



Things to do

Old-timer comedy 'The Bucket List' hits DVD shelves this week

By DAVID GERMAIN
AP Movie Writer

"The Bucket List"

Geezers made their mark at the box office with Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman's feel-good buddy tale about getting the most out of life in the face of death. Putting director Rob Reiner back on the commercial track after a string of duds, the movie stars Nicholson as a rich guy and Freeman as a working stiff, both diagnosed with terminal cancer, the duo teaming up to travel the world with a wish list of exotic adventures to squeeze in before kicking the bucket. The DVD and Blu-ray high-definition releases have an interview with screenwriter Justin Zackham and a John Mayer music video. The Blu-ray disc also features Reiner interviewing both Nicholson and Freeman about their roles. DVD, \$28.98; Blu-ray, \$35.99. (Warner Bros.)

"Jumper"

Hayden Christensen fights the high cost of fossil fuel by teleporting around the globe in this sci-fi adventure about "jumpers" able to travel anywhere instantly. Sporting bright blond hair, Samuel L. Jackson co-stars as an operative for a secret society that aims to destroy the jumpers as genetic abominations, while Jamie Bell plays a fellow teleporter who teams up with Christensen. Extras on single-disc DVD, two-disc DVD and Blu-ray editions include commentary by director Doug Liman and three making-of featurettes. The Blu-ray and two-disc DVD releases also have six deleted scenes, more featurettes and a digital copy of the movie for portable DVD players. Single DVD, \$29.98; two-disc DVD set, \$34.98; Blu-ray, \$39.98. (20th Century Fox)

"The Other Boleyn Girl"

Natalie Portman is the scheming sister and Scarlett Johansson's the nice younger sibling among the Boleyn family, whose girls find themselves at odds over the attention of Britain's King Henry VIII (Eric Bana). The rivalry is set in motion by the sisters' father and uncle, who plot to foist Portman's coquettish Anne off on the king only to find the monarch attracted to Johansson's innocent — and newly married — Mary. The DVD and Blu-ray discs have deleted and extended footage and three behind-the-scenes segments examining life at court in the 16th century and how the filmmakers adapted their story from Philippa Gregory's novel. DVD, \$28.96; Blu-ray, \$38.96. (Sony)



Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman regret their decision to jump from a moving plane in "The Bucket List."

TV on DVD "John Adams"

Paul Giamatti stars as one of the United States' key founding fathers in the acclaimed miniseries that features Laura Linney as his wife, Abigail Adams, Tom Wilkinson as Benjamin Franklin and David Morse as George Washington. The seven-part series comes in a three-disc set, tracing Adams' life as he balances politics and the presidency with devotion to his family. DVD set, \$59.99. (HBO)

"Home Improvement: The Complete Eighth Season"

Tim Allen finishes his run as the TV tool guy in the final season of his family sitcom. A four-disc set packs the last 28 episodes plus a reunion special. DVD set, \$23.99. (Disney)

"Soap," "What's Happening"

Two 1970s comedies arrive in complete-season sets, with a 12-disc package containing all

90 episodes of the soap-opera parody "Soap" and a nine-disc collection gathering all 65 episodes of the buddy show "What's Happening." DVD sets, \$59.95 each. (Sony)

"7th Heaven: The Sixth Season"

The wholesome show about a pastor (Stephen Collins), his wife (Catherine Hicks) and their brood of children (including Jessica Biel) continues with a six-disc set containing all 22 episodes from year six. DVD set, \$49.99. (Paramount)

"The Odd Couple: Season 4"

Jack Klugman and Tony Randall return as slob Oscar and finicky Felix in the comedy based on Neil Simon's play about mismatched roommates. DVD set, \$42.99. (Paramount)

"Army Wives: Season 1"

The home-front drama features Kim Delaney and Catherine Bell among a group of military spouses on an Army base.

The first 13 episodes come in a three-disc set,

accompanied by deleted scenes, cast and crew commentary and behind-the-scenes segments. DVD set, \$39.99. (Disney)

"The Fugitive: Season 2, Vol. 1"

David Janssen is still on the run as a doctor falsely convicted in the murder of his wife. A four-disc set has the first half of year two's 30 episodes. DVD set, \$42.99. (Paramount)

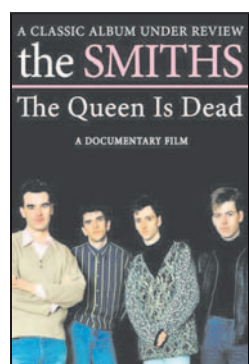
"The Boondocks: Season 2"

The animated comedy about two urban boys living in the 'burbs continues in a three-disc set with all 13 episodes from season two, plus two installments that did not air in the United States. DVD set, \$49.95. (Sony)

"McLeod's Daughters: Season 6"

An eight-disc set has all 32 episodes from year six of the Australian saga about half-sisters who inherit a cattle ranch and run it with an all-woman team of cow hands. DVD set, \$79.98. (Koch Vision)

Smiths, Dylan DVDs required viewing; Onyx for fans only



"THE SMITHS — THE QUEEN IS DEAD: A CLASSIC ALBUM UNDER REVIEW" (MVD Video/Sexy Intellectual) ★★☆☆☆ out of 5 — I was in high school when the Smiths started making records and was too busy banging my head to Motley Crue or grooving along with Phil Collins to appreciate what these four lads from Manchester, England, were doing. The hipsters (or whatever we called them in 1985) loved the Smiths, of course, but I wasn't part of that group. Why get depressed listening to "Meat Is Murder" when Wham! were reminding us to

"Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go"?

I hate to admit it, but when it came to sexually ambiguous British frontmen of the 1980s, I preferred George Michael to Morrissey. Does that make me a bad person?

