

# VISIONS OF SOUND MUSIC ON DVD

## THE JESUS LIZARD Live

Still at the height of their prowess just after the release of *Down* (and before the jump from indie Touch and Go to major Capitol), the gods of spastic noise rock, the Jesus Lizard unleashed this 14-song set. Filmed remarkably well, and featuring great audio, this 1994 Boston performance captures the trademarks of any of the Jesus Lizard's legendary live shows: singer David Yow relentlessly throwing himself into the crowd, baiting the audience in between vocal seizures, while the incredible musicians play fast and loose with "hits" such as "Mouthbreather," "Puss," "Boilermaker" and many more. Yow and his craziness are the focal points, although he restrains his usual nudity, but one watches in stunned amazement as he launches himself into the crowd over and over, never seeming to miss a word. This is a welcome reminder of when "indie" music was confrontational and unpredictable, and of a band at their peak. Also included is a five-song set from CBGB from 1992 that sacrifices audio and visual fidelity for a sense of claustrophobia and increased danger. (MVD, www.mvdb2b.com)  
Chris Gramlich

## GIL SCOTT-HERON New Morning: The Paris Concert

Though long hailed on a cult level as one of the most inspirational warriors of '70s soul music for his pointed social commentary and richly emotive, poetic lyricism, Gil Scott-Heron's personal life in recent years has been no less than a tragic mess of drugs, poverty and incarceration. *New Morning* finds Heron during one of his brief positive moments back in 2001, performing at the Paris club of the same name. Surprisingly together given his much publicised crack addiction, Heron runs through classic cuts like "A Lovely Day" and "Did You Hear What They Said," dancing and leading the audience through a funky call-and-response version of "Angel Dust," and setting up "Winter in America" with a long, vamp-y introductory story via "Everybody Loves The Sunshine." The

enthusiastic, sturdy-voiced singer and his band wind down a set peppered with slick improvisations with fan favourite "The Bottle," closing out a show that gives an interesting glimpse of what could have been all these years had Heron only found a reason to get his life straight. (Inakustik, www.inakustik.com)  
Kevin Jones

## FRANK ZAPPA Apostrophe(1)/Over-Nite Sensation

The trend of "immortalising" audio artefacts (read: "classic albums") by putting out films and literature devoted to these works is at once thoughtful and interesting, and anal and problematic. In terms of an artist like Zappa, it makes total sense because he was an obsessive archivist, not only releasing mountains of diverse material but also thoroughly documenting the processes. The decision to do a doc on two specific albums is an obviously subjective one, but the producers do well by tying in aspects of Zappa's career that fans will find indispensable. For example, the trip into the vault with the archivist, which aside from the music stories, is a time trip through the history of recording, from quarter-inch reels to digital mayhem. There are great interviews with everybody from Steve Vai and Ruth Underwood to Billy Bob Thornton, Alice Cooper and the unsung heroes of sound engineering that facilitated Zappa's music and art. My favourite bits are the scenes of Dweezil Zappa, with archivist Joe Travers, sitting at the mixing board analysing some of the songs from these albums and finding stuff they never knew existed. While Zappa fanatics will gobble this up, fans of music will find this an interesting addition to any analysis of the creative process, as well as rude behaviour. (Eagle Rock, www.eaglerockent.com)  
Nilan Perera

## TIME OUT Presents THE OTHER SIDE OF BERLIN MIXED BY ELLEN ALLIEN

The latest volume of *Time Out's* project that recruits musicians as tastemakers, shining the bright lights on selected parts



Jesus Lizard

of their native city, features BPitch Control label owner/musician Ellen Allien taking us on an audio-visual tour through her favourite spots in Berlin. For the first 45 minutes, Allien speaks to the viewer in English and German while visiting clothing, record and music equipment shops, her favourite restaurants and even her friends (Richie Hawtin cameos with some Berlin dating advice). A fairly exhaustive appendix follows that informs of even more places to shop, eat, stay and experience Berlin nightlife. The accompanying CD is a compilation of previously released

material from various artists that had a hand in the architecture of Berlin's multi-faceted electronic scene. The disc begins with David Bowie's German version of "Heroes" and also includes contemporary minimal techno, dub tech featuring Booka Shade, I & Sound, Plastikman, Monolake, N. Kitten and Villalobos. These mini-documentaries are interesting because they reveal some quirky private tastes of your favourite musicians. (Deaf, Deaf & Blind, www.deafdumbandblind.com)  
Stephanie Kale

village in Alsace, your involvement in their plight will be total. The extras consist of a decent "making of" featurette and a melancholy animated short by Bouchareb, "The Colonial Friend," about a Senegalese recruit fighting for France in 1940. (Alliance Atlantis)  
Mark Carpenter

