

comprised of classic rock influences that are sure to seduce fans of all ages. They write their own tunes and masterfully covered Willie Dixon's "Spoonful." I stumbled across them in a small bar playing to an even smaller group of admirers but, like the bands at SXSW, there's no doubt their numbers will continue to grow. —Ali Green

**Iggy Pop**

Lust For Life DVD

(ABC Entertainment)

This is cool. Performances and interviews from 1986, when Iggy was beginning to really hit the big time with "Real Wild Child." This DVD has such a weird feel...so loose and so out there, which is of course totally appropriate. You get into it, the interviews with Iggy, the stories, the performance shots and suddenly a narrator starts talking, what's he saying?



It's all in Dutch! So disorienting, because Dutch sounds enough like English you think at first there's something wrong with your hearing.

It's about Iggy, so obviously it's about the Stooges too. You get Iggy, very intense, all cleaned up and happy, telling stories about how it all began, who he was when the Stooges started to hit, what it meant to him and why. There is a wonderful segment from a Canadian TV show in the '70s, and some crazy Stooges stuff. Then you get Stooge guitarist Ron Asheton's take—somehow the film makers tracked him down and none of the others.

It's all so good, hearing this stuff and seeing the actual locales where it took place. There's Ron at his mom's house. There he is at the original Stooges house, I guess you could call it the "Funhouse" and then some of the first venues, it's quite thrilling really. It's also melancholy and uplifting at the same time. He speaks of his disappointment that the Stooges never got back together and yet reiterates that everything between him and Iggy is cool, that it was all love. As we all know, the Stooges did reform last year, had a tremendous run

and then Ron suddenly died. In the eyes of the classical Greeks, this makes for the best end—to go out on a high note! So if you love Iggy Pop (and who doesn't?), let this disc be a bright light in your DVD collection. —Robin the Hammer

**Pete Seeger's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday—The Clearwater Concert**

Madison Square Garden, New York, NY

Pete Seeger marked his ninth decade by giving concertgoers a truly remarkable gift—a wondrous evening of American music and a stunning harmonious tribute to a legend.

Over 40 performers came out on this magical night to celebrate Pete's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday and raise funds for the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater. Pete Seeger's efforts to clean up the Hudson began in 1969, ahead of the environmental curve and just one of many milestones in a life of populist activism, spearheaded by his folk music for more than seven decades.

The stars who contributed included Bruce Springsteen, Joan Baez, Rage Against the Machine's Tom Morello, Ani DiFranco, Bernice Johnson Reagon, Billy Bragg, Norman Lear, Ruby Dee, Arlo Guthrie, Guy Davis, Michael Franti, Tim Robbins, Dave Matthews, John Mellencamp, Ben Harper, Richie Havens, Roger McGuinn, Emmylou Harris, Tom Chapin, Tao Rodriguez-Seeger and Peggy Seeger.

Concerts with a multitude of superstars can't achieve the level of musicianship that music lovers expect, but on this night the sum was greater than any of the parts. Notable moments included the searing rendition of "Fare Thee Well," performed by Rufus Wainwright, Teddy Thompson, the McGarrigle Sisters, Bruce Cockburn and Tony Trischka's banjo duet with Bela Fleck. Richie Havens' "Freedom" had the house on its feet.

While Taj Mahal, Toshi Reagon, Steve Earle, Warren Haynes and Seeger traded verses on "Sailin' Up, Sailin' Down," a new generation sang along. The finale was a rousing version of "This Land Is Your

Land" and featured Dar Williams, Tom Paxton, Patti Scialfa, the Preservation Hall Jazz Band and Oscar the Grouch from *Sesame Street*. The encore, fittingly, was the 51 artists singing "Happy Birthday" to Pete and ending the evening with "Goodnight Irene." —Howard B. Leibowitz

**Ben Ratliff**

The Jazz Ear: Conversations Over Music

(Henry Holt & Company)

Since 1996, *The New York Times* jazz critic Ben Ratliff has established himself as one of the leading jazz commentators. With all the exhaustive John Coltrane studies out there, his *Coltrane: The Story of a Sound* actually brought new thought and analysis to this complex giant of jazz. Though Ratliff's *New York Times Essential Jazz Library* in no way rivals the venerable *Penguin Guide*, it does open up the jazz lexicon to a new and younger audience.

Originally a series of interviews conducted for the *Times*, Ratliff begins each by inquiring of his subject what music they'd like to listen to during their conversations. The music chosen, in essence, becomes the drive and rhythm of the conversation, like two horns cutting it up. For guitarist Pat Metheny, it's Sonny Rollins and Paul Bley. Rollins riffs on clarinetist Rudy Powell and agelessly influential Coleman Hawkins. Trombonist Bob Brookmeyer goes back to Basie. Diane Reeves gives props to Aretha and Sam Cooke. Other interviewees include Wayne Shorter, Ornette Coleman and Bebo Valdes.

The conversations serve both as a rediscovery of sorts for the subjects and a discovery for the reader (and in many cases, Ratliff himself). Though I prefer his writing in *Coltrane* to his interviewing style, there's something for everyone in *The Jazz Ear*.

—Mike Jurkovic



**Charles Mingus**

Epitaph DVD

(Eagle Rock Entertainment)

Taking place in 1989 at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, the premiere performance of Charles Mingus' *Epitaph* was one of the most anticipated jazz concerts of its time. It spectacularly lived up to its promise: rarely had a single evening in a concert hall so overflowed with revelatory sounds. The audio from this DVD was issued on CD in 1990, but the ability to see the singular designs Mingus drew from an orchestral audio palette in magnificent music largely unperformed during his lifetime is a special thing indeed.

Mingus developed his *Epitaph* score over two decades: a partial performance of the work at New York's Town Hall in 1962 was famously bedeviled by lack of preparation time. Not until 1985—six years after his passing—did the full score of this 2 hour-plus work for a 30-piece ensemble come to light.

Gunther Schuller, the work's editor, leads an ensemble of phenomenal musicians, including Mingus associates George Adams, John Handy, Sir Roland Hanna, Jerome Richardson, Jack Walrath and Britt Woodman. All performers play with inspiration, searing

