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FEATURES: SIGHTS & SOUNDS

Whew...

That, in a word, sums up the amazing onslaught of superb new video releases over the past couple of months as the music biz sharpens its sights on new DVD releases and probes more obscure artists for both vintage footage and original offerings. Consequently, even the most dedicated collector is served with a plethora of new releases that are beginning to rival their CD counterparts in terms of quantity and variety.

Take the Pixies, for example. The band's recent reuniting has spurred no less than three releases in the past couple of months, including *Live At the Paradise* (Eagle Vision), a show performed at an intimate venue shortly after their regrouping in 2004. Like the two releases that came before – the *Acoustic: Live In Newport* and the vintage *LoudQUIETloud* -- it features a generous assortment of classic Pixies titles from all phases of the band's storied career. Not surprisingly, the current Pixies are less oppressive and intimidating than they seemed in their youth, the effects of aging and personal crisis having mellowed them considerably. Consequently, *Live At The Paradise* spans the generational gap on classic cuts like "Monkey Goes To Heaven," "Wave Of Mutilation," "Bone Machine" and "Debaser." It also offers bonus vintage material from a Boston show recorded in 1986. The contrast is striking; while the reconstituted outfit is clearly still formidable, the new music has taken on a new accessibility that's more evident now than ever before.