

Ray Campi

Rockabilly Man

★★★★

Cherry Red Films CRDVD 156

The spirit of rockabilly up close and personal

This from-the-archives live show documents Ray Campi, the living spirit of all things retro-rockabilly, riding the crest of the wave of the 80s rockabilly revival at Preston's Canterbury Hall in 1988. Backed by Sugar Rayford & The Hotshots, Campi, resplendent from head to toe in scarlet and with a Texan flag tied to the neck of his double bass, shakes, rattles and rolls his way through a 20-song resume of his extensive career. Vintage 50s titles including My Heart's On Fire, Caterpillar and It Ain't Me get goings-over, alongside numbers from his time on the Rollin' Rock label during the 70s. There are also selections from his then current Bear Family album *Taylor, Texas* 1988.

From the off the tireless rockin' daddy from Austin, Texas works overtime slapping and riding his double bass, cracking jokes and sharing anecdotes from his lifetime in rockabilly, western swing and good old rock'n'roll. One thing this DVD captures by the truckload is Ray Campi's untamed enthusiasm for the music that's defined him. "You may not know these guys but you've heard these songs," he says. Just what you'd expect from a trusted keeper of the flame. *Grahame Bent*

Diesel Park West

Damned Anthems

★★★★

Angel Air NJPDVD 628

The forgotten men of guitar-slinging Britrock

Big things were expected of Diesel Park West when they signed to the fledgling Food label in the late 80s, but they fell by the wayside as the label channelled its energies towards more marketable signings Jesus Jones and Blur. It could be argued that John Butler's Leicester outfit were ahead of their time, too early to catch the guitar rock wave surfed so successfully by the likes of Stereophonics, Oasis and Ocean Colour Scene.

They maintained a healthy cult following, though, which will be overjoyed by this disc, featuring no less than three full European concerts. It inevitably means there's crossover and repetition, although songs such as All The Myths On Sunday and Like Princes Do (the latter a searing attack on elitism and privilege), deserve to be heard again – more than once.

With the Diesels back in business with a imminent new album, it's a timely reminder of their bygone power and potential. They nearly broke through last time, and let's hope the 21st Century shines brighter for them. *Terry Staunton*

Dinosaur Jr

Live In The Middle East

★★★★

SonyBMG 88697087089



As far as reunions go, Dinosaur Jr's back in 2005 beggared belief. The acrimonious sacking of original member Lou Barlow in the late

80s may have seen the mighty J Mascis and Murph go it alone, but it was a journey some thought they took almost to spite their erstwhile bandmate. Yet, here they are, getting along, sharing a stage in Boston's The Middle East and New York's Irving Plaza.

This offers some compelling footage of lo-fi grunge's most dysfunctional trio reliving their youth, performing an 18-track set with vigour and excitement alongside a, erm, giant pink monster. The additional bonus features, however, consisting of several live performances, as well as interviews with the band and other legends such as Thurston Moore, Kevin Shields and Steve Albini, seems a little sparse. The band retrospectives offer minimal insight into Dinosaur's ferocity during their peak and the impact of their eventual implosion.

As one would expect from a feature film directed by Mascis' own brother-in-law, Philipp Virus, *Live In The Middle East* isn't brave enough to delve into the nitty gritty of the myth with any real intrigue. As Albini puts it, this is "bummer hard rock" at its best, but more of a treat for hardened fans. *Ash Dosanjh*

BB King

Standing Room Only

★★★

S'More 88697 08706 9

Stand close to the exit

This concert was filmed in 1990 in the Trump Marina Hotel, Atlantic City. From that you can rightly deduce that this is glitzy hotel entertainment, and consequently the band comes complete with slap bass and the ugly drum sound that characterised so much music at the time.

BB King and his guitar Lucille give good performances to keep



the concert afloat. An amusing slapstick routine sees him conducting the horns with different limbs, including his ample rump. The set is mostly uptempo material, but as King's finest moments are so often the slower numbers, it's a shame there aren't more. Ain't Nobody's Business What I Do simmers nicely as King takes the time to get to the heart of the song.

