

Box Set Reviews

SANTANA – Dance Of The Rainbow Serpent

Guitar master and pioneer of the rock fusion with Latino and Jazz that's synonymous with his name, Carlos Santana is the latest icon to be honored by a lavish box set that offers proper and ample insight into an outstanding career. Far superior to the old 2-disc retrospective, this 3-CD set serves up digitally remastered recordings that just shine. The dense, layered percussion seems to pulse and weave behind the instrumentation even more than before and the track descriptions in the excellent liner notes are fun, full of info and apt. The artwork, liner notes and discography are also equally well-executed. You know this is the real thing from the first note of the classic "Evil Ways" through a bevy of previously unreleased rare material like a 1978 collaboration with Vernon Reid, this is a fitting tribute.

TOM PETTY - Playback

What's obviously the best box set of the season is also one of the best box sets ever. First off, you get 6 cd's for \$80.00! Six discs is more than most artists use to anthologize an entire career, but what separates this release from the rest of the pack is that it's divided in half. 3 discs contain a choicely selected collection of Petty's greatest hits from his 15-year career at MCA. Two discs consist entirely of unreleased material, over 20 never-before-heard tunes! The sixth disc has all the collector-oriented material, full of B-sides and non-album tracks. Some of the unreleased material is from the band Mudcrutch, which is what Petty and longtime sidekick Mike Campbell called their first band. In '74-'75, Petty was signed to Shelter records and living at Leon Russell's house. Two songs come from that period, "Louisiana Rain" and "Since You Said You Love Me", featuring Al Kooper on piano and Jim Gordon on drums. There's the original version of "The Apartment Song", recorded with Stevie Nicks, and a smoking take on "Stop Draggin' My Heart Around". There's some cool Elvis covers, a tune with Lenny Kravitz, songs by Van Morrison and Nick Lowe, plus a lavish booklet. A wonderful package from an endearing performer.