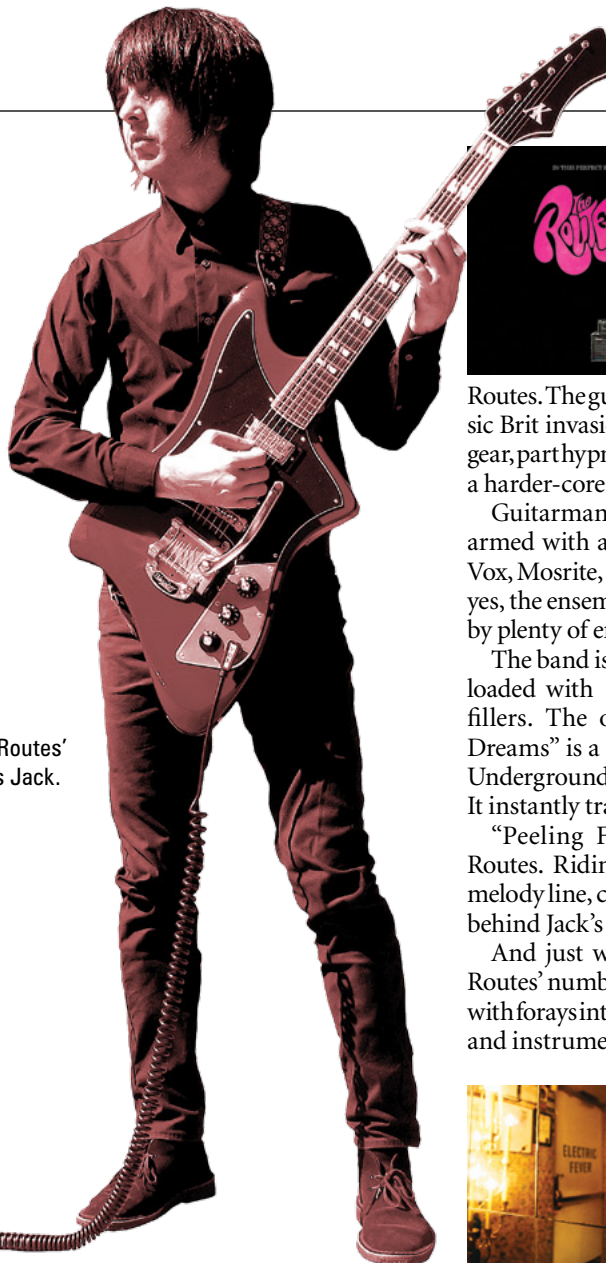


Should Have Happened A Long Time Ago” unfolds in cloud-like billows of arpeggios (via Frisell’s Collings semi-hollow), and rich lines from both players. It’s gorgeous and complex.

“Wildwood Flower” is the kind of country-jazz communion that Frisell has explored before and, no question, this Carter Family classic works as a jazz standard. The closing crowd-pleaser is the theme from James Bond’s “Goldfinger,” long popular with the surf-guitar crowd. Here, Fris plays it with a straight face and it’s dead-on perfect – much like the rest of this CD.

Dominic Miller, meanwhile, is best known as Sting’s guitarman, and this is his first for ECM. There’s nothing wrong with the album – it’s full of exquisitely recorded



The Routes’
Chris Jack.



instrumentals on acoustic – but it’s oddly sweet for the trailblazing label. “Water” is charming, though perhaps too close to New Age for its own good. Miller’s fine fingerstyle aside, the collection comes off more as elegant background music than anything truly compelling. – *PP*



Flamin’ Groovies Live 1971 San Francisco

Flamin’ Groovies are best known for the ’76 power-pop gem “Shake Some Action,” but this show – recorded five years earlier at the final Fillmore West concerts – couldn’t be more different. It’s blunt three-chord rock, somewhere between the Seeds, MC5, and the Rolling Stones. The live tape’s audio fidelity is lo-fi and raw, but still it *rocks*.

Fronted by guitarists Cyril Jordan and Ray Loney (who left soon after), the set opens with a pummeling cover of The Who’s “I Can’t Explain,” while Chuck Berry’s “Sweet Little Rock ‘n’ Roller” is converted into a punky rave-up, full of snarl and chunky riffing. The joyous “Doctor Boogie” speaks to ’50s rockabilly and the Sun Sessions – all the more ironic as this Flamin’ Groovies gig came in *post*-psychedelic San Francisco of the early ’70s.

The 10-minute “Slow Death” sports greasy and none-too-proficient slide guitar (as well as a perfectly Neanderthal bass solo), but it’s right in the sloppy spirit of things. Other covers include the frat anthem “Louie Louie,” “Walkin’ The Dog,” and another Who nod, “Shakin’ All Over,” as well as the controversial original “Teenage Head.”

Call the Flamin’ Groovies proto-punk or garage rock, but this live shot is a raucous rock and roll explosion. – *Pete Prown*

The Routes In This Perfect Hell



Think old-school Zombies crossed with new-thing Arctic Monkeys: the result may just be the

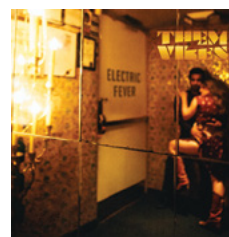
Routes. The guitar-bass-drum trio is part classic Brit invasion rockers with period-perfect gear, part hypnotic proto-psychedelia – yet with a harder-core modern edge to their sound.

Guitarman Chris Jack fronts the band, armed with an arsenal of Selmer amps and Vox, Mosrite, and Fender Jaguar guitars. And yes, the ensemble’s voice is suitably enlivened by plenty of enthusiastic fuzz.

The band is now back with its fifth album, loaded with 10 originals and no covers or fillers. The opener “Thousand Forgotten Dreams” is a rocking sonic drone à la Velvet Underground or the Jesus and Mary Chain. It instantly transports you to another era.

“Peeling Face” may be quintessential Routes. Riding the overdrive is a ’60s-style melody line, complete with chanted choruses behind Jack’s lead vocal.

And just when you think you’ve got the Routes’ number, check out their past albums, with forays into R&B, garage-rock Americana, and instrumentals. – *Michael Dregni*



Them Vibes Electric Fever

Nashville band Them Vibes latest recalls rock’s past without sounding dated or cliché.

Much of the reason for that is the guitar work of Alex Haddad and Kyle Lewis. There’s no in-your-face playing, but there’s plenty of tasteful guitar work that forms the basis for the 12 cuts on the record. And, when the two lock up and play dual lines, as on the melodic rock of “Who Do You Love,” the result is glorious.

The band is right at home with riff-based tunes. “Shoot The Messenger” shows they’ve learned all the best lessons from the past. And the riffs on “Comin’ Down On You” provide proof that the melody is the thing. “New Religion” shows off the band’s affinity for ’60s rock, with its Beatles circa 1966 feel from the guitars and the rhythm section.

Their acoustic side shines through on “Sha La Loo Ya,” which also features killer vocals and harmonies. That’s not a mistake as the vocals of lead singer Brother Love and Haddad mix wonderfully throughout the record.