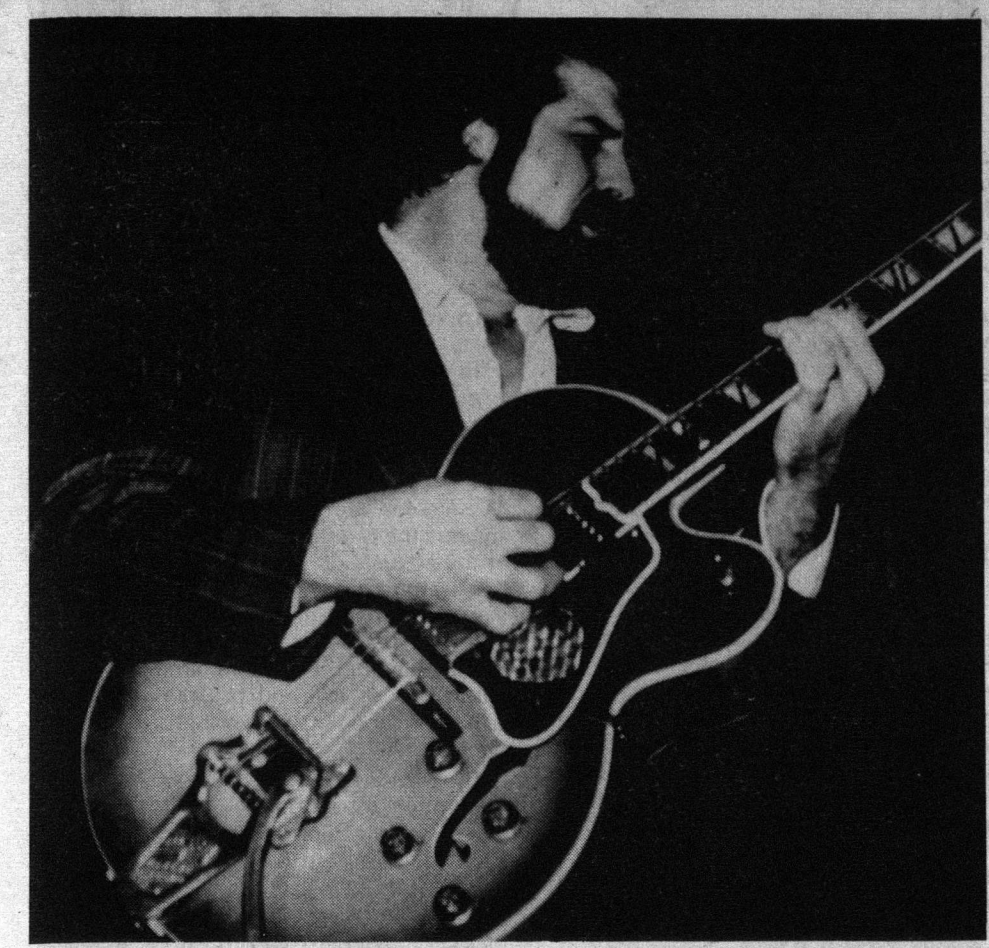


Johnny V deliverin' his "get-off-your-ass-and-dance" blues from point blank range.

Johnny V plays "pit bull blues"

Johnny V and The HouseRockers
Andante Restaurant
Monday, November 6

review by Arthur Kingston

Johnny V and The HouseRockers bring down the house so hard that they need a demolitions permit in order to play. These are not post-pubescent wanna-bees with dime-store instruments and three-chord progressions. Rather, they are foot-stomping, thigh-slapping, get-up-off-your-ass-and-dance blues players. They are a veritable pit bull of a blues band, grabbing onto your attention and not letting go until they damn well want to — and you enjoy every minute of it.

