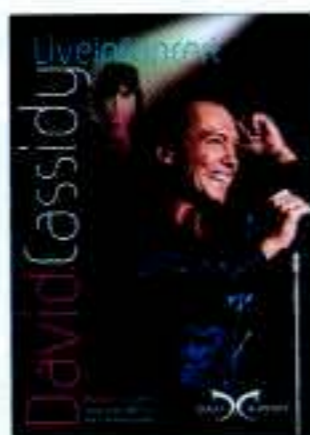


David Cassidy: Live in Concert ★★1/2

(2003) 106 min. DVD: \$19.99. Image Entertainment (avail. from most distributors). Color cover.

David Cassidy's old and new fans will find plenty of enjoyable nostalgia in this Glasgow, Scotland concert, in which the former teen idol and star of television's *The Partridge Family* performs 1970s touchstones ("I Think I Love You," "I Woke Up in Love This Morning") and solo hits ("Could It Be Forever," "I'll Meet You Halfway") that still recall Cassidy's vintage pop sensibility: country touches, dreamy crooning, and grownup arrangements with a glitzy surface for the teenybopper crowd. Cassidy has more problems with the covers in this 20-song set: Deep Purple's "Hush" and Barry Manilow's "I Write the Songs," among others, lack authenticity, and feel like part of a post-icon's attempt to look like a seasoned, show business survivor, a role which obviously makes him twitchy and uncomfortable. Not that the man lacks talent: his cabaret take on "Cry" sounds good and offers a glimpse of the sophistication he may one day wear with conviction. Presented with DTS and Dolby Digital 5.1 sound options, the disc also includes backstage footage. Optional. Aud: P. (T. Keogh)



Dirty Old Town: Ted Leo/Pharmacists vs. Coney Island ★★1/2

(2004) 63 min. DVD: \$24.95. Plexifilm (avail. from most distributors). Color cover.

Another one of those concert/documentary hybrids that can't seem to make up its mind what it really wants to be, Justin Mitchell's misleadingly-named *Dirty Old Town: Ted Leo/Pharmacists vs. Coney Island* cuts between interview footage—mostly with lead singer/songwriter/guitarist Ted Leo—and performance clips of his band playing a summer 2003 concert at Coney Island (I've no idea what the "vs." means, as there is no conflict here, dramatic or real). Leo, a 32-year-old vegan who wears his influences on his musical sleeve (The Jam, The Clash, Elvis Costello, Thin Lizzy, Split Enz) is a laidback, low-key, nondescript kind of guy who's built up a significant audience as an indie alterna-rocker with punk and New Wave roots. On songs such as "Dirty Old Town," "Biomusicology," "The High Party," and "Where Have All the Rude Boys Gone?," Leo and his small backup band rock the house nicely, but the interviews feel meandering and the B-roll footage of Coney Island visitors is just that: nicely-lensed, non-germane background to a film that only finds its rhythm when the band plays, and drifts



aimlessly the rest of the time. DVD extras include an extra half-hour of performance footage. Optional. Aud: P. (R. Pitman)

The Frank Sinatra Show: Welcome Home Elvis ★★★

(1960) 60 min. DVD: \$14.95. Music Video Distributors (avail. from most distributors). Color cover.

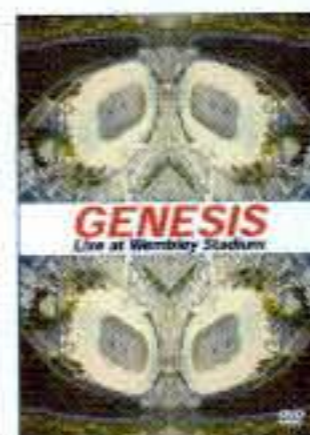
Given that they were, until the arrival of the Beatles, unquestionably the two biggest pop music icons of the 20th century, this 1960 summit meeting between Elvis Presley and Frank Sinatra was genuinely historic. After Elvis, who was recently discharged from the Army, does a couple of solo numbers ("Fame and Fortune" and "Stuck on You"), Ol' Blue Eyes comes on to sing a swingin' "Love Me Tender" while the King counters with the Sinatra standard "Witchcraft." Granted, this bit has been seen many times before, but what's interesting about this program is that it contains the entire TV broadcast, placing the two stars in a context that might best be described as Rat Pack Lite. Dino's nowhere to be seen, but daughter Nancy and Sammy Davis, Jr. are on hand to bolster the Chairman, as are quasi-Packers Peter Lawford (who had some genuine charm and talent) and the egregious Joey Bishop (who had absolutely none of either), and the Rat Pack vibe is in full effect, with everyone kissing up to Frank and casting thinly-veiled racial aspersions at Davis, who just happened to be the most gifted of the whole lot. The black-and-white video quality is pretty awful, and the audio track is beleaguered by loud tape hiss, but all is forgiven when Sinatra does a simply beautiful version of the ballad "Gone with the Wind," with backing arranged and conducted by the great Nelson Riddle. Recommended. Aud: P. (S. Graham)



