

Beaux Arts at 50

★★★1/2
(2006) 60 min. DVD or VHS: \$24.99 (\$54.95 w/PPR). PBS Video. Closed captioned. ISBN: 0-7936-9292-X (dvd).



It's rare for any chamber music group to remain in business a full half-century, but that's how long the Beaux Arts Trio—violin, cello, and piano—have been performing the masterworks of such composers as Beethoven, Mozart, and Schubert. This affectionate tribute centers around a 2005 recital at Indiana University in Bloomington celebrating the group's remarkable 50th anniversary. Not surprisingly, the members aren't the same as in 1955—the string positions have passed through several hands—but pianist Menahem Pressler, who's on the Bloomington faculty, has been a permanent fixture, and while his playing may not be quite as fleet and sensitive today, performers half his age would still be hard pressed to equal his neat and nimble touch, and Pressler's younger colleagues Daniel Hope and Antonio Meneses match him superbly. The hour-long *Beaux Arts at 50* features excerpts from the recital, interspersed with comments from the players regarding rehearsal techniques and performance goals, as well as occasional glances back at the group's long history. The bountiful DVD extras include the complete 2005 concert (including Beethoven's "Ghost" and "Archduke" trios), a monochrome version of the encore, archival video of an earlier version of the Beaux Arts (with violinist Isidore Cohen and cellist Bernard Greenhouse joining Pressler) playing the Ravel piano trio, and a biography of the Beaux Arts (including personnel changes over the years). Presented in Dolby Digital 5.0, this is highly recommended. Aud: C, P. (F. Swietek)

Benny Golson: The Whisper Not Tour ★★★

(2007) 56 min. DVD: \$19.98. Arkadia DVD (avail. from most distributors).



Film buffs might remember saxophonist Benny Golson from the Steven Spielberg film *The Terminal* (Tom Hanks' character was in America because he needed Golson's autograph to complete his late father's collection, and Golson himself appeared very briefly at the end). Others might recognize his best-known song, "Killer Joe." But serious jazz lovers know that Golson is one of the finest composers in the history of the medium, responsible for certified classics such as "Whisper Not," "I Remember Clifford," and "Blues March." All three are performed in this Berlin concert reuniting Golson with two veteran partners, trumpeter Art Farmer and trombonist Curtis Fuller (who played together in the Jazztet nearly 50 years ago),

and featuring Jon Hendricks, one of the creators of "vocalese" (the technique of singing jazz instrumental solos and adding lyrics to existing melodies). Annoyingly, no date for this gig is supplied, but it's apparently from the late '90s, by which time all four of these front-liners were well into their 60s. While Golson's tunes have been played and recorded a zillion times, these are elegant performances by world-class musicians, backed by a much younger rhythm section and pianist Geoffrey Keezer (not yet 30 at the time), who is simply brilliant, his every solo a minor miracle of chops, energy, and fresh ideas. Presented in Dolby Digital stereo, DVD extras include a few bonus performances (three are audio-only), text bios, and photos. Recommended. Aud: C, P. (S. Graham)

Big Audio Dynamite—Live: E=MC² ★★★

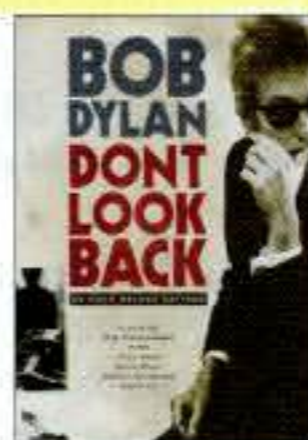
(1992) 50 min. DVD: \$19.95. Music Video Distributors (avail. from most distributors).



