

Rush

# SCREEN TEST

## DVDs in Review

**Rush**  
**R30 (Anthem/Zoë/Rounder)**  
**★★★★**  
 Powered by great live performances and paramount musicianship, Rush have built themselves an incredible multiplatinum career despite a mediocre discography. This new DVD, as you may have guessed, celebrates the band's 30th anniversary with two discs—the first covering the R30 tour, the second opening the video vault. With audio and video spanning three decades, it's a lavish package, and a fitting tribute to an accomplished band.  
**SCENE STEALER:** Alex Lifeson's playing is always challenging, and rarely rote, which means always



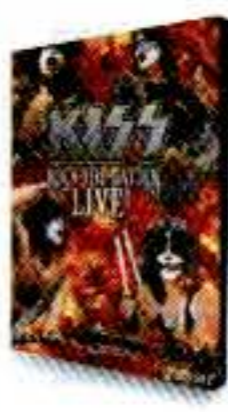
a joy to watch—here, in both old and new footage, and especially on forgotten gems like "Finding My Way" and "A Farewell to Kings."

**Franz Ferdinand**  
**Franz Ferdinand (Epic)**  
**★★★★**  
 The Talking Heads-influenced neo-new wavers from Glasgow rip it up on a tour across the U.S. and Europe. Pretty straightforward stuff. Yet surprisingly, this film, with its effective "tour-doc" extras, punches a hole in the suave veneer of the band and peels away their well-honed faux elegance, replacing both with affable normality. Watch as the four members learn to deal with



their still-fresh superstar mantle.  
**SCENE STEALER:** On record, "Take Me Out" and "The Dark of the Matinee" are little more than sparse dance-rock tunes. But here they're nothing short of manna to the ears of 50,000 screaming Scots, thanks to the serrated rhythms of guitarists Alex Kapranos and Nick McCarthy.

**Kiss**  
**Rock the Nation Live (Image)**  
**★★**  
 Filmed in high-definition in 2004, *Rock the Nation* is a big-budget concert production featuring a string of hits, a few surprises, and, yes, hundreds of crowd shots of writhing girls with tongues stuck out.



Cynics can easily cite the crass nature of this disc; both the fans and the band members—who, as seen here, have gone through the same dressing-room ritual for 30 years—are showing serious signs of age, giving segments of this video heavy overtones of pathos. Fact is, Kiss's antics have grown as wearisome to watch as Gene Simmons's codpiece must be to wear.  
**SCENE STEALER:** Tommy Thayer replaces Ace Frehley here—and Eric Singer replaces Peter Criss—but, rather than being given some leeway, he's forced to rehash Ace's classic work on "She" and "Deuce" right down to the Spaceman's wobbly legs.

**Queen**  
**Under Review 1973-1980 (Chrome Dream)**  
**★★★**  
 Debuting in the States in the early '70s, Queen played a critical role in the second British Rock Invasion, along with Bowie, Zepelin, Sabbath, and Floyd. This disc explores the band's formative period, starting with their early history and ending with 1980's *Jazz*. There's some decent vintage footage, but nothing terribly rare. In other words, hardcore fans won't see much they haven't seen before, while casual fans will consider much of the disc too much information.  
**SCENE STEALER:** Queen history is explained by random talking heads, one of whom is Simon Bradley, an editor of the British magazine *Guitarist*, who demonstrates some of Brian May's tricks and techniques in detail.  
 —BOB GULLA



## EXTRAS

**Alice Cooper**  
**Good to See You Again (Shout!)**  
 Eureka! It's the groundbreaking *Billion Dollar Babies* tour from 1973! Sure, the film itself is kitschy and "lo-def," but the thought of seeing this classic lineup should prompt long-in-the-tooth Cooper fans to fire up

the minivan and head to Borders to purchase this valuable artifact.

**Robin Trower**  
**Living Out of Time (Inakustik)**  
 Inakustik's line of DVDs is frill-less but nicely produced—and almost always features excellent

guitarists. Robin Trower may be three decades beyond his seminal *Bridge of Sighs*, but in these recently recorded performances he proves he can still play Strat-fired blues-rock with the best of them.

**Frank Zappa**  
**The Dub Room Special! (Eagle)**  
 Taken from mid-'70s footage and assembled in 1982, this is classic Zappa, perfect for wild-minded music-makers compelled by his humor and creative process. The early Steve Vai foot-

age is a welcome bonus.  
**Collective Soul**  
**Home (El Music Group)**  
 This show, filmed in the band's hometown of Atlanta, gets a significant boost from the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra, whose involvement elevates Ed Roland's basic melodies and three-chord progressions into something infi-



RICK GOULD