Genesis: Live at Wembley Stadium ★★★

(1987) 115 min. DVD: \$19.99. Rhino Home Video (avail. from most distributors). Color cover.

In this 1987 concert filmed at London's Wembley Stadium, the prog-rock turned pop-rock Genesis—Phil Collins on drums and vocals, Mike Rutherford on lead guitar, and Tony Banks on keyboards—serves up nearly every track from their 1986 smash release *Invisible Touch* (all but "In Too Deep" and "Anything She Does"), including "Land of Confusion," "Throwing It All Away," "Tonight, Tonight, Tonight," and the title track. Other songs from the predominantly early '80s 14-song set include "Mama," "That's All," and "Home By the Sea" (from the self-



tilted 1983 *Genesis*); the title track from 1981's *Abacab*; and—the *piece de resistance*—an extended "Turn It On Again" (from 1980's *Duke*), stuffed with '60s and '70s hit digressions such as "I Can't Get No (Satisfaction)," "Twist & Shout," "Pinball Wizard," and "In the Midnight Hour." Collins, who alternately seems to be channeling John Cleese and John Belushi, spends more time in front of the microphone than behind his drum kit, but Chester Thompson handles the primary drumming duties nicely, and the pair square off for a crowd-pleasing drum duet at one point. Overall, Genesis (third generation, after the loss of Peter Gabriel and others) fans are likely to enjoy this high-energy, generous rock arena extravaganza, presented in room-encompassing Dolby Digital 5.1 sound. DVD extras include a 17-minute backstage featurette, tour program, and photo gallery. Recommended. Aud: P. (R. Pitman)

Grateful Dead: The Closing of Winterland ★★★1/2

(1978) 2 discs. 375 min. DVD: \$29.95. Monterey Video. Color cover. ISBN: 1-56994-238-2.

If you're into the Grateful Dead, you've probably heard the slogans: you know, like "put on the Dead and spread," or "I need a miracle, man" (the piteous cry of the ticket-seeking wankers outside every Dead-related event). And this one: "There is nothing like a Grateful Dead concert," which may be true but also should be amended with the following: "... except every other Grateful Dead concert." Blasphemy? Maybe to Deadheads, but this two-disc set, all six hours-plus of it (including bonus stuff), really is just a typical Grateful Dead show—notwithstanding the occasion (the New Year's Eve '78 closing of Bill Graham's Winterland, the funky old hall where the band played many times). Of course, that's not necessarily a bad thing. Grateful Dead concerts can be transcendent affairs, when the jamming coalesces and the music, the band, and the audience seem to lift off in some great communal trance. Other times, though, it all just kind of lies there, stoned and indolent. There's some of each vibe in the three full sets here. "Terrapin Station" is lovely and lilting, and "Dark Star/The Other One" has its moments; but far too many others (even the "rockers," like "Not Fade Away" and "Good Lovin'") barely have a pulse. For Deadheads, this will be like going to church: Jerry Garcia in his prime, lots of DVD extras (onscreen lyrics, interviews, a couple of tunes by the Blues Brothers, etc.), DTS and Dolby Digital 5.1 sound, and a trippy light show to boot. For the rest of us, well, how many more versions of "Sugar Magnolia" and "Friend of the Devil" do we really need? Recommended, with reservations. Aud: P. (S. Graham)

