



A grapple in the Apple: De Niro and Minnelli emote.

Jethro Tull

★★★★★
Nothing Is Easy: Live At The Isle Of Wight 1970 EAGLE VISION

Tull on an equal footing with Hendrix and The Who: the case for the defence.

In between their blues origins and the knowingly preposterous prog of their mid-'70s heyday, Jethro Tull, their musical palette boundary-stretching and unique, were both regular hit-paraders and a live experience that even Hendrix feared following. Bolstered by sound-check footage and *A Song For Jeffrey* taken from the Stones' *Rock'n'Roll Circus*, and linked by an engaging Ian Anderson interview on the festival, the era and that one-legged-fluting motif, this concert film – 40 minutes, in fabulous sound and multi-camera vision, extant from a 60-minute set – is as important as Zeppelin's *Albert Hall* concert. It challenges the too-easy 'prog rock pantomime' sneer of standard pop revisionism with the visual evidence of explosive energy and total stage command by one of rock's most compelling frontmen.

Colin Harper

New York, New York

★★★★★ M.M.
Two-disc special edition of Scorsese's much maligned 1977 musical.

Many thought *New York, New York* was Martin Scorsese's mid-career aberration. After the



sassily improvised street grit of *Mean Streets* and the urban-noir of *Taxi Driver*, the elaborate musical about two creative egos – a jazz saxophonist (Robert De Niro) and a singer (Liza Minnelli) – not working out together was an oddball failure. The gaudy artifice of '40s and '50s musicals appeared uneasy with Scorsese's modern, authentically freewheeling dialogue style and complex approach to grown-up issues. These days, of course, it looks extraordinary, any stylistic discomfort just part of the fun. De Niro's method miming (to swing-to-bop veteran Georgie Auld's playing) on sax was justly admired, Minnelli's streetwise canary has its own peculiar genius and the scope and ambition of the whole is quite breathtaking in parts. The package features the movie in the original short version and the director's cut (with the *tour-de-force* production number *Happy Endings* reinstated), interviews with Scorsese and Minnelli, a docu-

mentary, director's commentary, storyboards, deleted scenes and an alternate ending.

Chris Ingham

Ray

★★★★★ UNIVERSAL
Taylor Hackford's take on the life of the man known as The Genius.

Director Hackford has always been a good friend to rock, providing commercial yet engrossing fare with *The Idolmaker* and a revealing Chuck Berry documentary in *Hail! Hail! Rock'n'Roll*. *Ray* continues the route of friendly persuasion in its presentation of the Ray Charles story. Though Charles is shown to be a junkie, a serial sex-machine whose prevalence for wrist fondling led to the fathering of 12 children (read the final credits) and a hard-headed business man prone to ignoring friendships when cheque-books were opened, he still emerges as a Hollywood hero, fit for a film with a



BY JON HARRINGTON, CHRIS INGHAM, CHRIS NELSON, SYLVIE SIMMONS AND JAAN UHLSZKI.

Joe Strummer

★★★
Viva Joe Strummer

WHE EUROPE
 This could have been a heartfelt tribute to the Clash and Mescaleros' late frontman with its poignant contributions from Mick Jones, Topper Headon and Johnny "I'd have killed a man for him" Green. Instead poor captioning, misquoted lyrics, factual and pictorial errors, plus huge oversights in the narrative (no mention of *Sandinista!* and *Combat Rock*) lets the project down. Joe deserves better. JH

Johnny Cash

★★★★
Ridin' The Rails: The Great American Train Story RHINO



The Man In Black (and grey and white and frills; there's more costume changes here than on the Cher show) talks and sings (mostly solo acoustic, sometimes a cappella) about two favourite topics, American history and trains. This previously unavailable 1974 TV docudrama tribute/Amtrak infomercial would have got five stars had more than a handful of songs been full-length. SS

Shakatak

★★★★
Live At The Playhouse



SECRET FILMS
 Funky, jazzy and sunny, Shakatak remain unmistakable. After commercial successes in the early '80s, they became as unfashionable as

mandatory happy ending. After all, it's hard to dislike someone whose traumatic early life, depicted amid horror-filled hallucinatory flashbacks, includes guilt over a drowned brother and blindness at the age of six. Particularly when that person is a gifted musician who virtually invents soul music and performs with incredible passion. And especially, too, when the lead is played by Jamie Foxx who transcends acting to actually become Ray. The film is ultimately one overlong but is a brilliantly coloured, montage-filled, musically unbeatable triumph for Hackford, Foxx and Charles whose recordings provide the soundtrack.

Fred Dellar

Moog

★★★★
A Film By Hans Fjellestad PLEXI

Documentary on Bob Moog and his synthesizer has live

furry dice in the UK but remain heroes in Japan. This 2004 Epsom concert reveals their strengths intact: Bill Sharp's silky piano skills, a bright, taut rhythm section and irresistible vocal pop hooks. Together now, "Flying through the night..." CI

Public Enemy

★★★
It Takes A Nation Of Millions: The First London Invasion 1987

MUSIC VIDEO DISTRIBUTORS



The grainy footage from Public Enemy's first UK tour shows a band cutting teeth, rapping over records with vocals intact. More compelling is the hip hop history Chuck D lays down on his audio commentary track. Who knew he stopped wearing the trademark clock around his neck because it banged knots into his sternum? CN

Monster Dog

★★★★
 SUBSTANCE



This heavy rock take on *Beyond The Valley Of The Dolls* with even more bosomy babes than the original, follows Vince Raven (Alice Cooper), America's most famous rock star as he returns to his childhood home, the Raven mansion to film a music video. Cooper emerges as a true cinematic talent, lighting up the screen with a strange understated incandescence as he meets the hounds of hell and all manner of other horrorshows. JU

music from Stereolab, Money Mark, and others.

"I can feel what's going on in a piece of electronic equipment," says Robert Moog, demonstrating the inspiration that prompted the former Theremin builder to start work on the Moog synthesizer in 1964. Ultimately he expands contemporary electronic sound sources into a practical playable keyboard, albeit one that initially came with a patch board the size of a door. Moog is an avuncular, charming and philosophical individual but, frustratingly, we never find out what he thinks of the myriad contexts in which the instrument has been used. There are many such holes in this hour-long story and it seems perverse that one has to delve through the special features to find out, for example, how his name is pronounced (choice of three ways and Bob prefers rhyming with vogue); how the Theremin actually works; and how he first got into music.

Mike Ba