

**Iggy Pop**



*Lust for Life*  
(MVD VISUAL)

It's somewhat shocking to recall that, in the midst of the conservative ethos of trickle-down economics and cowboy politics, Iggy Pop had a bona fide hit song. It was 1986 and Iggy charted with a cover of the old barnburner "Real Wild Child," the lead-off track from an album that, like the song, is utterly forgettable today, the suitably titled, *Blah Blah Blah*. Was this the incendiary maniac who once rolled in broken glass? He sounded like someone our grandparents might listen to. Yikes! What happened?

Around this time, a German television company filmed and assembled *Iggy Pop: Lust for Life*, a short look at Iggy's career up to that moment interspersed with live cuts from the same year. There is beauty here, but it is not in the performances (those are lackluster at best). What is more interest-

ing are interviews with Iggy and Stooges' guitarist Ron Asheton, the latter particularly poignant given his recent death. Both Asheton and Pop are articulate about the Stooges, and Asheton's words about the band's demise (he attributes it to heroin) are fascinating, as is Pop's understanding of Bowie's work ethic as instrumental to that musician's success.

One might wish that the intermittent live footage was not from the 1986 tour to support *Blah Blah Blah*, but then again one can easily skip those moments, or just blame Reagan (as I do with anything bad from that decade). Pop and Asheton are both personable enough to watch for hours and Asheton's explanation of his classic guitar lines (not to mention a solo guitar excursion on camera) are well worth watching. Why Iggy did not continue to make records with Asheton at his side is something we music fans will never understand. CHRISTIAN KIEFER

**SPECIAL FEATURES:** None. 41 Minutes. [musicvideodistributors.com](http://musicvideodistributors.com)

**Brian Wilson**



*That Lucky Old Sun*  
(CAPITOL/EMI)

Brian Wilson's palette is the shoreline and his paints are the rays of the brightest sun—always. Most prominently on this project, Wilson wants to complete what he started with previous concept albums and create a pastoral emotional history of California from tip to top. Collaborator Van Dyke Parks was meant to be more of a help here in the tall-tale-telling department but instead stuck to scribbling down several of *Sun's* narrative interludes. Parks' legendary lyrical largesse might've made *That Lucky Old Sun*—on CD as well as the often turgidly rocking live shows on this DVD—more intimate. Instead, the broadness of sound and word weigh Wilson the singer down. Brian still has it; the shame comes in that his energies are wasted on too little.

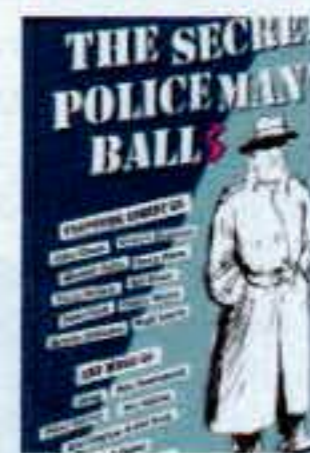
Wilson's band throughout—crack, able, inventive to the touch—seem to tire of pulling the clouds. Their rock-outs hurt the fragile melodies in a live setting. Though lyrics like "How could I have got so low, I'm embarrassed to tell you so/I laid around this old place, I hardly ever washed my face" convey Wilson's famed desperation, the band's monster touch is a crunching bore.

Yet, rather than damn the dying Caesar that is *Lucky Old Sun*, we can find relief in the second half of the DVD and its bit of history gathering. Not just regarding Wilson's influence on pop's rich display of harmonies and bruised romanticism (really, the Fleet Foxes get interviewed?!). But how Wilson himself was inspired by the warmth of so many suns to create his idealized Southern California. It ain't *Chinatown*, but it's nice to know he can look back.

A.D. AMOROSI

**SPECIAL FEATURES:** Track-by-track commentary by Wilson and band member Scott Bennett; making of; additional behind the scenes footage; Yahoo! Nissan Live Sets with studio audience Q&A; MySpace interview with Wilson and Zoey Deschanel; "Black Cab Sessions" performance. 160 Minutes. [emicap.com](http://emicap.com)

**Various Artists**



*The Secret Policeman's Balls*  
(SHOUT FACTORY)

Over the course of 13 years, five live events were presented in London as fundraisers for Amnesty International. The Secret Policeman's Balls, as they came to be variously titled, got their start in 1976. Already a supporter of the organization, John Cleese opened his Rolodex and out came pouring Beyond the Fringe and Monty Python. Repeated and expanded in 1979, '81, '87 and '89, these events led directly to Live Aid (Bob Geldof got the idea after being a performer in the third Ball).

For the most part, performers drew upon their familiar works, which heightened the sense of community for all those in attendance. Each one was filmed and Shout Factory's three disc set is a veritable tribute to the British comedy that sprung forth from the sixties and beyond. While comedy was the defining character of the shows, music came to have an increasing presence as the years rolled along (Townshend, Clapton, Sting, etc.), though it was wisely scaled back for the final event in 1989. Familiar bits serve to remind us how resilient much of this material is, as Dudley Moore and Peter Cook offer up one of their interviews or Cleese and Palin relive their dead parrot routine. Of particular note is the wonderful power of Rowan Atkinson prior to his emergence as a film star, as well as the cerebral and linguistic dazzle of playwright Alan Bennett.

DAVID GREENBERGER

**SPECIAL FEATURES:** Video intros by coproducer Martin Lewis; footage from UK premiere of *The Secret Policeman's Other Ball*; *Remember The Secret Policeman's Ball?* 2004 BBC documentary. 510 Minutes. [shoutfactory.com](http://shoutfactory.com)

