



JAZZ ICONS SERIES

REELIN' IN THE YEARS
NOT RATED



For lifelong fans of pop music, expanding their music appreciation into the realm of jazz can be a daunting undertaking. Where, exactly, does one start? With varying sub-genres and eras, household-name luminaries and countless essential sidemen, differences in style and practice, not to mention the groundbreaking music theory behind it all, a fledgling jazz head has a lot to catch up on. Luckily, Reelin' In The Years Productions is giving said neophytes, and certified heads alike, a good schooling with *Jazz Icons*. The first nine titles in the ongoing series—Thelonious Monk, Dizzy Gillespie, Ella Fitzgerald, Chet Baker, Quincy Jones, Louis Armstrong, Buddy Rich, Art Blakey & The Jazz Messengers and Count Basie—include full concerts filmed for European broadcast at television studios and concert venues throughout Europe, and have been rendered with unbelievably pristine sound and video quality. Each disc comes complete with a 16-page booklet written by jazz historians and authorities, describing the significance of the presented material, the history of the artist, a personalized account of the artists' work as it pertains to the author, rare photographs and, perhaps most useful for those delving into the specifics of jazz, a complete rundown of the songs contained therein, describing the historical importance of the performance down to play-by-play details (at times phrase-by-phrase).

However, all of this is secondary to the music itself. Presenting otherwise unreleased performances in their entirety, these DVDs showcase the players at vital chapters of their respective careers, their body language communicating as much of the joy and anguish as their instruments themselves. With more titles on the way, the *Jazz Icons* series is one not to sleep on. If, after experiencing all that *Jazz Icons* has to offer, you still don't "get" jazz, there's one piece of advice that I'd love to impart: Listen to the notes they *don't* play, man.

Maurice Spencer Teilmann

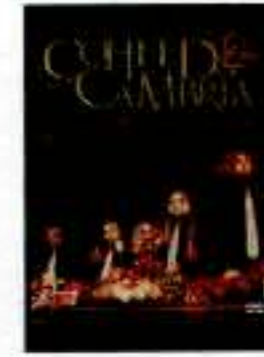
MISC. REVIEWS



THE BEAT KINGS:
RESPECT THE ARCHITECT
NATURE SOUNDS
NOT RATED

This is by far the most comprehensive documentary I've seen dedicated to the art of beat making and the individuals who have pioneered the music. Featuring interviews conducted by Mathematics (think Wu-Tang) with everyone from Marly Marl and Mark the 45 King to DJ Premier and Just Blaze, *The Beat Kings* covers all the bases. Broken into different categories comprising DJing and the business side of things, every producer you could think of, minus a few (Dre) speak candidly about their experiences. In one of the most interesting chapters, the question of the health of hip-hop is brought up to mixed opinions. It's not a big budget project, but it is an enjoyable flick for numerous viewings nonetheless.

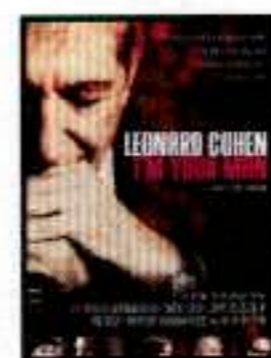
Corey Bloom



COHEED AND CAMBRIA
The Last Supper: Live at the Hammerstein Ballroom
SONY

With confidence, I can attest that Coheed and Cambria is a band one needs to experience firsthand in order to fully realize their galactic-melodrama-meets-soaring-space-metal epics. I can't say that a never-ending barrage of live DVDs is the way to go about perpetuating this fact; *Live at the Hammerstein Ballroom* essentially regurgitates to a newer, mainstream audience what hardcore fans already knew or had picked up from 2005's *Live at the Starland Ballroom*...sans the oomph. Swooping camera angles and spliced footage of bystanders attempting to preach the gospel aren't nearly as exciting as the simplicity of the lulling "Wake Up" segueing into the destructive "Delirium Trigger" so seamlessly.

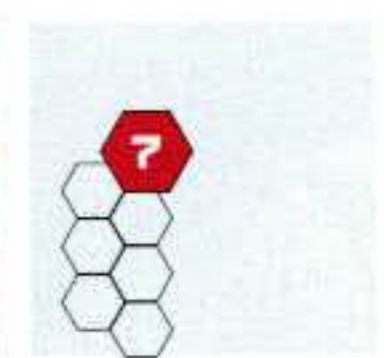
Ryan Prado



LEONARD COHEN:
I'M YOUR MAN
LIONSGATE
RATED PG-13

For the benefit of the unacquainted I'm going to let you in on a little tip: Leonard Cohen writes songs and poetry that make thighs quiver, and one of his albums on the record player will get almost anyone in the mood. But as much as Cohen is to be celebrated, I can't fully endorse *I'm Your Man*. When Cohen is on-screen, his impeccable dry wit and humility prove captivating, providing insight into his creative process. However, interspersing his interviews with portions of the Came So Far for Beauty tribute concert (featuring Pulp's Jarvis Cocker, Rufus Wainwright and Nick Cave, among others) finds the film careening into the no-man's land between documentary and concert film. Such high hopes...

Maurice Spencer Teilmann



CULTURAMA 777
Audiovisualbombshelter
Vol. 3
FEMALE FUN

Home to all the otherwise Internet-only underground hip-hop videos, Culturama has long been a valid excuse to split an Optimo and relax on the couch. For this particular release we are blessed with gems across the board, from Zion I and Awol One to DJ Muggs and GZA. There are a couple songs/videos I could do without, but they are easy to overlook. Self Scientific does a great job capturing the anger and fear in "Tears," one of the most memorable songs and videos in recent memory. Tanya Morgan's "We Be" lightens things up with a MySpace twist, and Jean Grae's "The Jam" is just as hilarious as it is dope. Rap videos, you never grow old.

Corey Bloom