

Entertainment Outlook

Video anthology chronicles the Boss

The long-awaited Bruce Springsteen home videocassette is finally here ... or at least it will be shortly. "Bruce Springsteen Video Anthology 1978-88" actually contains every videoclip the Boss has ever made, along with a number of live takes never released for broadcast.

Running 100 minutes long and list-priced at \$24.98, the cassette is expected to sell a minimum of 200,000 copies, which would make it the second-best-selling music home video ever. (Michael Jackson's "Thriller" sold 500,000.)

Rarities on the compilation cassette include an acoustic rendition of "Born to Run" and performances of two songs never seen in America: "Spare Parts" and "Tougher Than the

VIDEO BEAT



ETHLIE ANN VARE

Rest."

• Ziggy Marley and the Melody Makers proved that reggae is a viable commercial art form after all (even if it did take a second generation of Marleys to break it). Now they're releasing "Conscious Party Live at the Palladium" on Virgin Music Video,

priced at \$19.98.

• Tiffany, whose home video is complete and in the can, will keep her fans waiting for the cassette until various contract negotiations are worked out.

• Rockers Against Drunk Driving, an outreach program designed to inform young adults about the consequences of driving under the influence, has changed its name. Recording Artists Against Drunk Driving (keeping the old initials RADD) reflects widening support within the music industry.

Performers who have recorded public service spots for RADD in the past year include members of Heart,



The Rolling Stones

Whitesnake, the Rolling Stones, the Doors, the Doobie Brothers, Aerosmith, Yes, Los Lobos, Steppenwolf, REO Speedwagon, Lone Justice and the Moody Blues.

The big coup for RADD in '89 is corporate sponsorship — from Pringles potato chips in the United States which will donate 50 cents for each can purchased in selected cities, and Maxwell House coffee in Britain,

which is buying radio time for RADD spots. Now RADD is negotiating with a Soviet radio syndicate to air its awareness message in the Soviet Union.

• And MTV has sent representatives to the other side of the Iron Curtain to see about bringing music television to our Soviet counterparts. Since glasnost, the acceptance of rock music — once available only on the black market — has increased considerably.

• Congratulations to Steve Winwood ... not only for his second chart-topping comeback album, but also for the birth of his daughter Elizabeth Dawn. Eliza, as she will be called, entered the world on Dec. 1 in Nashville, weighing in at 8 pounds, 7 ounces.

• George Michael topped Billboard's year-end charts for both singles and albums with his LP "Faith" and the track of the same title. This is the first time since 1970 that the same artist has won both categories: That year, Simon & Garfunkel did it with the song and album "Bridge Over Troubled Water."

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New bio ably reveals Richard Burton

By Peter Robertson

Richard Burton: A Life. By Melvyn Bragg. Little, Brown. 633 pages. \$22.95.

The previews came early from excerpts in Life. Now for the uncut production of "Richard Burton: A Life" by Melvyn Bragg. And what a blessed, tormented, inspirational, heart-wrenching life it was.

The actor, born Richard Jenkins, was raised in Wales, a region of beauty and economic blight. It was dependent on one struggling industry, coal mining.

The youth loved to drink and rough-house, to sing and to act, to punish himself brutally. While playing rugby against players twice his size, he sustained injuries that would plague him for the rest of his life.

Burton came from a large family, which in his later years he was to support. As a youth, however, he fell under the tutelage of Phillip Burton, a teacher/mentor who would adopt him, and provide him with a new surname.

The actor's early life has an incendiary undertone, echoing the "kitchen sink dramas," the working-class agit-prop prose that would produce works such as "Saturday Night and Sunday Morning" — and "Look Back in Anger," a celluloid triumph for the young Burton.

He married, caroused endlessly, and threatened the English theater deities of Olivier, Richardson and Gielgud. All this happened pre-"Cleopatra," pre-Elizabeth Taylor, pre-life lived out in tabloids: his public battles with booze, four wives, five marriages and breathtaking performances in "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" and "1984."

Biographer Bragg is a novelist, one of the most visible and respected film



Richard Burton

worthy and ill-advised Hollywood projects. The million-dollar-plus paychecks may seem slight in the face of the megabuck deals needed to capture Sylvester Stallone today. But Bragg translates these figures by applying an '80s inflation calculation. Likewise, the estimated \$40 million plus spent on "Cleopatra" becomes a truly daunting figure when the author again multiplies.

The author works diligently, bringing these contrasts to the fore and making some sense of them. If his prose shifts uneasily on occasion, from lofty pronouncements on the theater and literature to the shenanigans of Liz & Dick, it is because Richard Burton himself did.

Bragg's book is a towering achievement, in no way lessened by his good fortune as a biographer. The author received a remarkable degree of cooperation from those close to Burton, especially from Sally Burton, his widow, and Kate Burton, his actress-daughter. The Sally period seems to reflect Burton's most relaxed years. They were sadly cut short by his death in 1984. He was 58 years old.

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critic/historians in Britain, and currently Head of Arts at London Weekend Television, an independent TV company. His book is filled with recollections by friends and wives, exhaustive research and the first extensive airing of the late actor's private diaries. The latter is what transforms Bragg's biography from excellent to definitive.

The late actor's own prose is both erudite and lacerating. He reveals a veritable ocean of contrasts and his personality emerges with a startling power: a well-read man, often obsessed with drink and love, often tortured by both. Bragg quotes with relish long-tormented soliloquies on drinking and drunkenness, on battles with his most famous lover/muse, mean remarks and gossip, and serious praise for fellow thespians.

Wherever he turns — helped by Burton's journals — Bragg unearths fascinating contradictions. During his career, Burton would make sporadic returns to the stage, working for next to nothing. At the height of the "Liz & Dick" years the couple demanded and received colossal salaries for both

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