The real litmus test is The Thrill Is Gone: if you ever hear a version of that song which doesn't send a chill down your spine, something's wrong. This version doesn't deliver that feeling, thanks to the limp backing. This is compounded by the murky audio mix, which gives none of the breadth that the band, particularly the effervescent horns, deserves. Also, the concert has been edited together from several sets, making the experience very uneven. *Mat Croft*

Gil Scott-Heron & Amnesia Express

The Paris Concert

★★★★

Inakustik INAK 6465 DVD

Televised, but not a revolution

The Amnesia Express must have connected with Scott-Heron pretty hard, as he seems to have forgotten most of his best known songs for this two-hour show at New Morning. OK, so there's Winter In America, Johannesburg and a near 20-minute The Bottle, but no The Revolution Will Be Televised, Lady Day & John Coltrane, Whitey On The Moon, etc.

What this does have is groove. In fact, Scott-Heron's so locked in, it's as if the 13 tracks just meld into one another. Some of the long improvs and call-and-responses drift too far to be enjoyable from the distance of a DVD, but Scott-Heron himself is the type that can hold your attention by simply being there.

A solo Your Daddy Loves You makes you question why he isn't as fêted as Bill Withers or Bobby Womack. Perhaps it's because he refused to play the game. Whitey On The Moon needs no explanation; Angel Dust is hardly going to get the radio play of an Across 110th Street. There's no mugging for the crowd (Scott-Heron's almost rocking the street tramp look: baseball cap over his eyes, dishevelled suit), it simply is what it is: two hours of soul jazz; and we mean jazz for the soul. *Jason Draper*

