

AUSTIN CHRONICLE

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PHASES & STAGES

DVDnds

THE POINT!

BMG DVD 71037

When my mother began dating my stepfather in the mid-Seventies, he was a virile young buck looking to put his paws on my keeper, so he did the right thing and bought me a book/record. Many nights I sat alone in his living room, wearing his enormous, cupped headphones, listening to Harry Nilsson's 1971 children's fable *The Point!*, following along closely with the accompanying illustrated booklet. There I met Oblio (voiced on DVD by *The Brady Bunch*'s Mike Lookinland), a kid with a round head who grows up in the Land of Point, where everything has one. A point; that is. After beating the Count's kid at triangle toss, Oblio is banished to the



Pointless Forest, returning later to a hero's welcome, having found that everything in the Pointless Forest has one. A point.

Despite my lifelong devotion to this album ("Me and My Arrow" is the pop song to end all pop songs), I never saw the TV special, which aired periodically throughout the Seventies. Narrated by Nilsson pal Ringo Starr in 1985 when

The Point! went to VHS, the animated version is a psychedelic Maurice Sendak-meets-the Beatles kind of freak-out perfect for kids. Nilsson's dreamy pop song craft is as beautiful as ever, but this version is, for people familiar with the record, less exciting. The songs, which to my ears are the crowning achievement of the man who brought the world "One" and "Everybody's Talkin'," fail to cut through the tedious and dumbed-down TV-special dialogue found here. That said, the DVD *will* whet appetites for the soundtrack, which has also been reissued in a deluxe CD edition with three bonus tracks and original comic booklet. The album relates the story better than the animated version, in which some things get lost in translation, but then isn't that always the case when it comes to fables?

- Taylor Holland

★★★★★ Perfect ★★★★★ Great ★★★ Good ★★ Mediocre ★ Coaster