

Absolute Garbage

★★★★1/2
(2007) 130 min. DVD: \$14.98. Universal Music Group (avail. from most distributors).



Combining an hour's worth of music videos with a 70-minute behind-the-scenes tour documentary, *Absolute Garbage* serves as a DVD companion to the same-titled greatest hits CD release from Garbage, the Grammy-nominated rock band that's built a fervent following since their popular, eponymous debut release in 1995. Formed by a quartet of renowned Wisconsin-based record producers who were itching to make their own music (including drummer Butch Vig, who produced Nirvana's *Nevermind*), Garbage recruited Scottish vocalist Shirley Manson from her previous band, Angelfish, and it's no surprise that Manson gets most of the attention here, as she's a vivid and charismatic performer, who combines bad-girl allure, ultra-cool style, and a charming personality in the 16 music videos presented here, culled from the band's four CDs. All of their best-known tracks are represented by a wide variety of styles, with "Push It" (directed by Andrea Giacobbe), "I Think I'm Paranoid" (Matthew Rolston) and the concert-filmed hit "Only Happy When It Rains" (Samuel Bayer) ranking among the highlights, while the accompanying documentary, "Thanks for Your Uhh, Support," is a real treat for Garbage fans, revealing a close-knit unit (the band also includes guitarist Steve Marker and bassist Duke Erikson) that has endured 10 years of heavy touring and several breakups. Boasting solid audio, *Absolute Garbage* features a parental advisory label for some explicit lyrics. Highly recommended. Aud: P. (J. Shannon)

Amazing Journey: The Story of The Who

★★★★
(2007) 2 discs. 120 min. DVD: \$29.98. Universal Studios Home Entertainment (avail. from most distributors).

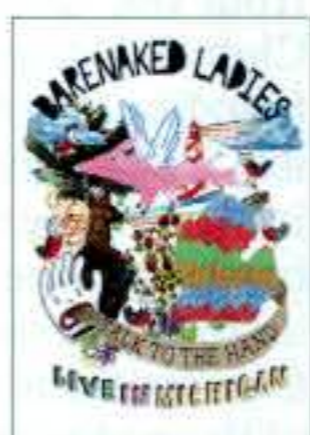


Fans of 1979's *The Kids Are Alright* might beg to differ, but a case could be made that Murray Lerner's *Amazing Journey* is the definitive history of The Who. Although Keith Moon and John Entwistle are no longer with us, surviving members Pete Townshend and Roger Daltrey are enthusiastic participants here, as are various associates, friends, and family members, along with admirers such as Sting, U2's The Edge, and Oasis' Noel Gallagher. The tale begins with childhoods spent in the grim, rubble-strewn landscape of post-World War II London, continues through the band's early years (including some 1964 black & white performance footage of the High Numbers, as they were then known), their run of brilliant hit singles and transformation—via Townshend's visionary

songwriting—into the stadium-filling avatars of *Tommy*, *Who's Next*, and *Quadrophenia*, as well as their lowlights (Moon's alcohol-fueled demise in 1978, the deaths of 11 young fans at a gig in Cincinnati the following year, the band's protracted creative slumber), before reaching present day (the last bit of live footage is of the reunited Daltrey and Townshend onstage in 2007). Backed by plenty of photos and some rare and genuinely thrilling live clips, *Amazing Journey* gives us a strong sense of how these four combustible characters, each of them a true original (drummer Moon and bassist Entwistle were among the most unconventional and potent players of their respective instruments in the history of rock), became one of the great British bands, surpassed only by the Beatles and arguably the Rolling Stones. Presented in Dolby Digital 5.1, DVD extras include a bonus disc with the six-part documentary "Six Quick Ones," which includes profiles of the musical abilities of each band member. Highly recommended. **Editor's Choice.** Aud: P. (S. Graham)

Barenaked Ladies: Talk to the Hand—Live in Michigan ★★★

(2007) 68 min. DVD: \$19.98. Shout! Factory (avail. from most distributors). Color cover. ISBN: 978-1-60399-035-6.