Bryan Ferry

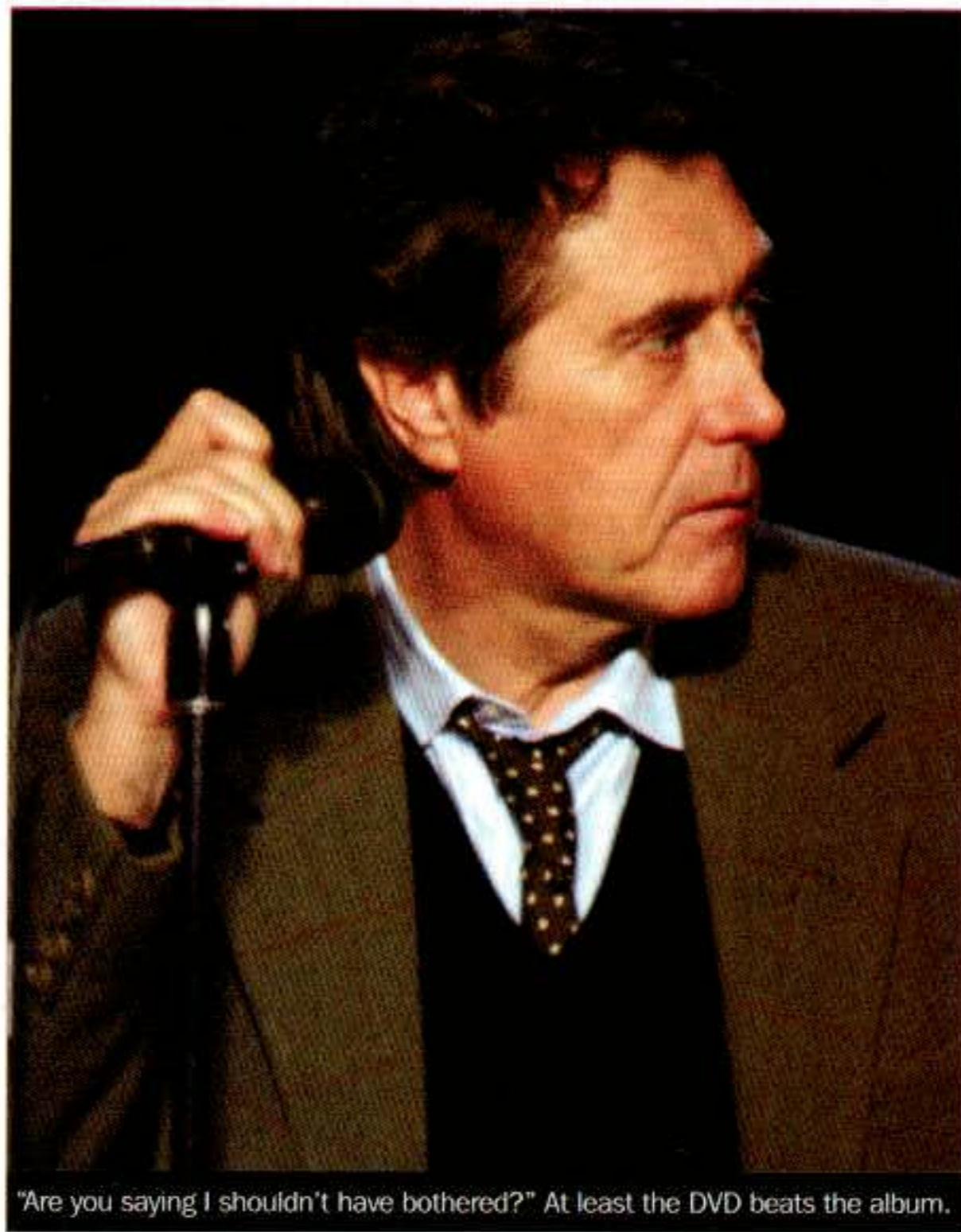
Dylan-esque Live: The London Sessions

★★★★

Eagle Vision EREDV 633

Better than the album

It "didn't take much rehearsal, and then the next day we just banged through the album and it was filmed", Ferry says. Mostly sitting throughout, and with little



"Are you saying I shouldn't have bothered?" At least the DVD beats the album.

audience to speak of (essentially the camera crew), this is something of an understatement of its informality. Compared to his dapper *BBC Sessions* turn recently, this dishevelled suit-wearing Ferry isn't the face of M&S we know today, nor the impressively sharp man we knew before. In fact, he looks slightly awkward and shy.

What is impressive, however, is that this live run-through-plus-some-more of his Dylan covers album is much more interesting than the album itself. Away from the anodyne studio production, the songs seems engaged with and sometimes even possessed of an edge wholly missing from *Dylan-esque* the record; and that's saying something, considering that it's recorded in a near-empty hall.

Intercut with Ferry talking to the camera between songs, he comes off now as a kind uncle, rather than a ballsy, art-rocking leader. Change is good, but not when it's for the blander. The bonus video for his 1973 cover of A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall leaves you too aware of what he didn't bring to the material this time around. *Jason Draper*

New Morning 25th Anniversary

★★★★★

Inakustik INAK 6464 DVD (2-DVD)

Saluting a jazz institution

The New Morning jazz club in Paris has become something of an institution since it opened in 1981. This four-hour 2-DVD retrospective commemorates the first quarter-century in the colourful life of this musical landmark. With the selection of artists designed to illustrate the breadth of talent that has graced

the New Morning stage over the years, each DVD incorporates a series of introductions and interviews hosted by drummer Alvin Queen and Cameroonian sax colossus Manu DiBango.

Disc One documents the years 1994-2001, with Disc Two continuing the story up to 2005. The 25 artists range from Archie Shepp and Joe Lovano to Billy Cobham and Larry Coryell.

Special mention must go to the performances from Bob Berg, Monty Alexander, master conguero Ray Barretto, John Hammond, The Willie DeVille Acoustic Trio and, arguably the double-DVD's defining moments, the Lou Donaldson Quartet's masterful take on Laura, Ray Brown Trio & Art Farmer's In A Sentimental Mood, Gil Scott-Heron's Three Miles Down and long-serving Miles Davis drummer Al Foster's show-stopping revisitation of Miles Davis' Jean-Pierre. Bon anniversaire, and here's to the next 25 years! *Grahame Bent*

The Original Country Joe Band

Turned Up & Turned On

★★★★

Secret Films SMADVD 238 X

Keeping the Woodstock spirit alive

It's not every day a living icon of the late-60s counter-culture turns up on your doorstep. But that's exactly what happened at Southsea's South Parade Pier in June 2004, when The Original Country Joe Band took to the stage for a turn.

Country Joe could have been forgiven for thinking his anti-war protest days were well behind him. With the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan in full swing, and