

Glitter Gutter Trash



Bauhaus

Shadow of Light/Archive (DVD)

Beggars Banquet

Street: 12.06

Bauhaus = Godfathers of goth (Bowie/Eno/Bolan + Hammer horror films)

While there may be debate over who was more important in the post-punk era, **Joy Division** or **Bauhaus**, my vote is, was and always will be for the boys in black. The evidence is here in the long overdue release of Bauhaus' two video collections *Shadow of Light* and *Archive* packaged on one DVD. While most promo videos shot in the early 80s come across as fashionable kitsch, Bauhaus avoided looking ridiculous by making art films with abstract lighting and imagery that not only referenced the band's live performances, but their sense of humor. **Duran Duran** may have been fashionable but Bauhaus are timeless; a detail only more emphasized by both band's recent reunions. Even the live footage from a performance at London's *Old Vic Theater* in 1982 (interspersed on *Shadow* and dominating *Archive*) is edited in such a way that one wonders why so many concerts from the same period couldn't capture the raw energy found here. Then again as last year's *Coachella* festival proved, no one can hold a candle to Bauhaus' live show. Oh, and by the way, their music is still as vibrant and shocking as it was when "Bela Lugosi's Dead" first droned into the adolescent minds of London's youth. The 5.1 surround mix, well that's just candy.

A psychotic candyland full of glam glitz, trashy pop, new wave, post-everything, retrofuturisms and distorted beauty
From the broken mind of Ryan Michael Painter rien@davidbowie.com

New York Dolls

All Dolled Up (DVD)

MVD

Street: 12.06

New York Dolls = glam + punk + New York youth

If ever there were a band that deserved to be shot in full Technicolor it was the New York Dolls; unfortunately *All Dolled Up*, only comes in black and white, but considering how lucky we are to have the footage at all it's hard to complain – and in an unintentional way, the lack of color plays homage to the cover of their first album (if we could have only had a splattering of pink here and there). While technically this is a documentary culled from over 40 hours of footage shot by **Bob Gruen** and **Nadya Beck** during the Dolls' peak of success, it feels more like an unedited memoir mixed with live performances. Brilliant and unrestrained, *All Dolled Up* is the definitive music documentary, not because it offers a step-by-step progression (it doesn't), but because it offers the chaos that was the Dolls without explanation. **Johnny Thunders** and **David Johansen** spout off like class clowns; **Jerry Nolan** and **Sylvain Sylvain** offer up their unsupportive banter (particularly in Sylvain's commentary recorded with Bob Gruen) while **Arthur Kane** mumbles in such a gentle voice that after repeated viewings I'm still not certain if he's speaking in sentences. For those less interested in the characters in the band and more passionate about the music, there are 12 full performances included in the bonus features, along with an extensive collection of photos and two commentary tracks (sadly, on Johansen's the audio is rather muddled).

Edward Ka-Spel

A Long Red Ladder to the Moon &

Laugh China Doll

Beta-lactam Ring

Street: 11.01

Edward Ka-Spel = Current 93 + Coil + Beat Generation Poetry

Laugh China Doll was Ka-Spel's first solo album, originally released in 1984 and *A Long Red Ladder ...* is his most recent. Recorded 20 years apart, the recording quality and equipment are noticeably different, but it is striking how little has changed in Ka-Spel's approach to minimal electronics under abstract, perhaps nonsensical to some, poetry. With that said, I may be oversimplifying things a bit; Ka-Spel's contribution to experimental music has often gone unmentioned. While he might not garner the same praise in the electronic world as Coil or the accolades in dark-folk circles as Current 93 he, along with his cohorts in **The Legendary Pink Dots**, have quietly built a bridge between the two musical styles. While this combination doesn't exactly translate into the *Billboard* charts, it does strike a chord with the many likeminded experimentalists who make up Ka-Spel's devoted

following. Neither *A Long Red Ladder* nor *Laugh China Doll* will sway those who consider Ka-Spel's work to be the inane babbling of an old hippie (drugs, peace, love) but it will blissfully add to the collection of those who know better. It's a shame really, because as inaccessible as some seem to find it, much like **Kerouac** and **Ginsberg** were disregarded as vulgar, Ka-Spel brings a sense of soft humanity to the abstraction.

The Strokes

First Impressions of Earth

RCA

Street: 01.03

The Strokes = gritty Bop boy-band image – Good Charlotte + indie cred

While it might be nearly as fashionable to write off The Strokes as it is to continue to crown them as saviors of rock n' roll, I'm more inclined to take them as something smaller than a phenomenon. Their first two albums were nice; a handful of really solid tunes mixed among nothing offensive, but rarely did I sense the energy or the excitement that so many others swore was surging beneath the sloppy strums and staccato picking. *First Impressions of Earth* changes that. The opening jangle of "You Only Live Once" is infectious and even though at times *First Impression* meanders, you can't help but feel like the band has finally found themselves. Sure, "Ask Me Anything," an experimental synth-driven number, is as bad as anything the band has written (particularly lyrically with lines like "Don't be a coconut/God is trying to talk to you."). If anything, the album could benefit by cutting the loose fat; which is a debate for another time and another writer. *First Impression* is easily their most ambitious and rewarding album yet.

Vashti Bunyan

Lookaftering

DiCristina Stair

Street: 10.25

Vashti Bunyan = Enya + renaissance choral + folk

Vashti Bunyan recorded one unheralded album some 35 years ago and quickly exited stage right, abandoning music altogether and hadn't been heard from since. Not until now, anyway. Something of a cult icon with mythic qualities fueled by her absence, and associations with the **Rolling Stones**, **Fairport Convention**, **The Incredible String Band** and legendary producer **Joe Boyd** (**Nick Drake** among others), *Just Another Diamond Day* became a highly sought album. After years of legal entanglements, *Just Another Diamond Day* was re-released to ecstatic reviews. In the wake of rediscovery, Bunyan returns with an album that is every bit as beautiful as it is delicate. Reminiscent of the atmospheric recordings by **Sinead O'Connor** ("Special Child" or "John, I Love You," for example) and the storytelling side of **Kate Bush** or **Joni Mitchell**, *Lookaftering* is stark and otherworldly without submitting to the pompous artistry that often comes with folk music. This is simple, honest and one of the best albums to surface in 2005. **SLUG**