

Vintage Eric Clapton/John Mayall gem re-issued on vinyl; Sonic Youth and Nirvana flash back to 1991 on DVD

Published: Tuesday, September 13, 2011, 6:00 AM

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John Mayall with Eric Clapton, "Blues Breakers," (Sundazed – vinyl release). 4 ½ stars.

Sonic Youth "1991: The Year Punk Broke" (UMe - DVD) 3 stars.

Rarities and Reissues

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One of the most influential blues/rock albums of all-time, [John Mayall](#) and [Eric Clapton's](#) "Blues Breakers" recently has been reissued on 180 gram vinyl courtesy of those vinyl-loving folks at Sundazed.

The source was the original U.K. mono masters.

Listening to it "Blues Breakers" all these years later confirms one thing for certain: No one was playing guitar quite like Clapton in 1966. The guitarist had teamed with Mayall a year earlier, and on these sessions pushed his Gibson Les Paul to the max, cranked his Marshall amplifier and delivered a slightly distorted, undeniably heavy sound that was far removed from the smoother style typically favored in studio recordings of the era.

And when the future "Slowhand" tore through tracks like the Freddie King instrumental "Hideaway," Otis Rush's "All Your Love," or the riff-riding guitar instrumental showcase "Steppin' Out," it signaled the start of the British blues explosion in earnest.

Clapton also sang on a record for the first time, taking over lead vocals on Robert Johnson's "Ramblin' On My Mind," a song that would become one of his signatures in future years. He worked all that wonder around undeniably solid contributions from Mayall – check out his harp playing on Mose Allison's "Parchman Farm" – and a band that also included future Fleetwood Mac mainstay John McVie on bass.

DVD Spotlight

Sonic Youth "1991: The Year Punk Broke" (UMe) 3 stars.

You may find yourself struggling a bit through what [Sonic Youth's](#) Thurston Moore later called "hyper editing" but the first DVD release of this film offers a precious look back at momentous period in musical history.

Filmmaker Dave Markey captured Sonic Youth's 1991 tour of Europe in all its raw, wild glory complete with an impressive guest list that included Nirvana, a month before the release of their breakthrough album "Nevermind;" Dinosaur Jr.; The Ramones and several other bands.

Moore plays the part of the ringmaster and handles a lot of the off-stage interviews, most notably prophetically remarking at one point, "'91 is the year that punk finally breaks...to the mass consciousness of global society."

Still, it's the action on stage that far outweighs the backstage bantering, and Nirvana rip through tracks including "Smells Like Teen Spirit" (which almost didn't make the original cut of the film – too much of a hit) as well as a sparse "Polly," and "Negative Creep."

Dinosaur Jr.'s performances are highlighted by "The Wagon," The Ramones are seen doing "Commando," and Sonic Youth turn in several cuts, notably "Teenage Riot," and "I Love Her All the Time."

The two-hour-plus DVD release features more than an hour of bonus material, including a 2003 panel discussion featuring several of the key players in the film.