



# Petty's odyssey

Tom Petty and The Heartbreakers, then, right, and Petty now.

Tom Petty Live by Jacob Butler and Zox

## Film shines light on artist, his Gainesville roots

By **BILL DEAN**

Sun entertainment editor

Tom Petty may forever be remembered as the ultimate Gainesville pop-rocker done good, a musician of integrity who never backed down, and a singer/songwriter who could sell 50 million albums and collaborate with artists as varied as Bob Dylan, George Harrison and Roy Orbison (The Traveling Wilburys), Stevie Nicks, Johnny Cash and Roger McGuinn.

But his complete story has never before been told in a single, for-the-record volume that combines music with film footage to put his entire career and impact on rock 'n' roll and popular music into context — until now.

Today, the Peter Bogdanovich-directed documentary on Petty's life, "Runnin' Down a Dream," receives its first public screening at the New York Film Festival. On Monday, the four-hour-long film will be screened in 27 cities for one night only — except in Gainesville, where it will be shown for two sold-out nights starting Monday.

Trimmed from an original five hours by director Bogdanovich, the film traces Petty's journey from his early years with the Gainesville band Mudcrutch into becoming a marquee-name rock star who could sell out tours around the world and



The Associated Press

Peter Bogdanovich, right, director of "Runnin' Down a Dream," and Tom Petty appear at the film's world premiere in Burbank, Calif., on Oct. 2.

even start a band with a former Beatle.

"It's a long story but certainly not a dull one — so much happens," Petty said in comments to Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Vice President Warren Zanes, released only on Petty's Web site ([tompetty.com](http://tompetty.com)).

On Tuesday, the entire documentary will be

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### Concert memories

■ A full-length version of The Heartbreakers' '06 Gainesville concert is part of the film's four-disc boxed set. We relive those memories, **IN DAYBREAK**



### Sold out

■ Showings of "Runnin' Down a Dream," on Monday and Tuesday are sold out, but more may be in the works.



### Online

■ Watch a 4-minute trailer from the film and check out our archive of Petty stories

and video at [gainesville.com/tompetty](http://gainesville.com/tompetty)

# Book recounts Petty's personal, professional life

■ The book describes the rock legend's origins in Gainesville and his impact on the industry.

By ALICE WALLACE  
Sun staff writer

If the four-hour documentary "Runnin' Down a Dream" doesn't completely satisfy your needs for all things Tom Petty, a coffee-table-style book that's set to be released soon will offer even more insights into the iconic rock band's roots.

The book — also titled "Runnin' Down a Dream" — includes many of the interviews featured in the Peter Bogdanovich documentary

that is scheduled to be screened in Gainesville on Monday and Tuesday, but also goes further into anecdotes and stories not mentioned in the movie.

The book begins with Petty's own recollections of life growing up in Gainesville, and Petty says in the opening paragraphs that many people picture Miami when he tells them he's from Florida, but that he always considered Gainesville to be closer, both geographically and in spirit, to Georgia.

"Miami was five or six hours away, but it may as well have been many oceans away, really," he says. "I come from the South, not its fringes."

The book also features Petty's own description of his fateful sighting of Elvis at age 11, and

chronicles Petty's early days with bands like the Sundowners, the Epics and Mudcrutch.

Many photos — both professional and candid — adorn nearly every page.

And some pages even display copies of original lyric sheets, newspaper clippings, concert fliers and set lists.

Magazine covers featuring Petty also are scattered throughout the book, including a famous 1981 Rolling Stone cover that features Petty tearing a dollar bill with a smirk on his face — the headline "Tom Petty: One man's war against high records prices," indicating the time Petty refused to let his record label change the standard price of record from \$8.98 to \$9.98 for his album "Hard Promises."

"It went on for months. But they finally backed down," Petty says of the stand he took in the 1980s. "It was a long time before they crept the price up, and I'm kind of proud of that because I had something to do with it."

The book ends with a section titled "Thirty Years: Friends Weigh In" in which people ranging from Stevie Nicks to Johnny Depp weigh in on the impact Petty and the Heartbreakers have had on the music industry.

Elliot Roberts, a former co-manager of the band, described it this way:

"They call it a light in your eye. And whether you're twenty or forty or sixty, if you ever had it, you still have that little light. Tom's got that light."

## PETTY: Documentary's director came to city to do interviews

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released in a box set that also includes a DVD of Petty's 2006 homecoming concert in Gainesville (see Daybreak, Page 1D), and will be followed soon by the release of a companion, 240-page, coffee-table book, also named "Runnin' Down a Dream."

Bogdanovich, the acclaimed feature-film writer and director known for such films as "The Last Picture Show," "Paper Moon" and "Mask," calls the Gainesville native's full story nearly unique among American popular music.