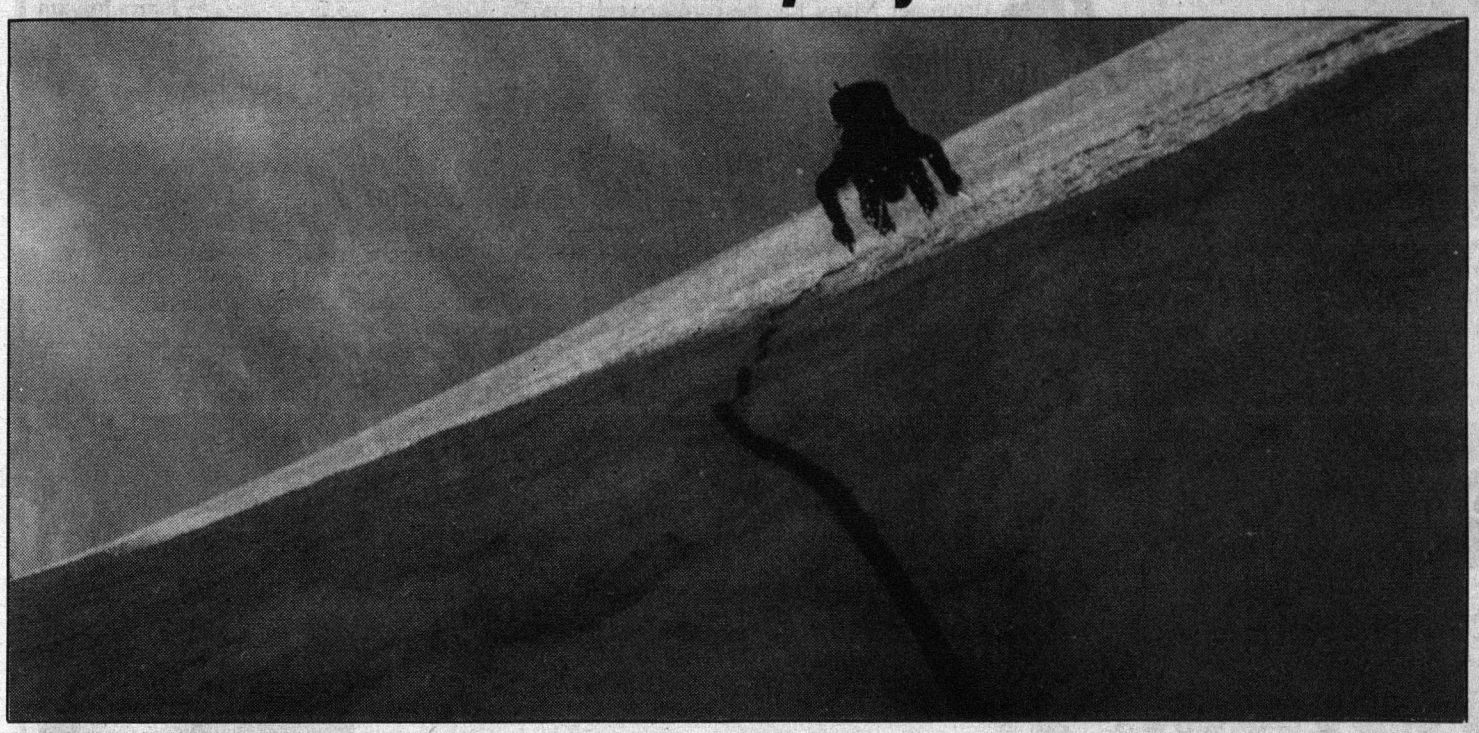
Singer/guitarist Johnny "V" Mills shows his phenomenal talent, cranking out licks and lyrics so hot that they're thermonuclear. He uses the guitar like a weapon of acoustic warfare on full auto, with soul-searching vocals delivered at point blank range. Taking complete command of the stage, your attention is riveted by the full spectrum of blues played, ranging from slow-and-low blues to high energy rock 'n' blues. You might as well forget about your cold beer and hot date, 'cause they pale by comparison.

Johnny is backed up by saxophone player Dan McDonald (the only musician other than Johnny still with the group from the album *Roosters and Hens*), drummer Scot Anderson, and bass player Tom Knowles. McDonald plays the sax like a pro, the notes being crisp and pure, with Anderson pounding out trip hammer drums and Knowles grinding out smooth bass lines that blend in harmoniously. Experienced blues players, their performance is established proof of this.

Johnny V and The HouseRockers will be playing at the Power Plant this Thursday through Saturday, providing top quality entertainment and great blues. There are a few rough spots in the performance, but they do not detract from it. The show is mindblowing. Once they start, there is no holding them back. A one-hundred-and-ten-percent effort.

> —He uses his guitar like a weapon of acoustic warfare—

Best of mountain fest plays the Princess



Best of the 1989 Banff Festival of Mountain Films
Princess Theatre
November 12, 13, 14

review by Chris Helmers

The inspirational, entertaining, thought-provoking and beautiful Banff Festival of Mountain Films winners are again showing at the Princess (November 12-14). The Festival ran November 3 - 5 (just last weekend) and some selected winners have already begun their 12-city Canadian tour.

