



**“War: Loose Grooves — Funkin’ Live In England 1980”
(RPM Films/ MVD Visuals)**

2 stars

Between 1971 and 1976, popular R&B/funk collective War released a handful of acclaimed albums that spawned several singles (“Spill the Wine,” “Low Rider,” “Why Can’t We Be Friends?”) that still get plenty of radio airplay more than 30 years after the fact. “Loose Grooves” is a concert film from their tour of the United Kingdom in 1980. By then, War had undergone a major personnel overhaul and the lineup shown here had been cobbled together in an attempt to fit in with the disco glitz that was all the rage at the time. Though War recaptures some of their old magic at times — “Low Rider” is every bit as impressive live and “Cisco Kid” is especially funky here — the poor film quality and occasionally amateurish editing don’t translate well to DVD. At that point in the band’s career, War was still recording new material — this tour was in support of the critically lambasted “The Music Band 2,” a commercial flop — instead of wisely sticking exclusively to the old hits. Forgettable tunes such as “I’ll Be Around” have no place on a concert film that contains only eight songs. For a better example of War’s dynamic stage presence and musicianship, check out the 1974 double album “War Live,” a funky masterpiece — even though “Low Rider” and “Why Can’t We Be Friends?” were still a year away.

(*Jeffrey Sisk*)