

The over-the-top music parody "Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story" was a hit with critics, though it underperformed at the box office.

'Walk Hard,' 'Blood' arrive on DVD

By DAVID GERMAIN
AP Movie Writer

"Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story"

The latest laughfest from producer Judd Apatow ("Knocked Up," "Superbad") earned fair praise from critics but could not bring in the crowds. Apatow and director Jake Kasdan spin an over-the-top parody of music biographies with their tale of the rise and fall and rise again of a rock icon (John C. Reilly) who lives an outrageous life of excess as he beds women, sires children and overindulges in every drug he can find. A two-disc DVD set and the Blu-ray release have an unrated version of the movie running 24 minutes longer than the theatrical release, along with deleted and extended scenes, full-song performances, commentary with cast and crew, and a huge range of background featurettes. The movie also comes in single-disc DVD with the R-rated theatrical version. Single DVD, \$28.95; two-disc set, \$29.96; Blu-ray, \$43.95. (Sony)

"There Will Be Blood"

Daniel Day-Lewis drank Paul Dano's milkshake and earned another Academy Award as a flamboyant, acquisitive and more than a little crazy oil pioneer in Paul Thomas Anderson's saga of early 20th-century greed and corruption. Day-Lewis won the best-actor prize for his towering performance as Daniel Plainview, whose single-minded determination to pull petroleum from the ground puts him on the path to destroy himself and everyone around him. Dano co-stars as a young preacher who proves that religious piety can be just as black-hearted as cutthroat commerce. The movie is available in a single-disc DVD with just the film and a two-disc set with extras that include a couple of deleted scenes, the 1923 silent film "The Story of Petroleum" and a slide show of vintage photos from the era selected by filmmaker Anderson. Single DVD, \$29.99; two-disc set, \$29.99. (Paramount)

"The Water Horse: Legend of the Deep"

A boy and his sea monster. This family film featuring Emily Watson, Ben Chaplin and Brian Cox centers on a boy in Scotland who finds an egg that hatches a cuddly reptile, which quickly grows into a colossal friendly beast — and the most famous and elusive resident of Loch Ness. A two-disc DVD set and the Blu-ray high-definition release come with deleted scenes and half a dozen behind-the-scenes segments examining the myth of the Loch Ness monster, the effects that went into creating the beastie and how the story was developed from the novel by Dick King-Smith. Two-disc set, \$28.96; Blu-ray, \$38.96. (Sony)

"Lions for Lambs"

A lot of talent and ambition went into this box-office dud that was the first release from United Artists under its new overseers, Tom Cruise and producing partner Paula Wagner. One of a string of war-on-terror dramas generally ignored by audiences last fall, the movie stars Cruise as a senator with a bold new plan for the fight in Afghanistan, Meryl Streep as a jaded Washington journalist, Robert Redford (who also directed) as an idealistic professor, and Derek Luke and Michael Pena as U.S. soldiers in the line of fire. The movie is accompanied by commentary from Redford, two making-of featurettes and a segment on United Artists, the venerable outfit founded by Charles Chaplin, D.W. Griffith, Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford. DVD, \$29.98. (MGM)



Daniel Day-Lewis, right, took home the Oscar for his chilling performance as ruthless oilman Daniel Plainview in "There Will Be Blood."

"The Adventures of Baron Munchausen"

Terry Gilliam might stand as modern Hollywood's most-jinxed filmmaker, having waged epic battles against studio executives and blind fate to make films such as this, "Brazil" and "The Brothers Grimm," which starred Heath Ledger. Gilliam had to drastically alter the approach to his current fantasy, "The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus," using Johnny Depp, Jude Law and Colin Farrell to take over Ledger's character after the actor died midway through production (Depp also had starred in Gilliam's "The Man Who Killed Don Quixote," an unfinished film that had to shut down days after filming began because of a series of weather misfortunes and illness to co-star Jean Rochefort). "Baron Munchausen" stars John Neville, Uma Thurman, Eric Idle and Sarah Polley in a wild fantasy about an adventurer's impossible travels. In a 20th-anniversary edition, the movie is accompanied by commentary from Gilliam and a making-of documentary about the film, whose budget ballooned amid production troubles. DVD, \$19.94; Blu-ray, \$28.95. (Sony)

"The Bette Davis Collection"

Five films from the actress with the piercing eyes are gathered in a six-disc set, led by 1950's best-picture Oscar winner "All About Eve," which gets a DVD makeover in a two-disc version that includes commentary featuring director Joseph L. Mankiewicz and co-star Celeste Holm. The film stars Davis as an aging stage star whose young fan (Anne Baxter) schemes to take over her idol's life. The set also has single-disc editions of "Hush ... Hush, Sweet Charlotte," starring Davis as a reclusive spinster whose cousin (Olivia de Havilland) plots to have her committed; "Phone Call From a Stranger," about revelations unveiled about the victims of a plane crash; "The Virgin Queen," with Davis as British monarch Elizabeth I; and "The Nanny," featuring Davis as a woman suspected of child murder. DVD set, \$49.98; individual titles, \$19.98 each. (20th Century Fox)

TV on DVD

"Sense & Sensibility"

Days after its PBS premiere, the latest Jane Austen adaptation comes to DVD. The miniseries stars Hattie Morahan as Austen's prudent lady and Charity Wakefield as her starry-eyed sister as they maneuver the complications of romance and society in staid Britain. The two-disc set includes "Miss Austen Regrets," commentary and interviews. DVD set, \$34.98. (BBC)

"Fortysomething"