"He's like nobody else," Bogdanovich told The Sun in a phone interview. "The main thing that I've noticed about his work is that it doesn't date. You hear the early albums and the later albums and they all sound like Tom Petty."

"He didn't follow any trends. He was always his own guy."

Roger McGuinn, who fronted the folk-rock group The Byrds in the 1960s and appears in the film, compares Petty's accomplishment of combining seminal influences into his own sound in the 1970s to that of the Beatles in the '60s.

"I see him as really kind of pulling together all the best influences of the '60s; the Stones, Dylan and some of the Byrds, Bo Diddley," McGuinn told The Sun.

"It's kind of like what the Beatles did when they put Chuck Berry, calypso and bossa nova and all these different things into a stew pot, cooked them up and came up with their own recipe. And Tom has done

that," McGuinn said. "He's made his own thing out of the best parts out of the '60s music and turned it into something that really was a shining light in the '70s music."

From Petty's first album, 1976's "Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers," through his most recent 2006's "Highway Companion," his sound has segued from scrappy garage rock to mellower, acoustic-pop and back again, with enough elasticity to be considered a "new wave" artist in the '70s as well as a troubadour of Southern-bred songs like "American Girl," "The Waiting" and "Listen to Her Heart" at virtually the same time.

In many ways, Petty's life story became that of the great American rock 'n' roll star: combining elements of fairy tale success and record company defiance, along with drugs and personal loss and, finally, redemption.

And there's the prolific quality of releasing 15 albums with a combined sales of 50 million-plus — and releasing an astounding 42 singles that have tracked on Billboard's various singles charts over a 25-year period. (In comparison, Bruce Springsteen has released 47 songs on Billboard's charts, while Fleetwood Mac has tracked 35 Billboard singles).

But while much of Petty's life is well-known, it's the background and subplots of his story that reverberate in "Runnin' Down a Dream" — and in ways that may surprise even longtime fans.

■ There's the Heartbreakers' interaction with Stevie Nicks,



The documentary on Gainesville native Tom Petty's life, "Runnin' Down a Dream," receives its first public screening at the New York Film Festival today.

in which the Fleetwood Mac singer says on camera that she almost preferred the music of Petty's group to that of her own band — and would have even joined the Heartbreakers if she could have.

■ There's the story of a 20-something Petty embroiled in a lawsuit with his record company and staring down company attorneys while picking his fingers with a penknife. As Petty recounts in the film: "The big (lawyer) comes in and says 'Let me tell you something kid, you're gonna forget about this, go make your records and shut up.' And I said, 'I'll sell ----- peanuts before I'll give in to you. You can break me, but you can't make records.'"

■ There's the story of Petty intervening on McGuinn's behalf when officials with the latter's record company attempt to have McGuinn record a song that Petty finds inferior. In the rare archival footage, Petty reads the song's lyrics ("Gonna love you, gonna need you, this time I've got both feet on the ground") and says: "I could smoke a joint and come up with three better lines than that."

■ And there's the story of young Tom's verbal and physical abuse at the hands of his father in Gainesville, as seen through the eyes of Tom and his younger brother, Bruce. "It was a hard time," Bruce Petty told The Sun.

"Any time there was an

episode, an outburst or confrontation between my brother and my father, my mother was always the one coming around afterwards telling everybody it was OK and trying to get everybody back together. She was the peacemaker in the family."

In making the film, Bogdanovich spent more than two years compiling and sifting through 400 hours of archival footage and he shot 100 hours of new footage (including scenes from the 2006 Gainesville concert) that appear in the documentary.

Bogdanovich also conducted all new interviews for the film himself and came to Gainesville to interview Bruce Petty (who lives in Tallahassee today) and Mudcrutch drummer Randall Marsh, who lives in Bushnell.

During his audition to join Mudcrutch in Gainesville, Marsh introduced Petty to future Heartbreakers guitarist Mike Campbell.

And he journeyed from Gainesville to Los Angeles with the group, leaving Florida on April Fool's Day 1974 — only to see two vehicles in the group's caravan break down after leaving town.

In the early '70s, Marsh and others including photographer Red Slater also lived on the famous "Mudcrutch farm" outside Gainesville, where the band threw a couple of rock festivals that drew hundreds of listeners from around Florida and even out of state.

"Red was our live-in photographer," Marsh told The Sun. "And he took some film of the farm festival at the time." Along with many photos of Petty, and

the other musicians, Slater's footage is seen in Bogdanovich's documentary. "It was unbelievable; all those people showing up," Slater told The Sun. "We just had no idea that was gonna happen."

