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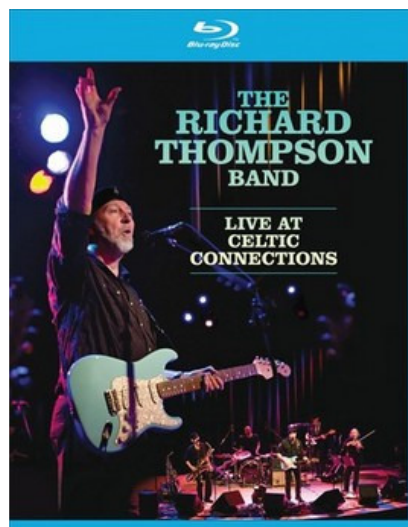
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B.B. King: Live At the Royal Albert Hall 2011 (2012/Shout! Factory Blu-ray)/**Lindsey Buckingham with guest star Stevie Nicks** (Soundstage/Image Blu-ray)/**The Richard Thompson Band: Live At Celtic Connections** (Eagle Blu-ray)/**Santana: Greatest Hits Live At Montreux 2011** (Eagle Blu-ray)/**Taylor Swift: American Beauty** (VLF/MVD DVD)



Picture: B- (DVD: C)
 Sound: B/B/B+/B/C Extras: C/C-/C/C+/D Main Programs: B-/B-/B/B/D

Here we are revisited by popular music acts we have covered before, except one it has taken us too long to cover.

The great B.B. King is back with a third Blu-ray concert release, **B.B. King: Live At the Royal Albert Hall 2011** and this is as good as the two previous Blu-rays we covered with the man taking center stage. For the record, they are:

Live At Montreux 1993
<http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/8692/B.B.+King+%E2%80%93+Live+At+Mo>

Soundstage 2009
[http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/11066/B.B.+King+Live+\(Soundstage/2009/I](http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/11066/B.B.+King+Live+(Soundstage/2009/I)

He performs *The Thrill Is Gone* yet again, so we guess he never misses this one, but he at least this time passed on *Let The Good Times Roll*. There are only ten tracks here in all including *All Over Again*, *Rock Me Baby*, *You Are My Sunshine*, *When The Saints Go Marching In* and a 'Guests Jam' are also here. It is on par with his many shows that I have seen, solid and professional with undeniable, though it never goes beyond the Blues which is great for fans if not the rest of us. As a Blu-ray, it is better than the **Soundstage** show, but that older **Montreux** disc still looks better than both. Extras include a backstage chat with King, interviews with Derek Trucks, Susan Tedeschi, Ronnie Wood & Mick Hucknall and Slash (in a separate section) talks music and B.B. King.

Lindsey Buckingham with guest star Stevie Nicks is a Blu-ray version of the out of print DVD of his 2005 Soundstage concert we reviewed at this link:

<http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/3802/Soundstage+%E2%80%93+Lindsey+B>

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The show is still a good one, but I still wanted more and the acoustic approach which he is using at most of his concerts (including the 2011 show we covered at this link: <http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/11289/Lindsey>) is intimate and fine, but not what I wanted in either case. The extras two tracks are repeated here too.

For the first time, we get to discuss Richard Thompson, originally from the band Fairport Convention and later as a duo with his one-time wife Linda Thompson and of course solo. Now he is here in **The Richard Thomson Band: Live At Celtic Connections**, a concert that shows off his talents for over 20 songs and two hours (plus you get two bonus tracks) and you can see and hear why he has been such a critical success and musician's musician and writer's writer for so many decades. He can play, sing, perform and the showmanship as well as synergy of the band makes for a really solid show. Though I liked some songs more than others, it was better than expected and as good as any show here. If you have never heard of Thompson, this is a great introduction to him and his work. Give it a try if you like alternative music. A booklet inside the case is the only other extra.

Santana: Greatest Hits Live At Montreux 2011 is no less than the fourth Blu-ray release of the legendary performer from the Eagle label following **Blues At Montreux 2004**...

<http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/5727/Carlos+Santana+At+Montreux:+Live+1>

... **Montreux Live 1998 with Wayne Shorter + Hymns For Peace 2004**...

<http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/9271/Carlos+Santana+Presents+Blues+At+M>



Again, you get an excellent concert, even if at this point, we are getting more overlap than I would like and some songs not as fun as others, but doing AC/DC's *Back In Black* as a sort of Rap variant is oddly amusing and Cindy Blackman Santana joins in on *Corazon Espinado/Guajira*. Also interesting is that Derek Trucks and Susan Tedeschi from the separately released B.B. King concert above (down to a different company releasing it) show up here to join in on *Make Somebody Happy/Right On Be Free*, so they are getting around and that is a good thing. Extras include an interview with both the Santanas, a Behind The Scenes featurette and a nice booklet (as usual from Eagle) with technical information and more fine color reproduction in its photography.

Last and least is the silly, quickie cash-in project **Taylor Swift: American Beauty** which is just a bad, low budget, cheesy rehash of the authorized, much more detailed **Journey To Fearless** we covered here:

<http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/11220/Cream+%E2%80%93+Royal+Albert>

Only the most diehard, obsessed fan would want this dull rehash despite some fan interviews. There is no original music, no new insight, more than one "actress" badly playing Swift and no extras. Yawn!

The 1080i 1.78 X 1 digital High Definition image on all four Blu-rays are about on par with each other, all having their own flaws, color limits and depth issues, but is just fine and what is expected for older HD productions. The anamorphically enhanced **Swift** DVD with the same aspect ratio is poor, soft and weak. The DTS-HD MA (Master Audio) 5.1 lossless mixes are all warm, rich and professionally produced and mixed, as well as superior to any alternate tracks on their respective discs, but the **Thompson** DTS-MA is the best of all with an exceptional soundfield and terrific articulation making it the best presentation and one of the best of any live Blu-ray concert we have encountered lately. **Buckingham** is a marked improvement from the lossy, out of print DVD version, but he is still too much in the center channel. The Dolby Digital 2.0 sound on **Swift**

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is weak, has varying audio issues and is barley stereo.

- Nicholas Sheffo

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