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New Morning 25th Anniversary DVD Set: 1981 – 2006 (MVD/Inakustik)

Picture: C Sound: C+ Extras: D
Compilation: B



You would never know it from all the newer DVDs of material of the series we have covered to date, many of which were disappointments technically and in content, but the New Morning series, now celebrating a quarter century with the new 2-DVD **25th Anniversary DVD Set: 1981 – 2006**. The first disc spans 1994 – 2001, barely covering the missing years, but offering better performances by the Archie Shepp Band, Ray Brown Trio, Gil Scott-Heron and Robben Ford Band than the second DVD, with lesser known acts and a few known ones (Billy Cobham Culture Mix) repeating some tracks previously issued.

Billie Holiday on the back of the case might give you the impression she is here, despite dying long before 1981, but that is typical of this set, which should offer much more background info for its 240 minutes, extras and a booklet, none of which are here. For what is here, the music is good, but even in celebrating an anniversary, seems to come up short.

The various aspect ratios for the clips are good, but vary in image quality throughout. Though DTS 5.1 and Dolby Digital 5.1 are offered, the PCM 2.0 16/48 Stereo often sounds best and many of the older recordings show their age, though we have (as we had with many previous DVD releases in the series) disappointment with the 5.1 mixes to begin with. There are no extras.

- Nicholas Sheffo

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