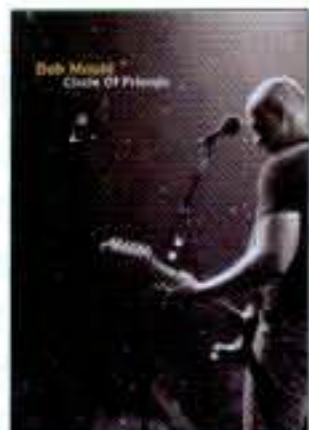
Recorded at the DTE Energy Music Theater in Clarkston, MI, on June 15, 2007, *Barenaked Ladies: Talk to the Hand* finds the Canadian alt-rock band in typical high spirits throughout the 15-song set featured on both discs of this CD/DVD combo. Beginning with one of their biggest hits—"One Week"—all of the band members get a chance to shine, but co-founders Steven Page (vocals) and Ed Robertson (lead guitar) dominate the concert with their trademark combination of goofy moves and comedic interplay. The music (presented in DTS 5.1 or stereo) is tight, precise, and lively, and the hits (including "The Old Apartment," "Bank Job," "Brian Wilson," and the show-closing "If I Had \$1,000,000") just keep on coming, with a short break for acoustic renditions of "For You" and "Be My Yoko Ono." In keeping with the band's environmental advocacy, the CD/DVD comes in 100% eco-friendly packaging, with DVD extras including a backstage conversation with the band (that focuses, in part, on their "green" touring practices), and a sound check featuring "Angry People." Recommended. Aud: P. (J. Shannon)

Bob Mould: Circle of Friends ★★★

(2005) 103 min. DVD: \$19.95. Music Video Distributors (avail. from most distributors).

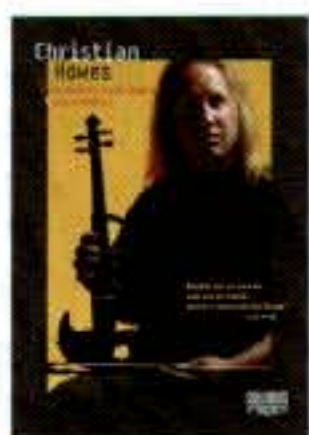
Back in the mid-'80s, the quickest way to reduce my circle of family and friends was to cue up any CD by Minneapolis punk-pop trio Hüsker Dü, fronted by singer-songwriter-guitarist Bob Mould: the first under-three-minute

speed guitar anthem would clear the room before the first solo (except, of course, these lean and mean songs had no solos). My wife Anne left after 30 seconds (to play Zuma on her computer) of this October 2005 concert at Washington D.C.'s 9:30 Club, where Mould served up a headlong no-frills 23-song set, ably backed by Richard Morel on keyboards, Jason Narducy on bass, and Brendan Canty on drums. The band plays half of Mould's then-current 2005 release *Body of Song*, with standouts including the ballad (in a relative sense) "Circles," "Best Thing," and the haunting "Beating Heart the Prize." In addition to cuts (such as "Egoverride" and "See a Little Light," although "Wishing Well" is disappointingly missing) from other solo albums, Mould zips through a handful of Hüsker Dü classics (including "Could You Be the One?," "Hardly Getting Over It," and "Makes No Sense at All"), as well as seven songs off *Copper Blue*—such as "Helpless," "Man on the Moon," and "A Good Idea"—off the first CD by Sugar (Mould's short-lived early '90s trio). To quote the title of a Rod Stewart LP, there is never a dull moment during this wall-of-Dolby-Digital-sound concert (which includes a 10-minute band interview featurette) that will appeal to a circle of patrons who recognize Bob Mould as one of the most influential musicians of the '80s and early '90s. Recommended. Aud: P. (R. Pitman)



Christian Howes & The Horacio Icasto Quartet: Live In Madrid ★★★

(2002) 59 min. DVD: \$19.98. Arkadia DVD (avail. from most distributors).



Playing jazz violin is a rarefied enough skill that anyone who comes along wielding a fiddle and a bow is bound to invite comparisons to predecessors, from Ray Nance and Stuff Smith to Joe Venuti and Jean-Luc Ponty. And if his song list includes "Nuages," "I've Found A New Baby," and "I Got Rhythm"—three staples of the repertoire of the immortal guitarist Django Reinhardt and his Quintette du Hot Club de France—then being compared to Django's Hot Club partner, Stephane Grappelli, isn't just inevitable, it's obligatory. But based on this hour-long 2002 club gig in Madrid, Christian Howes is his own man. Accompanied by an outstanding band (led by pianist Horacio Icasto), the Ohio-born violinist saws his way through an hour-long club performance that signals numerous influences; much of the music is straight-ahead jazz, but when Howes whips out an electric violin, occasionally strumming it like a guitar and adding the kind of heavy effects normally heard from rock and fusion players, it's obvious that this is no Hot Club