

MEDIA *Mix*



SOLOMON BURKE *The King Live At Avo Session Basel* ●

MVD Visual

From the halcyon days of soul music—the 1960s—Solomon Burke, the self-styled “King of Soul,” is the last man standing. The best of them all, Otis Redding, is long gone. So too James Brown, Sam Cooke, Ray Charles and too many others. Morbidly obese, but still in fine voice—at least in 2003 when this was taped in Switzerland before a curiously passive audience—King Solomon has carried the torch proudly. Here he would have rocked the house—if it had let itself be rocked—with his own tunes (“Down in the Valley,” “None of Us Are Free”) and classics from the pantheon of soul, like “A Change Is Gonna Come” and “Georgia On My Mind.” Burke’s a commanding presence. In his 70s, he still smolders. It’s a pity the performance released on this DVD wasn’t before more receptive fans.

★ *c d kaplan*



ALL MY LOVING ● MVD Visual

Rock was at the crux of a culture war in 1968 when Tony Palmer pieced together this one-hour documentary for the BBC intended to demonstrate that the music was not the end of the world. There’s a marked defensiveness to the interview segments: musicians from McCartney (“Pop is the classical music of now”) to Townshend (“It’s crucial that it should remain art”) feel a compulsion to convince the viewer that the bubblegum era is gone and rock now has meaning (so why name the film *All My Loving*, after an early Beatles song?), while assorted geezers are trotted out to persuade that all this racket will not only destroy one’s ears but probably one’s mind as well. But what really makes this vital viewing is the rare footage: Hendrix pounding through a “Wild Thing” as electrifying and erotic as the one in *Monterey Pop*; a pink-silhouetted post-Barrett Pink Floyd; a nearly uninterrupted “We’re Going Wrong” from Cream; The Who smashing it up in Peoria. *All My Loving* takes itself way too seriously—the sober narration borders on parody—but the film is well worth seeing for the performances, and it does serve as an accurate window into the push-and-pull that rock was experiencing as it matured in the late ‘60s. ★

Jeff Tamarkin



SXSW LIVE 2007 ● Shout! Factory

The annual South by Southwest Music Conference in Austin—one of the world’s largest with over 1,500 showcasing acts this past year—is all about authenticity. Whether it’s rock, pop, metal, rap, electronic or country, bands are judged on their genre’s merits. As such, so too should the space of the performances: With 70 venues, SXSW is all about piling into sweaty, worn spaces to watch bands perform on cramped, simply lit stages where its

simply about the music. So it was a shock to see how slick and over-produced *SXSW Live 2007* was. Creating two “venues” at The Austin Convention Center—the Bat Bar and Lone Star Lounge—this overly lit setup has more in common with an awards show than the real SXSW experience. Out of the 18 performances repackaged from live broadcasts for Direct TV (with host Andrew W.K.), a few manage to shine: Mando Diao’s rock, Joe Purdy’s brooding introspection, Razorlight’s angular indie rock and reggae legend Lee “Scratch” Perry’s otherworldly toasting (this perhaps being the only recent, high-quality documentation of the legend in his later years). ★ *Josh Baron*



LOS ZAFIROS—MUSIC FROM THE EDGE OF TIME

Directed by *Lorenzo Destefano* ●

Shout! Factory

They became known as The Latin Platters but this to be sure is a discredit to the myriad of influences within their music. Musical director/guitarist Manuel Galban with four vocalists from the Cayo hueso district in Havana nicknamed El Chino, Kike, Miguelito and Ignacio with little-to-no formal musical training, created what is one of the most interesting hybrids of music from the tumultuous shores of early-’60s Cuba. Combining Calypso, bossa nova, doowop and Cuban rhythms, Los Zafiros (translated as The Sapphires) had a meteoric rise to fame and nearly as swift a fall from favor. They were as big as The Beatles (at least in Cuba) or so this film claims as it follows the one remaining vocalist Miguel “Miguelito” Cancio and Galban down an emotional path through the streets that gave rise to their dreams. With visits to family, friends and influences, the excellent film is all-encompassing nostalgia as the last men standing remember the glory days that took them from Trillo Park in Havana to crowded public squares in Moscow. Los Zafiros are one of those bands born of a singular time and place, but their music is truly undeniably timeless. ★ *Tyson Schuetze*

THE ROCK ‘N’ ROLL FILM ENCYCLOPEDIA

By *John Kenneth Muir* ● Applause Books

The standard music freak with even a passive interest in films is automatically a qualified music film nut. The equation works out this way every time. Sooner or later, the music junkies have taken over movie night and there’ll be a heavy discussion over a seemingly arbitrary topic like whether the order of R&B songs in the 1991 classic *The Commitments* matches up with the order that the songs were actually released through the years. (This has actually happened.) It is only those who’ve been there that understand the need for such a book like *The Rock ‘n’ Roll Film Encyclopedia*, which is really just a glorified chronicle of every movie that has either starred a musician or whose storyline was based on music. So does it pass the one standard—thoroughness—that a reference book must? Well, not quite. A random search for a particular favorite—the 1996 indie classic *Bandwagon*—returned a disheartening zilch, while a credibility-destroying abundance of page space is given to Broadway musicals-turned-movies. ★ *Andy Stokes*