



Speaking of swinging, and back to the terrific *Face The Music* part of the SIFF program this year, one of my very favorite films in the series is [\*The Wrecking Crew\*](#). Meet some behind-the-scene geniuses who could instantly lay down great tracks for everyone from Frank Sinatra to The Byrds.

Really nicely directed by Denny Tedesco, loving son of late WC guitarist Tommy Tedesco, *The Wrecking Crew* is in fact already one of my very favorite rock documentaries. You may have never heard of Carol Kaye, Hal Blaine, Joe Osborn, or Earl Palmer, but trust me, you love their music as much as the big names in The Band's cherished kiss-off. They were the Los Angeles-based session players for everything from Sonny & Cher's "The Beat Goes On" to pretty much anything The Association ever recorded to being the actual players on the Beach Boy's adored *Pet Sounds*. And on and on and on. Kaye herself, an insanely brilliant bass player and pretty much the only gal in a pack of guys who were used to getting up at 7 AM and recording for Decca, Capitol, and doing jingles before heading to record for Brian Wilson at midnight, is a whole story in herself (she actually lives in the Seattle area, which isn't mentioned in the movie). Her incredibly nimble playing is displayed, as is the focused wisdom of jazz great Earl Palmer, who adeptly bashed his way through thousands of garage rock songs you love without ever getting credit — well, none of them got any credit in public (sleeve notes, etc.). That's not how things were done. They were pros and knew that; and besides, guys like David Crosby were a little pissed that they weren't allowed to play on their own records. That would soon change, however.

There are tragedies; remarkably-intuitive drummer-arranger Blaine's costly divorces that led him from mansions and yachts to working as a security guard in Arizona within just a couple years with the decline of a need for session players, for one. But there are the triumphs too, most of which have to do with people like Cher and Dick Clark giving this group — which no one knows the exact number of, from the core half dozen interviewed here to about thirty making the studio rounds back in the day — just about all the props for Phil Spector's and many others' manic pop thrilling millions. I know there's sexier things to gravitate to during the Festival, but you will be the sharpest kid on your block if you don't miss *The Wrecking Crew* when it plays later this month, and you will know some very startling secrets about the music so many love.