

Gene Parsons, Keith Richards, John York and Nigel Williamson contribute in-depth analysis and poignant discourse on the band's legacy. From the formation of the band to their use of studio musicians, its early releases, the pillaging of Bob Dylan's catalogue, the rotation of members, the impact of the Beatles and the British invasion, the evolution of the band's music (how and why), right through the final dissolution of the band, it is all here, warts and all. *Under Review* also explains the impact that the Byrds had on such artists as Tom Petty, the Pretenders, REM and the Smiths, and why the Byrds are responsible for the terms "country-rock" and "crossover" in the rock dictionary.

One glaring omission in *Under Review* is the absence of Roger McGuinn. I interviewed Roger years ago at a show that he and Gene Clark were putting on and asked him about the legacy of the Byrds. Then, he made no bones about the fact that he felt the Byrds were grossly underappreciated in rock history, and he was right. Why he didn't take this opportunity to help remedy that perception in what is an extremely good historical portrayal of the band is beyond me.

—Grip



## ZAPPA PLAYS ZAPPA

*Beacon Theater, NYC*

The night was full of both tricks and treats as Dweezil Zappa revived a family tradition his father started over 35 years ago: playing New York on Halloween. The Beacon Theater was packed with Frank Zappa devotees, festively clad and ready to imbibe a lot more than just candy.

Although live-in-the-flesh would have been a little too creepy even for All Hallows Eve, everyone was pleased to see their favorite rock star ghost projected on an enormous screen behind the band. Incorporating old concert footage of Frank Zappa directly into their act, the band played "Cosmik Debris" and sang back-up to Frank's vocals. Dweezil added his own virtuosity on the guitar and suddenly father and son were playing a duet. The sound quality of the old concert footage was outstanding and seamlessly blended with the live music. Ray White, who toured and recorded with Frank Zappa, came on stage and took over on lead vocals, belting the familiar songs beautifully, adding a touch of soul to the Zappa classics.

In a memorable improvisational moment, Dweezil asked the audience to supply lyrics to "Duprees Paradise," and someone shouted out, "Save our lives bro." Dweezil conducted the song by pointing to individual band mem-

bers, who soloed in turn. The band's ability to respond in this high paced roundabout showcased their considerable musicianship. Then Ray White came in with the audience member's lyric, "Why don't you save our lives bro?"

In the end, everyone had a little too much fun and, after a three-hour set, the Beacon had a hard time getting the band off the stage. This reviewer was grateful to finally experience Zappa songs live, played by a talented group dedicated to celebrating both the Halloween spirit and the memory of an immortal artist.

—Ali Green



## SID GRIFFIN

*Million Dollar Bash*  
—Bob Dylan, The Band  
and The Basement  
Tapes

(Jawbone Press)

The first thing I liked about this book was the cover: right behind hipster Bob Dylan in his shades and polka dot shirt, a clear-eyed, thoughtful Richard Manuel gazes into the middle distance. As this minutely detailed account of the making of the Basement Tapes makes clear, this featured status was not accidental. Although Garth Hudson was arguably the indispensable man with the tape recorder, Manuel's contributions—heartfelt vocals and inspired songwriting, lovely piano lines at just the right moment and surprising drum chops in Levon Helm's absence—were the glue that made much of it work, before the "mailbox money" and the trouble that came with it.

The book is exhaustive, leaving no story or rumor untold, and no theory undissected. Griffin lists every take of every song on the known recordings from those 1967 sessions, most of which took place in the basement of Big Pink, and speculates (sometimes with the help of an insider or two) about every aspect of their creation. From the placement of the microphones and the quality of the tape to who might have played what and why, clues are examined by people who were there, and others who were not.

Rob Fraboni, who engineered the version of the tapes released in 1975, brings a wealth of interesting information about that process and the selections that were made. Others interviewed contribute pieces of another psychological portrait of Albert Grossman. But for many of us who listened to scratchy copies of the *Great White Wonder* bootleg, along with the dizzying parade of rumors about what it all meant, where Bob was hiding and why, it's amusing to see just how far off the mark everyone was. Fascinating.

—Kay Cordtz

## NEIL YOUNG

UNDER REVIEW 1974 - 2006



## NEIL YOUNG

*Under Review*  
1976-2006 DVD  
(MVD)

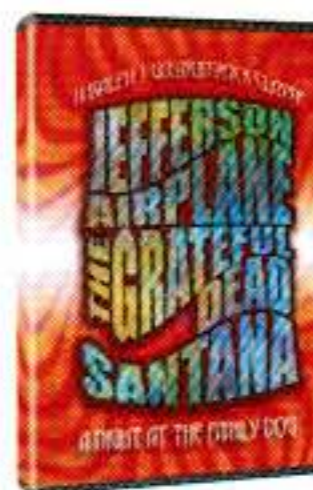
This DVD is a thoughtful and intelligent, almost clinical examination of an important 30-year segment of Young's oeuvre, offering the listener brief snatches of Young's music and performances over the years. The film covers a lot of ground, but then again so has Neil Young.

The beginning of the film throws out opinions from three different critics, all of whom touch on Young's floundering in the mid-1970s. Mixed in with this is an outtake of Young: "I'm singing for the Stringman/Who really lost his way/There is no nearer friend of mine/That I know in this life." That juxtaposition immediately made me conclude that this is not an ordinary video. The director took the time to insert a cogent, seemingly autobiographical verse into the mix. The film goes on to reinforce this with zingers and hosannas echoing off one another, sometimes from the same critic.

The discussion of Young's fascination or fixation with punk, and his familiarity/love/hate/jealousy/influence on that genre here is belabored. So what if Young's a leopard who changes his spots to blend with a particular genre of music? Another subject mentioned repeatedly was Young's problems with record labels. Young wants to do what he considers the next logical step in his musical progression, as opposed to \$\$, the label's concern. Can't fault the company: it's the nature of the business; neither do I fault Young.

Overall, I thought this a fair and balanced story of a musician respected by critics as well as the technical staff. The message I get is, "Neil Young is a human whom we all esteem. But he's still human."

—Lou Novacheck



## JEFFERSON AIRPLANE, GRATEFUL DEAD, SANTANA

*A Night At the Family Dog*  
DVD  
(Eagle Vision)

Another fascinating film from Ralph J. Gleason, this aired on NET as one piece of a two-part series on the San Francisco music scene. Filmed in February 1970, it's a brief glance into something folks who were there are still trying to comprehend.

It kicks off with two from Santana, "Incident at Neshabur" and "Soul Sacrifice," and that's a show. To see Carlos and the boys so young, playing with the skill, intensity and