After Bogdanovich interviewed Bruce Petty and Marsh (in a room at the Paramount Plaza Hotel on SW 13th Street), the three got in a car and drove around Gainesville to show the director some of the locations that figured in the early days of Petty and his band, including the Lipham Music store, though it's in a different location today than back then.

Marsh, who saw "Runnin' Down a Dream" at Tom Petty's home in Los Angeles during a recent visit, gave his Mudcrutch band a solid thumbs-up after seeing the film.

"I told him I thought it was not only a wonderful story about the Heartbreakers, but a generic, really well-done movie about an American rock band," Marsh said. "It can stand on both levels."

Bogdanovich attributes much of that to the presence, character and integrity of Tom Petty himself. "I thought Tom would be good on camera and he is," Bogdanovich said. "He's very charming, very much himself and very honest."

"He's just really a natural artist. He was born with it and figured out what to do with it at an early age," he said.

"I mean, there's not another Tom Petty, you know?"

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# Daybreak

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The Gainesville Sun TODAY: Travel, Arts and Lifestyle trends



Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers perform at the O'Connell Center in September 2006. For those not lucky enough to snag one of the highly coveted spots at the concert, fans can now catch glimpses of the concert in director Peter Bogdanovich's documentary on Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, titled "Runnin' Down a Dream."

## HEARTBREAKIN' MEMORIES

Footage from last year's Gainesville concert included in director Peter Bogdanovich's documentary on Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers

By ALICE WALLACE  
Sun staff writer

**W**hen Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers played their long-awaited 30th anniversary concert in Gainesville last September, it was like a warm blanket spread across the city.

Tom Petty had finally come home.

Tickets to the concert were hotter than even a Tim Tebow-led Gators matchup — every ticket was gone within 30 minutes of going on sale two months before the Sept. 21 concert date.

So for those not lucky enough to snag one of the highly coveted spots at the concert, fans can now catch glimpses of the concert in director Peter Bogdanovich's documentary on Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, titled "Runnin' Down a Dream."

The film will have its Gainesville premiere Monday and Tuesday, though the showings are, like the concert, sold out.

But a four-disc boxed set of the movie also will be released Tuesday and will include a full-length version of the concert from start to finish.

When the day dawned last September on Petty's first concert in Gainesville in 13 years, the magnitude of Petty's return was not lost on the city that claims the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Famer as one of its own.

Mayor Pegeen Hanrahan, with a star-struck look in her eye, handed the band members keys to the city just hours before the band took the stage at the Stephen C. O'Connell Center.

She also presented them with a plaque proclaiming Sept. 21 as "Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers Day."

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Tom Petty and Stevie Nicks perform together on stage with the Heartbreakers at the O'Connell Center in September 2006. Nicks joined the band for several songs, including she and Petty's hit duet "Stop Dragging My Heart Around."



### 'Runnin' Down a Dream'

■ **THE DOCUMENTARY:** "Runnin' Down a Dream," a documentary on Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers directed by Peter Bogdanovich, will have its Gainesville premiere Monday and Tuesday, though the showings are sold out.

■ **THE DVD:** A four-disc boxed set of the film will also be released Tuesday and will include a full-length version of the '06 Gainesville concert.

■ **THE BOOK:** "Runnin' Down a Dream" (Chronicle Books, 224 pages, \$39.95, scheduled for release Oct. 25), includes hundreds of photos and materials from the band's personal archives.

Big screen embraces hot muse: rock stars

The New York Times

In the second half of "Runnin' Down a Dream," a documentary about Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers by the director Peter Bogdanovich, Eddie Vedder of Pearl Jam sits in on a duet of "The Waiting." Standing before a tumultuous crowd roaring its approval, Petty turns to Vedder and suggests that he enjoy the moment. "Look at that, Eddie — rock and roll heaven."

Moviegoers might be saying the same thing for months to come. There seems to be enough projects in theaters and in development built on the intersection between celluloid and what used to be called vinyl to fill a jukebox.

"Runnin' Down a Dream" is one of three musically themed movies scheduled for the closing weekend of the New York Film Festival, along with "The Other Side of the Mirror," a Bob Dylan documentary, and "Fados," a look at the Portuguese musical tradition.

The music of the Beatles is currently reimagined in Julie Taymor's "Across the Universe." On Wednesday, "Control," a dramatic feature about the Manchester sad-core band Joy Division, will have its theatrical release, to be followed next month by Todd Haynes' "I'm Not There," featuring six performers all taking turns as avatars of Bob Dylan.

Meanwhile, Martin Scorsese, whose Rolling Stones documentary will come out next year, just signed on for a documentary about George Harrison.

And after a summer that saw musicals and biopics like "Hairspray," "El Cantante" and

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