

# Rock legends break ground in releases



Courtesy of Virgin

**"Live at the Hollywood Palladium: December 15, 1988"  
Keith Richards and the X-Pensive Winos  
Virgin Records**

It has been said repeatedly that on any given night, any band can be the world's greatest. To apply a permanent tag to a particular band is to ignore those nights when they're not exactly together, and more importantly, it is to forget those rare nights when young, hopeful groups hit upon the elusive vibe of joyous musical communion.

On Dec. 15, 1988, the Rolling Stones' own Keith Richards and his raggedy band of smiling stalwarts supposedly claimed the heavyweight title. It could be that there weren't many bands playing in the world that night, or it could mean that the rock legend delivered the goods better and more assuredly than he had in years. Bet on the latter.

On this wondrous disc you pick up

## Reviews



all the adrenaline, smiles, mistakes, smoke, aches, sweat and glee of a ripping performance by what ol' Keef thinks to be "the second ace band" of his career. All the cogs of the live band machinery are working in delicate sync, and the virtuoso players at hand are clearly enjoying the fact.

Most of the material from the show draws from Keith's 1988 solo venture, the vastly underrated "Talk is Cheap." (From that album alone it was plainly discernible who was the driving groove in the Rolling Stones.)

The music is classic three-chord Telecaster, booming bass, and some tight trap work courtesy of Richards'

invaluable collaborator Steve Jordan. The material translates better than expected to the live situation, as in the dead-on JB workout "Big Enough" and the churning "Struggle."

Vocalist Sarah Dash comes to the party with a touch of grace amid all the gruff, adding real sensuality to the slow burner "Make No Mistake" and taking over lead on the Stones' own "Time Is On My Side." Guitarist Waddy Wachtel keeps a tasteful rhythm and lead going over Charley Drayton's nasty bass and Ivan Neville's fat, prickly organ, while longtime 'Stones cohort Bobby Keys jabs in the air with his tenor sax's dirty

work.

Then there's Keith. The voice that smoked a thousand Camels is in top condition (well, considering how he usually sounds), and he is clearly enjoying this night out with the boys, away from carrying the mantle of rock god, just being one of the guys; pouncing on the crunch and punch of classic rock 'n' roll. It's a rare moment in history when something along those lines occurs. The thing is, it may never happen again.

As Kurt Loder puts it in the extensive liner notes,

"What's captured here...is the surge and flow of music itself, and the charting of complex routes through what are sometimes thought to be shallow musical waters. It's about getting into music, and getting off on it."

That sums it up nicely.

—Paul Winner

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Music from The Motion Picture Soundtrack  
**Until The End Of The World**  
A Film By Wim Wenders  
FEATURING NEW MATERIAL BY:  
Depeche Mode · Elvis Costello  
R.E.M. · Talking Heads  
Lou Reed · The Cruise  
T-Bone Burnett · Neil Lanois  
Nick Cave · The Seeds  
Jane Birkin · The Bang  
CAN  
Criminals  
Graeme Revell  
David Byrne  
Patti Smith · Fred Smith  
U2

Courtesy of Warner Bros. Records

**"Until The End of the World"**  
Music from the Motion Picture Soundtrack  
Various Artists  
Warner Bros. Records

Premier film director Wim Wenders is about to release his latest film, and naturally there is a hum of excitable anticipation in the cinema world. There are a few fragmented ideas floating around pertaining to what the plot of the movie is: something about 1999, desolation, desert images, two hearts finding each other across an endless, bleak sea of dust. Pretty heady stuff.

No matter how the film turns out, what should be noted is that it boasts one of the best soundtrack albums to come along in quite a while. Fourteen brand new songs by highly respected artists (from U2 to Depeche Mode to Nick Cave to CAN) all strangely scooped in the same images that "Until the End of the World" supposedly possesses: bleakness, emptiness and isolation. If the film didn't exist, this could still be a soundtrack for somebody's serious depressive blue funk.

Sparse arrangements abound, where brushed snares snuggle with strummed electric guitars, tribal rhythms, off-key violins and plucked chamber instruments. (Any analogy is going to be strained, but this just might be Cole Porter meets Joy Division, introduced via Lou Reed). You could either wish for average standard from these artists, or allow the collaborative efforts of all of them to overwhelm you with striking originality.

Talking Heads get things rollicking with their first new song in five years, "Sax and Violins." The song's stutter-step drum pattern and twangy guitar picking and idiosyncratic David Byrne's singing set the mood for the rest of the album. It is essentially a sad song, and it's probably the happiest tune in the whole bunch.

R.E.M. and Elvis Costello both venture into more baroque shadings of their signature work, and the results are well rewarded. Similarly, T-Bone Burnett funks up his usually linear rock leanings with the corily witty "Humans From Earth," and k.d. lang joins songstress Jane Siberry