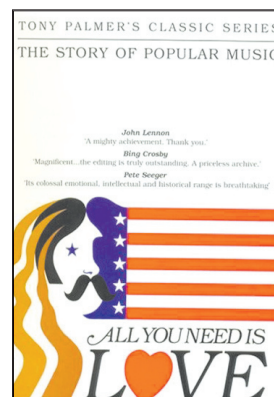
"House" star Hugh Laurie has done the doctor gig before with this 2003 British series in which he stars as a neurotic physician with voices in his head and incessant family problems. The two-disc set has all six episodes. DVD set, \$39.99. (Acorn)

Other new releases

"Reservation Road"

Joaquin Phoenix, Jennifer Connelly, Mark Ruffalo and Mira Sorvino star in this dark drama of two families drawn together by a tragedy that prompts profound grief and a longing for revenge. The DVD includes deleted scenes and a making-of segment. DVD, \$29.98. (Universal)

Tony Palmer's epic 'All You Need Is Love' traces the evolution of popular music



"ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE: THE STORY OF POPULAR MUSIC" (Isolde Films/MVD Visuals) ★★☆☆☆ out of five — With more than 100 films to his credit, British documentarian Tony Palmer is one of the preeminent directors of musical films in the world. One of his masterpieces, the epic "All You Need Is Love," hits DVD shelves later this spring.

This whopping five-disc, 15-hour collection — originally produced for British television in 1977 as 17 themed episodes — provides a remarkably thorough journey through the history

of popular music from its African roots straight through to the rock 'n' roll era.

Though a little dry — especially the material covering ragtime, Tin Pan Alley and swing — "All You Need Is Love" is a must for serious music aficionados. There are interviews with luminaries as varied as Bing Crosby, Bo Diddley and Paul McCartney, and first-rate performance footage of Jerry Lee Lewis, Ray Charles, Jimi Hendrix, the Rolling Stones, Cream and Pink Floyd.

The first disc is an introductory overview. It's a nice summary of the mammoth collection and offers several intriguing sneak peeks at what's to come. Discs two and three are the weakest, with sections on vaudeville and musical theater alongside segments on jazz, ragtime, the blues and swing.

Things pick up on Disc 4 with the early days of rhythm and blues, a slightly thin country music segment, the folk movement and the beginning of rock 'n' roll. Most fans will revel in Disc 5, which dedicates an entire episode to the Beatles, another on "sour rock" (the Stones, Frank Zappa, Janis Joplin) and touches on the glam/glitter movement spearheaded by artists like KISS, David Bowie, Alice Cooper and Elton John.

Though a fascinating collection, "All You Need Is Love" doesn't make for easy viewing. Its pace is far slower than what we're used to these days — you can thank/blame MTV for that — and the episodes require your undivided attention. But I'm guessing those willing to invest the time won't be disappointed. (Jeffrey Sisk)

"INSIDE THE SMITHS" (MVD Visual/Tib Street Films) ★★ — So what would happen if you cobbled together a documentary about one of the most beloved and influential British bands of the 1980s without any input from the creative geniuses that made the band great? Well thanks to "Inside the Smiths," you need wonder no more.

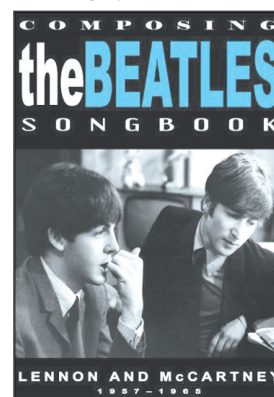
This documentary centers around former Smiths drummer Mike Joyce and bassist Andy Rourke, with zero input from frontman Morrissey or guitarist Johnny Marr. And while there's an occasional interesting story in this 52-minute production, Marr and Morrissey are essential components to anything involving the Smiths.

Joyce and Rourke are embroiled in a legal battle with their ex-bandmates over back royalties, which means Moz and Marr were unlikely to either appear in the film or grant permission to use any Smiths music.

Things get off to a silly start with co-director Mark Standley offering a bizarre on-camera introduction to "Inside the Smiths" shot in, you guessed it, a graveyard. It sets a bad tone for what's to follow.

Joyce and Rourke seem like affable enough chaps, though neither has tasted much post-Smiths success. They both know how to tell a story and some of their anecdotes are entertaining, if not exactly earth-shattering.

I have no doubt that hardcore fans will rush out to add "Inside the Smiths" to their DVD collection. But the rest of us will need to look elsewhere for the definitive story of this remarkable band. (JS)



"COMPOSING THE BEATLES SONGBOOK: LENNON AND MCCARTNEY 1957-1965" (Pride DVD/MVD Visual) ★★☆☆☆ — A couple weeks ago I reviewed a Beatles DVD that chronicled the Fab Four's early days in Germany. Despite my longstanding fondness for John, Paul, George and Ringo, I found "Destination Hamburg" quite lacking.

"Composing the Beatles Songbook" represents a definite step up in quality. Though it too wasn't authorized by any Beatles living or dead, there's enough archival footage to go along

with the standard interviews and commentary from a qualified assortment of panelists.

As you might gather from the film's more-than-a-mouthful title, "Songbook" focuses on the early years of the Lennon-McCartney partnership. It begins with their first meeting as teenagers and continues through "Rubber Soul."

We see how their individual songwriting developed over the years — though they always shared credit officially — and how McCartney leaned toward the poppier fare, while Lennon maintained a more cynical edge.

Among the songs dissected here are classics "Love Me Do," "She Loves You," "Can't Buy Me Love," "Hard Day's Night," "Yesterday" (which Lennon hated with a passion), "Michelle" (another that John despised), "Norwegian Wood," "Hard Day's Night" and "Help."

The ho-hum assortment of extras includes extended interviews and biographies of the panelists. (JS)