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The show is a veritable love fest from start to finish. There are no elaborate sets, flashy costumes or exuberant choreography. Diamond holds the crowd spellbound simply by the strength of his performance, creating an intimacy with the audience as only a true star can do.

Much of the night is devoted to Diamond's impressive back catalog, and not only the songs he's sung himself — "Love On The Rocks," "Forever In Blue Jeans," and "America" are included — but he also performs "I'm A Believer," a Diamond tune that was a hit for The Monkees. A highlight is the singalong to "Sweet Caroline," which could have been an obvious set closer, had Diamond not opted for the more interesting (and equally celebratory) "Brother Love's Traveling Salvation Show."

The show is also available on CD, featuring six additional songs.
— Gillian G. Gaar



Riverside
Reality Dream

Metal Mind Productions/ProgTeam Management (PT-001)
Grade: ★★★

Riverside's mystique remains intact on *Reality Dream*, a two-DVD set featuring a live performance filmed in May 2008 at

Poland's Toya Studios in front of an adoring home-country audience.

Never easy to categorize, the atmospheric prog quartet from Warsaw has gained a considerable following since forming in 2001, blurring elements of Pink Floyd, Porcupine Tree, Opeth, Dream Theater and Tool. This performance features songs from the quartet's first three albums, which comprise the "Reality Dream Trilogy" (*Out of Myself*, *Second Life Syndrome* and *Rapid Eye Movement*). It's heady stuff, but viewers will gain a greater appreciation for Riverside's work, despite the band making music as shadowy as its stage lighting. Grainy video effects add to the overall impact, giving the appearance of the band playing in a lightning storm on the spacious stage.

Also included is a dull behind-the-scenes video and seven additional songs filmed live in Germany, Canada and Holland.
www.progteam.eu
—Michael Popke

THEATRICAL REVIEW



The Doors
When You're Strange: A Film About The Doors

Wolf Films/Strange Pictures
Rated R, 85 minutes
Grade: ★★★

Tom DiCillo's "When You're Strange: A Film About The Doors" means to answer the more loony flights of fancy taken by Oliver Stone in his 1991 Doors biopic, but, in the process, creates a formal exercise in redundancy, offering no new insights into the much mythologized rock band.

The documentary does boast unseen archival footage of Doors band members Jim Morrison, Robbie Krieger, Ray Manzarek and John Densmore rehearsing, performing, hanging out backstage and, in the case of singer Morrison, defining, for better and worse, the rock-star template

that some musicians still follow to this day.

Die-hard fans will also revel in seeing several scenes from "HWY," an experimental film Morrison made with friends in 1969 out in the Southern California desert. We watch The Lizard King driving and crashing a '66 Mustang fastback, covering a dying coyote with a blanket and lending his camera-ready charisma to the role of aimless drifter.

That home movie footage is more revelatory than anything else in DiCillo's film, which rehashes the band's well-chronicled, boom-to-bust history in rote fashion.

DiCillo ("Living in Oblivion") inserts the same '60s news clips that we've seen a million times — JFK, MLK and RFK shot, Vietnam, civil-rights marches — to let us know that, yes, the decade was tumultuous. DiCillo constantly fudges with the timeline, though, in a pointless effort to have The Doors' music directly comment on the major news events.

Instead of "The Wonder Years" montages, the movie would have benefited enormously from new interviews with the surviving band members. Perhaps legal entanglements prevented that from happening. Densmore has successfully sued Krieger and Manzarek over the years for using the band's name and logo in new incarnations.

Undoubtedly, the trio would have had

some interesting (and conflicting) things to say about The Doors' legacy, but their thoughts might not have jibed with the kind of reductive myth-making that DiCillo seeks with his movie.

Johnny Depp provides the narration, dutifully reading the bland script and trying to lend a measure of soulfulness to the textbook-quality words.

But, with all due respect to Depp's trademark cool, the movie's mojo rises only when the music takes over. In this regard, DiCillo does succeed in explaining why The Doors' timeless blend of classical, blues, Eastern music and pop continues to resonate with new generations of listeners.

The personality cult that has grown around Morrison's self-styled Dionysus image has played a part in maintaining interest. As the movie notes, toward the end, fans came to the band's infrequent concerts not for the music, but for the "spectacle."

"It didn't seem like actual entertainment," complains one paying customer, following The Doors' infamous 1969 Miami concert, after which Morrison was charged with a felony count of lewd and lascivious behavior.

As bogus as the charge might have been, there's little disputing the concertgoer's point.
— Glenn Whipp, The Associated Press