

Living colours: Hendrix, Grona Lund, Stockholm, May 11, 1967.



“A blizzard of sexual energy, hair and guitar...”

Jimi's ride of the Valkyries remembered.

THE NIGHT of January 4, 1968 was not one of Hendrix's finest. Following a show in Gothenburg, Sweden, the guitarist began boozing heavily in the local clubs. Jimi was, apparently, a rotten drunk and became increasingly agitated as the evening wore on. That night, he was joined by a gay journalist who suggested Jimi and his backing band, The Experience, head back to their hotel for a foursome. “Jimi made an advance on me,” recalled bass player Noel Redding. “I passed on it, but the tension built up.”

Back in his room, Hendrix began smashing the furniture, until Redding and drummer Mitch Mitchell overpowered him. The incident was endemic of the Jimi Hendrix Experience's decline, as egos, drugs and money squabbles took their toll. Unwittingly, these rarely seen images, newspaper reports and eyewitness accounts plot the lightning speed at which Hendrix wowed the world and promptly crashed and burned.

Hendrix's first Nordic tour took in Sweden, Denmark and Finland in May 1967. On this trip, he shared a beer with Lars Ulrich's rock-loving, tennis-player dad Torben, and shocked hotel managers when he

and the Experience showed up with two women each on their arms. “What a sight!” raved one publication. “Jimi Hendrix is charmingly ugly.”

Hendrix on-stage was a gift to any photographer – a blizzard of wild hair, sexual energy and left-handed guitar – but it's the off-stage pictures which complete the story. In one, taken in Sweden on his second visit, Hendrix sprawls on the floor of an anonymous dressing room, eyes shut, puffing cigarette smoke, while his similarly knackered-looking tour manager, Gerry Stickells, cradles a beer beside him and a female friend curls up under a blanket.

Scroll forward to August 1970's final Nordic tour and Jimi's world had spun off its axis. Chandler was gone, the Experience had split and Hendrix was frying his brain cells with pills and powders. One image from Aarhus, Denmark, shows a saucer-eyed Hendrix flanked by two mini-skirted girls on a hotel bed but staring off into the middle distance.

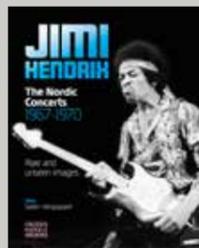
Kirsten Nefer, Hendrix's friend on the trip, recounts his decline here in an honest and unsentimental account. “Jimi talked about him not surviving to his 28th birthday, and he asked me to marry him,” she recalls. “But he asked a lot of people at the time.” He was also, it transpired, out of his box on Mandrax, and convinced “somebody was trying to shoot him”.

Fifteen days after his last Nordic gig, Hendrix was found dead at London's Samarkand Hotel. His legacy is awkwardly but charmingly summarised here by a Danish newspaper report from that final jaunt. “Last night Hendrix was outstanding,” wrote Dagbladet. “If you piled up all the guitar stars in rock, they still wouldn't reach Hendrix's knees.” Enough said.

JIMI HENDRIX: THE NORDIC CONCERTS 1967-1970

Soren Vangsgaard
Unseen Nordic Archives

★★★★★



ROLLING STONES 69

Patrick Humphries
OMNIBUS PRESS

★★★★★



Jagger and co's annus horribilis examined.

With a career entering its seventh decade, The Rolling Stones' story has many chapters worthy of deeper investigation. Well-regarded rock critic Patrick Humphries turns his attention to a single year in their life. The Stones' 1969 was a white-knuckle ride: they lost their talented but tortured co-founder, Brian Jones, broke in his replacement, Mick Taylor, with a free gig at Hyde Park and watched a fan murdered in front of the stage at the ill-fated Altamont Speedway concert. All this – and they released one of their greatest albums, *Let It Bleed*. Humphries tells the story briskly and with genuine insight. A kid in the '60s, he bought the Stones' records at the time. This personal detail – “Country Honk was considered the joke track on *Let It Bleed*” – gives *Rolling Stones 69* a welcome eyewitness feel. More than just a chapter in a bigger story, this study speaks volumes about the brilliant, contrary and often conflicted nature of The Rolling Stones. **MARK BLAKE**

FOO FIGHTERS: THE BAND THAT DAVE MADE

Stevie Chick
PALAZZO

★★★★★



The rise of the 'Nicest Man In Rock'.

Dave Grohl's ubiquity in 2019 is such that it's almost possible to forget just what an extraordinary journey the Foo Fighters frontman has been on. It's typical of the sensitivity long-time MOJO/Planet Rock contributor Stevie Chick brings to his always illuminating writing that in *Foo Fighters: The Band That Dave Made* one never loses sight of the human being at the core of the story. This is evident early in the text when, reflecting upon the messy demise of Grohl's former employers from Seattle, Chick writes, “Nirvana crashed and burned, and almost took Grohl with them.” The Virginia-born musician's dignified and respectful ascension from the wreckage is charted in detail, emphasising

how Grohl's passion for music would ultimately prove to be his salvation. “I felt I had to exorcise something from my soul to feel like life keeps moving forward,” he admits. His constant momentum since makes Chick's text a pacy and informative read.

