

liard, then took up guitar. The Great Kat is still playing classical tunes (by these really old dead guys like Beethoven, Wagner, and Liszt)—except now she's doin' 'em as speed metal, man! Plus, she's into sadism, castration, spewing lotsa blood all over the place...you know, awesome stuff like that. *And*, she's really, really hot. Yeah, right. Don't believe the hype. The Great Kat may be "the speediest, scariest female shredder of all time," as one testosterone-fueled reviewer put it (talk about damning with faint praise), but to these ears, at least, she pretty much sucks, as the music featured in the six (mercifully brief) videos contained here is such a garbled, frenetic mess of nonstop noise that it's hard to tell if she really is the guitar-violin virtuoso she claims to be. The whole package seems tailor-made for head-banging teenage boys...and no one else. Not recommended. Aud: P. (S. Graham)

Great Stars of Opera

★★★★

(2000) 103 min. DVD: \$24.99 (booklet included). EuroArts (dist. by Naxos of America). Color cover.



Dresden Opera Nights is an annual event taking place in the Theatre Square in front of the city's beautiful opera house and featuring crowd-pleasing numbers by a variety of artists. This program includes highlights from the 1998, 1999, and 2000 seasons: orchestral pieces (the overture to *Die Fledermaus*), familiar arias ("Nessun Dorma" from *Turandot*), Broadway hits ("Anatevka" from *Fiddler on the Roof*), light opera ("Es lebt' eine Vilja" from *The Merry Widow*), and ensemble pieces ("Liabiamo ne' lieti calici" from *La Traviata*), concluding with a rousing rendition of "Wien bleibt Wien" played against a spectacular fireworks display. The "Great Stars" featured here include Lucia Aliberti, Agnes Baltsa, Daniela Barcellona, Gunther Emmerlich, Jerry Hadley, Vincenzo La Scola, Eva Marton, Kurt Rydl, Deborah Sasson, Sandra Schwarzhaupt, Neil Shicoff, and Anna Tomowa-Sintow, in concert with the Prague Symphony Orchestra, Deutsches Filmorchester Babelsberg, and the Penderecki Festival Orchestra. Capturing the flavor of a pleasant summer concert of admittedly light fare, the program—presented in DTS, Dolby Digital 5.1, and PCM stereo—offers a good mix of artist close-ups, background scenery, and audience reaction. Recommended for larger music collections. Aud: P. (J. Reed)

The Human League: Live at the Dome

★★★★1/2

(2003) 87 min. DVD: \$19.95. Music Video Distributors (avail. from most distributors). Color cover.

As Eve Wood's documentary *Made in Sheffield* (VL-9/05) points out, all electronica can

trace its roots to the English working-class industrial burg Sheffield, which spawned such influential synth-pop bands as ABC, Heaven 17, Cabaret Voltaire, and the one true international superstar group, the Human League. Filmed at Brighton's Dome, this 17-song set features the silken-voiced Philip Oakey, joined by Susan Anne Sulley and Joanne Catherall on backup vocals (originally a pair of schoolgirls recruited after the departure of Martyn Ware and Ian Craig Marsh—who formed Heaven 17—Sulley and Catherall were no more than window dressing in 1980 and 25 years later remain so), fronting a solid lineup of synth, keyboards, guitar, and drum/percussion players. Nicely filmed and boasting a gorgeous Dolby Digital 5.1 audio track (as well as a stereo option), *The Human League: Live at the Dome* finds the band in like-they-never-left form on hits such as "Love Action," "Mirror Man," "The Lebanon," "Human," "(Keep Feeling) Fascination," and "Don't You Want Me." DVD extras include a 20-minute backstage American tour featurette, and a 55-minute interview with Oakey, Sulley, and Catherall. Sure to appeal to fans of '80s New Wave everywhere, this is highly recommended. Aud: P. (R. Pitman)



Jodeci: Back to the Future—The Very Best of Jodeci

★★★★1/2
(2005) 47 min. DVD: \$14.98. Universal Music & Video (avail. from most distributors). Color cover.



There's an obvious problem with a greatest hits package from a group that only produced three albums: the pickings can be pretty slim. Still, early Diddy protégés Jodeci hit the R&B charts 10 times between 1991 and 1995 with singles from their albums *Forever My Lady*, *Diary of a Mad Band* and *The Show, The After Party, The Hotel*, and all are represented in this video collection. Unfortunately, while the songs themselves often settle into fine mid- to slow-tempo grooves, it doesn't take long for the parade of videos to seem pretty repetitive, as there isn't a whole lot of narrative here, mostly just the DeGrate and Hailey siblings posing, glaring, finger-pointing, and ripping off their shirts to reveal their washboard abs and boxer-short waistbands. Make no mistake, the dudes be sculpted, but after so many six-packs, things start to feel a little bloated. On the plus side, there's a live version of "Lately" taken from the *MTV Unplugged* series, some funny business in "Feenin'," gorgeous vocals on "Love U 4 Life," and the closing video—"Get On Up," directed by Marcus Nispel—finds black-and-white beauty in bodies moving with the beat. Presented in DTS, Dolby Digital 5.1 and stereo, DVD extras include two alternate

versions of "Come and Talk to Me" and the previously unreleased video for "Lately." For hardcore fans, and fans of hard bodies, this is optional elsewhere. Aud: P. (M. Moore)

Lamb of God: Killadelphia

★★★1/2
(2005) 120 min. DVD: \$14.98. Sony Music (avail. from most distributors). Color cover.



Thrash metal band Lamb of God may sound like the roaring Beastmaster himself arriving by Harley, but behind the scenes, group members are a bunch of wine-sipping, practical-joke playing, wife-loving romantic pussycats given to topical debates and skydiving for kicks. Part concert footage featuring over two dozen tracks, and part fly-on-the-wall documentary about the ups and downs of touring, *Lamb of God: Killadelphia* is surprisingly entertaining, even for those who loathe death metal music. Despite daily hazards such as rental truck breakdowns, late arrival of equipment and show delays, or adoring fans, the band members keep their cool with wit and graceful camaraderie. Meanwhile, Lamb of God's grinding, apocalyptic wall of sound, especially singer Randy Blythe's croaking, monster vocals, whip a Philadelphia crowd into hell bound fury. DVD extras include three music videos, one of which is an uncensored "Now You've Got Something to Die For." Recommended for larger music collections, this is a strong optional purchase elsewhere. Aud: P. (T. Keogh)

Le Mozart Noir

★★★★
(2003) 180 min. DVD: \$19.95. CBC Home Video (dist. by Naxos of America). Color cover. ISBN: 1-55259-440-8.



A Canadian production, *Le Mozart Noir* aims to rescue from obscurity a musical figure of the late 18th century: Joseph Boulogne, Le Chevalier de Saint-Georges, a skilled composer and violinist who was born on Guadeloupe, the son of an African slave and her wealthy French master. After being brought to France by his father for a proper education, Boulogne not only became a noteworthy musician but also a master fencer (as well as a notorious ladies' man and, during the revolution of the 1790s, a general in charge of a contingent of a thousand black troops). Combining a biography with an introduction to his compositions, the program's musical performances—courtesy of the outstanding original instrument orchestra Tafelmusik, led by violinist Jeanne Lamon—reveal Saint-Georges to have been a proficient exponent of the gallant style. And even though the acoustic seems a bit too resonant, the Dolby Digital 5.0 sound is excellent, and comments from Lamon and several other musicians are illuminat-