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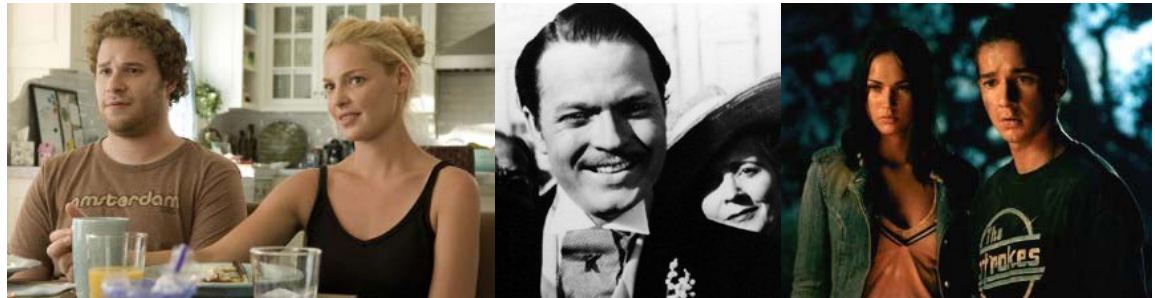
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## Larry Coryell: A Retrospective



This entry was posted on 5/15/2007 11:50 PM and is filed under [DVD Reviews](#).

With his shock of white hair and broad, friendly face, master guitarist Larry Coryell looks a bit like Harry Caray by way of *Saturday Night Live*'s master impressionist Darrell Hammond. **A pioneer of rock-jazz fusion**, Coryell has, over the course of a long and lucrative career, recorded as a bandleader, soloist and featured player, while also cultivating a reputation as one heck of a nice guy — **a virtuoso craftsman with the disposition of an amiable and knowledgeable guitar shop veteran**.

Recorded at The Avalon Club in Hollywood, on October 13, 2005, **the two-disc, simply titled *A Retrospective* provides an alluring overview of his canon**. Given Coryell's ample output — more than 70 albums over the past three-plus decades, from his groundbreaking work with The 11th House to a string of solo albums for Arista Records in the late 1970s — any sort of whittling down is bound to produce debate centered as much around the exclusions as the songs that made the final cut. Believe it or not, I'd never heard of Coryell until his fine interpretations of Ravel and Gershwin in the 1990s — music not included here. Based on the alternately electrifying and evocative nature of what *is* here, though, it's hard to argue too much with the final track listing.

**Influenced in equal measure by Chet Atkins and the note-bending work of Jimi Hendrix**, Coryell is a monster on guitar throughout the show, and frequent collaborator Bernard "Pretty" Purdie sits in on drums, to nice effect. Several special guests, including Maroon 5's James Valentine and Los Lobos' David Hidalgo, also drop by and lend their talents in homage to Coryell. A fairly simple introduction gives way to "After Later," and **the two-fer of "Souls Meeting" and "Souls Dirge" is surely something in which modern-day Arcade Fire fans could find purchase**. The rest of the track listing is as follows: "Hidalgo Rehearsal," "Slow Blues," "Half a Heart," "Valentine Rehearsal," "Beautiful Woman," "Stiff Neck," "Morning Sickness," "Beyond This Chilling Wind," "Spaces (Infinite)" and "Dragon Gate."

**Presented on region-free discs in a widescreen aspect ratio** enhanced for 16x9 televisions, *A Retrospective* comes anchored by a somewhat desultory stereo PCM audio track, and packaged in a standard Amray case with snap-tray insert. While a straightforward biography would have been a nice inclusion for neophyte jazz fans, special features consist of additional rehearsal footage of tunes not featured in concert, as well as an interview with the humble Coryell, who hints at a bout with drug addiction that cost him some of his best years. **B (Concert) B (Disc)**

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