PAUL BRANNIGAN

BLUES FROM LAUREL CANYON

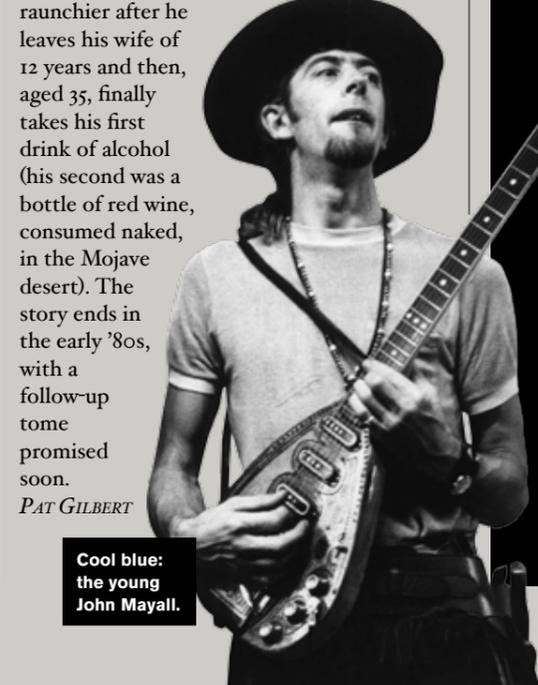
John Mayall
OMNIBUS PRESS

★★★★★



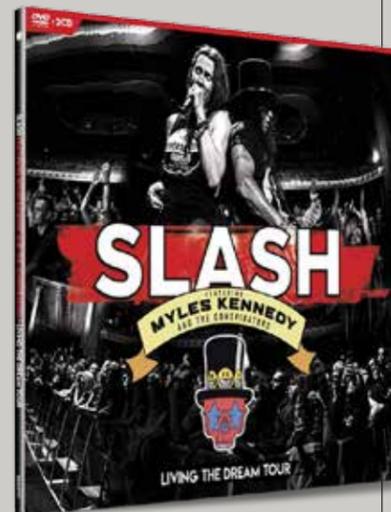
Memoir of the iconic Brit bluesman's first five decades.

As with his compadre Alexis Korner, no family tree of British rock's beginnings could be drawn without showing John Mayall at its deepest roots. A Korean War veteran from Cheshire – though he didn't actually see action, having been posted during his National Service to East Asia after the ceasefire – Mayall edged his way into the late-'50s jazz and blues scene, propelled by an insatiable appetite for black American music and the ability to run a tight band. By the mid-'60s, his Bluesbreakers had become the alma mater for everyone who would become anyone: Eric Clapton, Mick Fleetwood, John McVie, Peter Green, Jack Bruce. It was Mayall whom Mick Jagger would ring when seeking a replacement for Brian Jones – Bluesbreaker Mick Taylor came on his recommendation. Mayall's tale is really one of a gentlemanly, jobbing, much-respected touring musician, though things do get a little raunchier after he leaves his wife of 12 years and then, aged 35, finally takes his first drink of alcohol (his second was a bottle of red wine, consumed naked, in the Mojave desert). The story ends in the early '80s, with a follow-up tome promised soon.



Cool blue: the young John Mayall.

PAT GILBERT



SLASH

Featuring Myles Kennedy
And The Conspirators
Living The Dream Tour

EAGLE VISION

★★★★★

Exemplary live DVD which bizarrely omits its mainman from the mix.

FROM BUDDY Holly through David Bowie and Queen, to Bruce Springsteen, Black Sabbath and AC/DC, the Hammersmith Apollo – or Odeon as it will always affectionately be known to us – is a venue as iconic as the legends who have trodden its boards. Well, now add Slash to that list.

Filmed on Slash and band's London stop on their February 2019 European tour, *Living The Dream* is everything you would expect from a modern live DVD. Every angle is covered, from back of the venue and behind the drum riser, to side stage and mosh pit, with viewers simultaneously made to feel like they're in the crowd and part of the band.

The visual cut dances in perfect synchronicity with the band's energising blues rock, never too fast to induce motion sickness, yet never lingering so long as to outstay its welcome, even when Slash is ripping his furious solos. Myles Kennedy is, of course, a consummate enough vocalist to hold the crowd in his hand and never get lost in the guitarist's shadow. He even makes way for bassist Todd Kerns to take over when the band play wild and loose on *We're All Gonna Die* and *Doctor Alibi*. But the star of the show is obviously Slash, so it's inexplicable, then, that his guitar is pushed way too far down in the mix.

CAREN GIBSON

BEST TRACKS: *Ghost, Mind Your Manners, Nightrain*