## MONKEY WARFARE (Directed by Reginald Harkema)

Most Canadian films get made with high hopes, play for two weeks in three cities and then disappear into a big black hole never to be heard from again. Do me a favour: make sure that *Monkey Warfare* isn't one of those. Dan (Don McKellar) and Linda (Tracy Wright) are ex-radicals who eke out a living by picking through garbage and garage sales for items they can sell. When their pot connection gets busted, Dan fortuitously meets young, pretty dealer Susan (Nadia Litz), whom he turns on to the lore of militant groups while demonstrating his shaky "commitment." Unfortunately, the lessons take and Susan starts her own terrorist cell, which not only behaves irresponsibly but threatens the tenuous existence of the two older radicals and their terrible secret. Though deceptively simple, the movie manages to touch on issues such as the apparent impotence of the left, the floating values of various

hipster commodities and the un-sureness of undertaking political action. It also deftly sketches many facts of Toronto life, such as bike culture and the rapidly gentrifying Queen West neighbourhood. All this and it's sardonically funny as well. Pointed, acid-tongued, outraged and outrageous, it's everything that CanCon is usually not while topping most Yankee pictures as well. This is a film not to be missed. Extras include a joke-y commentary with McKellar, Wright and Litz, and a complete rough-cut of the film with a more pointed yak track by director Reginald Harkema and editor Kathy Weinkauf. (Alliance Atlantis)  
Travis Mackenzie Hoover

## PRINCE OF THE CITY (Directed by Sidney Lumet)

In the "behind the scenes" look at Sidney Lumet's forgotten nugget, *Prince of the City*, the director mentions the mixed reviews and poor box office take that his film opened to. It isn't hard to imagine how this tense and atmospheric portrait of a corrupt cop got lost in the shuffle back in 1981. While *Prince of the City* is a rich and meticulous character study in the fashion of the finest gritty dramas from the golden '70s, it was headlined by the melodramatic tough cop that the '80s had a hard on for. Caught between these, the film seemed to have slipped into an elapsed vault and remained

there until now, reappearing on a new double-disc DVD. Based on the true story of Robert Leuci (who also appears on the featurette), *Prince of the City* is a finely detailed and sprawling account of a corrupt undercover narcotics cop, Danny Ciello (Treat Williams), who seeks redemption by "turning." Seeking freedom from his own guilt, Ciello goes undercover to expose other crooked cops amongst the NYPD. What begins as a few routine wiretap jobs expands into years of paperwork, repeated cross-examinations, endless legal squabbles, death threats and finally, Ciello being forced to betray his own partners. It's an ambitious project from Lumet, a man that sat amongst the monarchs of the '70s with films like *Serpico*, which *Prince* closely resembles, *Dog Day Afternoon* and *Network*, and whose sure-fire direction and talent for eliciting solid performances find a worthy showcase in this film. Yet the filmmaker takes a few ill-advised turns in the extensive 167-minute narrative, which favours the macho and the melodramatic. So, while the film is still worthwhile viewing, these regrettable choices make us wonder what kind of masterpiece *Prince of the City* would have been had it appeared just two years earlier and steered clear of the '80s. (Warner)  
Radheyana Simonpillai

## RIO BRAVO (Directed by Howard Hawks)

To many, *Rio Bravo* is a pinnacle western, a distillation of the genre's thematic tropes, starring the man's man John Wayne — and his mate Howard Hawks film, a meditation on the bonds men share among themselves, allowing only the occasional female outsider to play on the field. Personally, I prefer other westerns: the vast, breathtaking vistas of John Ford's surreal artfulness of Sergio Leone; I prefer other Hawks films (the greater realism of the original 1932 *Stagecoach* or the light delight of 1938's *Bringing Up Baby* or 1940's *His Girl Friday*). Not to disparage the craft, perspective or influence of *Bravo*, which brought the western back from the brink of box office death and led to a long resurgence that indeed, all the rise of Leone. Part of its "ultimate western" appeal is that *Rio Bravo* is something for everyone: Wayne draws, as he moves from the yoke of *Stagecoach* into his later, more mature, an unexpectedly good performance as a deputy trying to get out of a bottle; and young superman Nelson (*The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*) as the young gun in town, a feisty, sarcastic Hawks-ian woman, Angie Dickenson — in fact, Havenly women were so of a type that several of Dickenson's lines are lifted from film *To Have and Have Not* (starring Lauren Bacall), made 15 years

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