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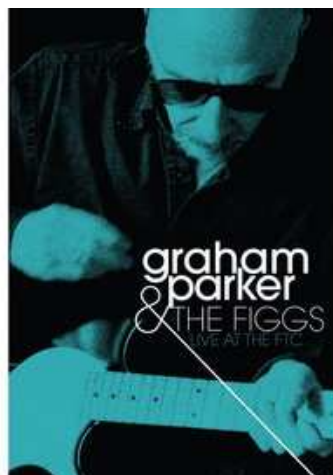
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Pina Bausch in Dancing Dreams (First Run DVD) + **Graham Parker & The Figs – Live At The FTC** (Image DVD/CD Set) + **INXS – Mystify** (1997/Eagle DVD) + **Frank Zappa – The Torture Never Stop** (Eagle DVD) + **Slaves To The Rhythm – Live At Wembley Arena** (Trevor Horn Charity Tribute/2008/MVD DVD)

Picture: C+/B-/C+/C/B-
 Sound: C+/B-/B-/C+/B- Extras: B-/C+/B-/B-/C+
 Documentary/Concerts: B/B-/B-/B-/B



Though the record labels have somehow not been able to embrace Blu-ray, they have also not supported DVD as much as they used to, with many key titles going out of print. However, the best independents have been filling the gap as the next five titles will show.

Pina Bausch in Dancing Dreams (2010) turned out to be a vital record of the great choreographer just before her passing. In 2008, Miss Bausch picked 40 teenagers with talent who had never heard of her and decided to work with them to perform a work called *Comfort Zone*. The result was a learning experience for all and we follow all in the development of the show, but we also learn about these young people and about a legend who left us in 2009. Annie Lisnel and Rainer Hoffman co-directed this fine piece that shows us how alive the art of dancing still is and can be when it is not just slick and angry in silly ways.

Some of the moments reminded me of **Hair**, others of movie musicals, but in the end, it is a solid look at a world not enough of us see and too few participate in.

Graham Parker & The Figs – Live At The FTC is a later look at the ever independent Rock singer/songwriter with his newest band live (and long after the Rumour broke up), he has been criticized for being everything from great to pretentious (his band's 1978 album *The Parkerella* gets bashed enough), but seeing him live gives on a direct idea of his talents and he is definitely very much so. As well, he started in the late 1960s and rightly is considered one of the individuals who made New Wave possible in the late 1970s and onward.

Though he has only had one Top 40 U.S. hit ever (1985's "*Wake Up (Next To You)*"), it is hard to understand why more did not happen with the fine concert he gives here. The set contains 21 songs (the CD only has 19) and is a decent show that will land up introducing many to the enduring

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> The Last Exorcism
(2010/Lionsgate Blu-ray/DVD
Combo pack)

Pina Bausch in Dancing Dreams (First R...

Parker, a survivor in tact from a genre with whom most of its members have given up or have nothing more to say. Best of all, it will want you to revisit his past works.

INXS – Mystify is a decent concert from 6/27/1997 that shows the band still had talent and energy in front of a big, fired-up audience in Germany. Though they had not had any hits for a few years, there is the late Michael Hutchence singing as well as ever, an underrated performer adding new depth and empathy to classic hits like *Never Tear Us Apart*, *What You Need*, *Devil Inside*, *Suicide Blonde*, *New Sensation* and *Need You Tonight*. He never got the respect he deserved when he was alive and his loss is larger than most realize. The rest of the band could also still play very, very well. To show the growth and how good they were early on, a shorter bonus 1984 concert with their early hits, including *The One Thing* is included as a fine bonus feature.

Frank Zappa – The Torture Never Stop is a concert I was surprised I had actually once saw... somewhere. Taped in 1981 at The Palladium in New York City, Zappa was in prime form and the band he was with was melding with his work and ideas so tightly that he was New wave and beyond with songs and ideas that were constantly subversive and did what they could to stop the Reagan Era among other things. This is a long show with 25 songs all worth your time and is one of the liveliest of the many Zappa releases we have covered to date.

For more Zappa on this site, start with this link:

<http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/9818/Frank+Zappa+%E2%80%93+The+Frea>

Slaves To The Rhythm – Live At Wembley Arena is a 2004 concert tribute to the great music producer (and sometimes singer, songwriter and musician) Trevor Horn, as all the artists who worked with him and had some of their greatest hits with him show up to perform them to raise money for The Prince's Trust. They include Seal (*Kiss From A Rose*, *Crazy*), Grace Jones (*Slave To The Rhythm*), ABC (*Look Of Love*, *Poison Arrow*), Lisa Stansfield (*Takes A Woman To Know*), Frankie Goes To Hollywood (*Two Tribes*, *Relax*), Pet Shop Boys (*Left To My Own Devices*) and three of his former bands, Art Of Noise (*Close To The Edit*), The Buggles (*Video Killed The Radio Star*, *Living In The Plastic Age*) and Yes (*Owner Of A Lonely Heart*, which he produced; he was the vocalist on their earlier album, **Drama**), among others.

That is not even the whole concert and other acts you may not have heard of also show up. This is one of the great tribute concerts and I hope more people see it and we see a Blu-ray too.

The anamorphically enhanced 1.78 X 1 image on **Bausch** has some issues, but is all of newly shot footage (digital) and looks good throughout, but is a little detail weak. I liked how this was edited and is captured nicely otherwise. The Dolby Digital 2.0 Stereo is also good, but has some location audio limits, but otherwise is just fine. The **Parker** concert is also anamorphically enhanced 1.78 X 1 and looks better, coming from what looks like a 1080i HD tape source, but color is better than Bausch as it is in a controlled stage atmosphere. The DTS 5.1 mix is the best soundtrack (outdoing the Dolby Digital 5.1 and the included PCM 2.0 Stereo on the CD somewhat). The **INXS** concert is an analog 1.33 X 1 taping and is soft, but the NTSC analog 1.33 X 1 **Zappa** is the softest, though the 1-inch stereo videotape source has been cleaned as much as it could be. Both have Dolby Digital 2.0 Stereo, but the INXS DVD tries to bump it up to DTS 5.1 and Dolby Digital 5.1, which sounds a bit better, but cannot hide the age of the audio, which was not conceived as multi-channel sound. The DTS is marginally the best.

That leaves the anamorphically enhanced 1.78 X 1 image on **Rhythm** looking as good as the **Parker** DVD and better than the rest, but it only



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Pina Bausch in Dancing Dreams (First R...

offers Dolby Digital 5.1 and Dolby 2.0 Stereo sound. The 5.1 is better, but I wish DTS were an option. Still, it is a fine soundmaster.

Extras on **Bausch** include a Photo Gallery, Dance Film Gallery that shows many First Run titles in the genre (with optional trailers), Bausch Biography and Director's Notes. **Parker** has a good interview with Parker, **INXS** has the bonus concert we noted already, while **Rhythm** adds a Juke Box function and two documentary featurettes: *Frankie Says Reform* (17+ minutes about the band reuniting with a new lead singer) and a near 20 minutes piece on the concert itself. **Zappa** includes a paper pullout inside the DVD case with an essay and technical information, while the DVD has a *Yes, But Also* section that offers DVDography, Discography, Liner Notes, Photo Gallery and three video clips: *Teen-Age Prostitute*, *City Of Tiny Lights* and *You Are What You Are*, an outright anti-Reagan Music Video.

All in all, that's five winners out of five!

- Nicholas Sheffo

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