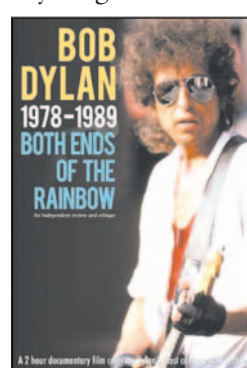
Anyway, my appreciation of the Smiths has grown by leaps and bounds in the intervening years, and this remarkably thorough and entertaining look at their 1986 masterpiece "The Queen Is Dead" is must-viewing for hardcore and casual fans alike. The latest in the almost-always-good "Classic Album Under Review" documentary series, the record is broken down song by song with input from "QID" co-producer/engineer Stephen Street, former Smiths guitarist Craig Gannon and a panel of journalists, professors, musicians and industry types.

Briskly paced in spite of its nearly two-hour running time, the film also examines the problems the Smiths encountered while making what would become their career-defining album. When the pre-"Queen Is Dead" single "Shakespeare's Sister" flopped, the ever-petulant Morrissey blamed indie label Rough Trade for failing to promote the song, and threatened to break the band's contract. The war of words (mostly one-sided) spilled over into the powerful British music press, but the Smiths eventually entered the studio to make the record for Rough Trade.

Every melody guitarist Johnny Marr came up with and every lyric Morrissey delivered worked on "The Queen Is Dead" — from the sprawling title track and tongue-in-cheek "Frankly, Mr. Shankly," to charting singles "The Boy With the Thorn in His Side" and "Bigmouth Strikes Again," to remarkable album tracks such as "Cemetery Gates," "I Know It's Over" and "There

Is a Light That Never Goes Out." In fact, former New Musical Express writer Len Browne calls "There Is a Light" the best song ever written by a British band. High praise, indeed.

Some folks quibble over the fact that the "Classic Album Under Review" series doesn't include direct input from the artists themselves. There are snippets of old Morrissey interviews here and there, but the bulk of the film is from the perspective of outsiders. And in a way, that adds a layer of credibility to the proceedings (especially with this top-notch panel), as their perception of this highly influential album is more objective than anything the band could tell us. (Jeffrey Sisk)



"BOB DYLAN 1978-1989: BOTH ENDS OF THE RAINBOW" (Chrome Dreams/MVD Visual) ★★☆☆☆ — Most music aficionados know the furor Bob Dylan caused when he went electric at the Newport Folk Festival. Folk icon Pete Seeger famously threatened pull the plug and a big part of Dylan's fan base was angry and alienated. But that's nothing compared to what happened 15 years later when Dylan embraced Christianity and started making records that bordered on religious zealotry.

That period is the focus of a fascinating — if slightly overstuffed — new documentary, "Both Ends of the Rainbow." A panel of journalists and industry professionals offer a thorough and not very flattering look at what many consider the creative low point of Dylan's transcendent career.

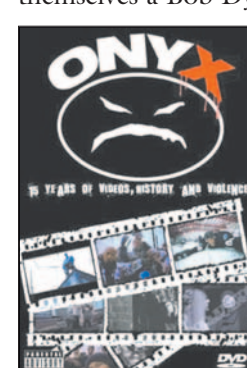
His two preachiest albums, 1979's "Slow Train Coming" and 1980's "Saved," are pretty much dismissed, and Dylan's my-way-or-the-highway religious fervor is roundly criticized. The panel has (marginally) nicer things to say about 1981's "Shot of Love" and 1983's "Infidels," though the general consensus is that Dylan had become hopelessly out of touch by the mid-1980s. His embarrassingly bad performances recording "We Are the World" (which one panelist ridicules as the worst song ever written) and headlining the 1985 Live Aid concert are documented with damning video evidence. Dylan suddenly looked old and clueless.

A well-received set at the inaugural Farm Aid later that year, with Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers as his backing band, start-

ed a career resurgence that continued throughout the remainder of the decade with 1985's "Empire Burlesque"; his critically and commercially acclaimed Traveling Wilburys project with Petty, Roy Orbison, Jeff Lynne and George Harrison; and 1989's "Oh Mercy."

There were a few missteps along the way — 1986's "Knocked Out Loaded," 1988's "Down in the Groove," the disastrous Dylan & the Dead tour and live album — but Dylan emerged from the 1980s primed for the late-career renaissance that continues to this day.

"Both Sides of the Rainbow" tries to cram too much into its 127-minute running time. Splitting the 11 years covered here into two documentaries might have been a better way to go, but this fascinating portrait of arguably the greatest American songwriter should be required viewing for everyone who considers themselves a Bob Dylan fan. (JS)



"ONYX: 15 YEARS OF VIDEOS, HISTORY AND VIOLENCE" (Major Independents/MVD Visual) ★★☆☆ — I never warmed to the loud-louder-loudest rap of Queens-based rappers Onyx, and 15 years after they exploded onto the scene with their Def Jam debut, that opinion hasn't changed.

Fans of Sticky Fingaz, Fredro Starr, Big DS and DJ Suave Sonny Caesar might enjoy "Onyx: 15 Years of Videos, History and Violence," but there's nothing here to win new converts to their in-your-face brand of gangsta rap.

The bulk of the DVD is comprised of 17 Onyx music videos. The early entries tend to blend together, with a lot of hard posing for the camera on "Throw Ya Gunz," "Slam" and "Shiftee." With bigger budgets came better production values, making some of the group's later videos ("Last Dayz," "Broke Willies," "Slam Harder") pretty enjoyable — and foreshadowed Sticky's eventual move into acting.

A "rare footage" section includes 70 minutes of mostly home videos of Onyx from their early days to a near-riot-causing performance in Newark, N.J.

If you were really into Onyx back in the day, this DVD might be worth checking out. If not, you probably shouldn't waste your time. (JS)