Formed in 1984 by lead singer/guitarist Mick Jones after he was let go by Brit punk pioneers The Clash, Big Audio Dynamite split up in 1989, and then reformed as BAD II, releasing their most popular album ever—*The Globe*—in 1991. This 1992 eight-song set from a performance at London's Town and Country Club features a trio of tunes off *The Globe*—including the title track and "Rush," the band's biggest hit—as well as three songs from their 1985 debut *This Is Big Audio Dynamite*, including "E=MC²" and "The Bottom Line." After the departure of Don Letts (who would later direct the excellent 2005 documentary *Punk: Attitude* [VL-11/05]) and others from the original BAD, Jones added Nick Hawkins on lead guitar, Gary Stonadge on bass, and Chris Kavanagh on drums and percussion. Here, they do a nice job of mixing the band's driving beat with their signature spoken word and sound effect samples used in intros and bridges, wrapping up with a rousing rendition of Prince's "1999." Although too short by half at a mere 50 minutes, this is the only BAD music DVD currently available. Presented in Dolby Digital stereo, this is recommended. Aud: P. (R. Pitman)

Bob Dylan: Don't Look Back (65 Tour Deluxe Edition) ★★★1/2

(2006) 2 discs. 152 min. DVD: 49.95 (book included). Docurama (avail. from most distributors). ISBN: 0-7670-9156-6.

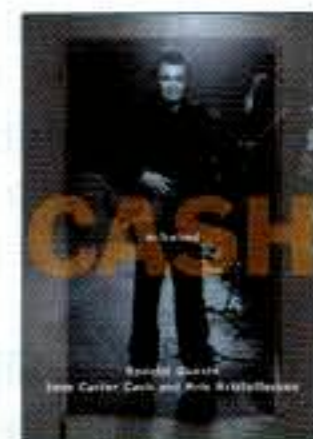


D.A. Pennebaker's original *Don't Look Back*, which has been available on DVD for several years, remains an entertaining if somewhat self-conscious look at Bob Dylan as he travels around England on his final all-acoustic tour

in 1965. Capturing him jousting with the press (he fields their often-inane questions with obfuscation and whimsy), interacting with then-paramour Joan Baez, and performing at several venues, this is essential viewing for Dylan fans and documentary lovers as well (Pennebaker's film has been acclaimed as arguably the best rock documentary ever produced, even though "rock" has precious little to do with it). This two-disc set includes both the original film and a new documentary entitled *Bob Dylan 65 Revisited* featuring more than an hour's worth of previously unseen footage. Normally, bonus footage is more of a warning than an invitation—if the outtakes are so hot, why didn't they make the original cut?—but here we see another side of Dylan—a more genuine, likable side at that. In the somewhat rambling commentary supplied by Pennebaker and Dylan road manager and pal Bob Neuwirth, the director suggests that Dylan was "acting" in much of the original 1967 release, but in the new film he seems friendlier, much more accommodating to his fans, and a good deal less willfully enigmatic. Best of all is the inclusion of some unreleased Dylan solo performances: we catch him fooling around with "It Takes a Lot to Laugh, It Takes a Train to Cry" and "I'll Keep It with Mine" on the piano, and there's concert footage of "It Ain't Me, Babe," "If You Gotta Go," "To Ramona," and other songs. The ample bonus material includes five audio-only numbers, a book containing photos and a complete transcript of the film, and an entertaining frame-by-frame flipbook of the famous "Subterranean Homesick Blues" cue card sequence. Highly recommended. Aud: C, P. (S. Graham)

Cash in Ireland ★★★1/2

(1993) 50 min. DVD: \$14.98. Universal Music Group (avail. from most distributors).



Another month, another Johnny Cash DVD. Or maybe it only seems that way, since the great man's death in 2003 has been followed by a flood of releases (of variable quality) from throughout his career. While not great, *Cash in Ireland* is a serviceable example of Cash's early '90s performances: i.e., a family affair, heavy on the hits, with a persistent cornball element redeemed by Cash's essential class and artistry. With 16 tunes packed into less than an hour, there's no time wasted, as wife June Carter (with sister Helen and daughter Rosie—not Roseanne) and son John Carter Cash share the stage before the Man in Black takes over to perform some of his best known songs, including "Folsom Prison Blues," "Get Rhythm," "Jackson" (with June), "A Boy Named Sue," and, of course, "I Walk the Line." Kris Kristofferson also shows up for "Long Black Veil" and "Big River," and young Rosie comes on like a countrified Etta James