A bit of background on the Festival comes from the Princess guide: "The Banff Festival of Mountain Films was founded in 1976 as a local event to celebrate the mountain spirit ... [It] attracts the best mountain films and filmmakers from North America, Europe, Asia and the South Pacific ... [and] more than 5000 people annually. The Festival is devoted to films about mountains: sports, mountaineering, culture, the environment, adventure and ethical issues. The Festival is juried, with cash prizes awarded in categories such as Best Film on Mountaineering, Best Film on Mountain Sports, Best Film on Environmental Issues, People's Choice and others, plus the Grand Prize for the Festival."

This year's "Best of" is a two-and-a-half-hour, four-film collection containing *Solitary Journey* (Canada/1989), winner of three awards — Grand Prize, People's Choice and Mountaineering; *Yosemite: The Fate of Heaven* (USA/1988), winner of the Environment category; and *Canon Surf 2* (France/1988) and *Seo* (France/1987), winners of Special Jury awards.

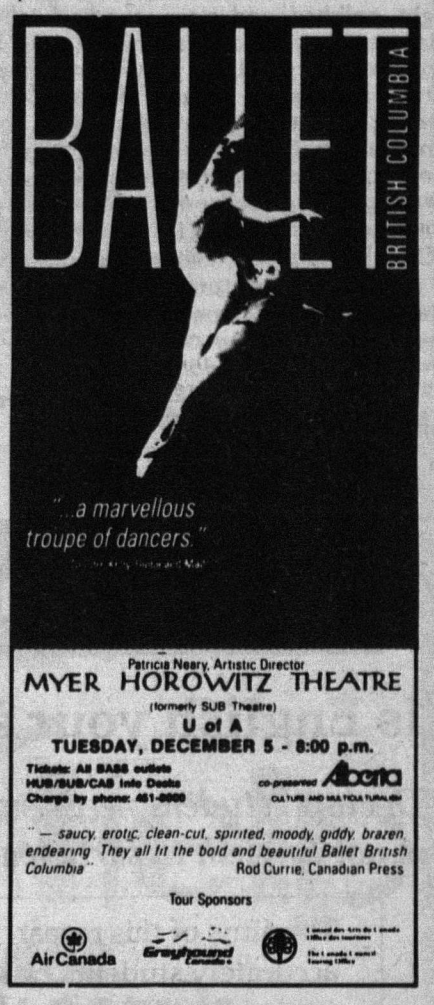
Seo, a short film which features Catherine Destivelle rock climbing in Bandiagara, Mali, is the first film in the line up. The climbing sequences are strangely inspirational as we watch Destivelle climbing around on sun drenched cliffs and under precipice overhangs like a fly on a ceiling. It seems so impossible yet looks so deliciously easy. A side feature of this film is the complimentary tribal/jazz music accompanying Destivelle on some of her climbs.

Next comes the Grand Prize winning Canadian film, *Solitary Journey*. The film is an historical, spiritual, environmental, and cultural film about the recollections of two members of the 1953 British climb of Mount Everest, sherpa Dawa Tenzing and Lord John Hunt. While describing their individual memories and perceptions of the expedition, they also discuss cultural and environmental effects that result from expeditions to Everest. I find this film to be boring at points and not as interestingly or artistically produced as *Yosemite*. Perhaps I am biased by the continual scenes of freezing, blizzardous winter and the desolate lives of the local sherpa villagers.

Third in the line up is the highly entertaining *Canon Surf 2*. This film depicts the fun and exhilaration of snowboarding from some extremely steep mountain peaks. Juxtaposed with colourfully clad hot dogs and scenes of colourfully clad/lit dancers and musicians whom are providing the eclectic background music for the show.

Finally, we see the one hour *Yosemite: The Fate of Heaven*. This is by far my favourite. The film is a Qoyanisqaatsi-esque look at Yosemite park. Entries from the diary of Lafayette Bunnell, one of a troop of soldiers that were scouring Yosemite for Indians in 1851, are read throughout the film as we see scenes of the park's natural wonders mixed with scenes of the activities within the more than 2300 campsites in the park. There are some astonishing time-lapse images of natural sights as they progress through the seasons. The cinematography is beautiful, crisp and revealing. It should be noted that the film is produced by Robert Redford through his non-profit film institute, the Sundance Institute. Redford also narrates the film.

"The Best of... is worth seeing, but go expecting to be moved by some of "the best" exposes of the results of man's existence on this planet.



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