

### Corea dekalog

Nine highly satisfying concerts by jazz pianist Chick Corea are gathered in the impressive ten-platter set from Image Entertainment, **Chick Corea Rendezvous in New York** (ID1796IEDVD, \$100). The tenth platter is a documentary about the other programs, although it contains enough music to qualify as a tenth performance show as well. Each set runs under an hour and appears on a separate platter. The picture, letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback, is immaculate and the sound, available in 4.0-channel Dolby Digital and a crisper 4.0-channel DTS, is outstanding, with distinctive separations and a strong dimensionality. There is no captioning. Each program has a brief introduction but is otherwise uninterrupted.

The opening program is probably the most unique, *Chick Corea & Bobby McFerrin Duet*. Running 46 minutes, McFerrin's unusual vocal instrumentals make a challenging counterpoint to Corea's impulsive improvisations, and it is only as you watch Corea concentrate on McFerrin and provide the space around the vocals that you begin to see how delicate and close to the edge McFerrin's performance is. There are two other duet programs and each is highly satisfying, although much less of a high-wire act. *Chick Corea and Gary Burton Duet* is an entertaining 53-minute set pairing off Corea's piano with Burton's vibraphone. The sticks Burton uses to play his instrument create a visual kineticism that adds to the performance dynamic (the set is more relaxing, however, if you don't look at it). Corea joins with a fellow pianist on the 49-minute *Chick Corea & Gonzalo Rubalcaba Duet*, the two avoiding the temptation to duel as they build upon one another's dexterities.

Corea is joined by Ray Haynes, Christian McBride, Joshua Redman and Terence Blanchard for a look back to classic jazz constructions in the 50-minute *Remembering Bud Powell Band*, while he looks to the future of jazz by using younger musicians on the 56-minute *Chick Corea & Origin*, including Avishai Cohen, Jeff Ballard, Steve Wilson, Steve Davis and Tim Garland. Probably the most satisfying offering in the collection, *Three Quartets Band* runs 52 minutes and features Michael Brecker, Eddie Gomez and Steve Gadd. The program is both earnest and smooth, inventive yet inviting, and each of the musicians is on par with Corea, not just in the sense of musicianship, but in terms of screen presence, making the program as exciting as it is relaxing.

There are three programs in the collection where Corea is backed up only by a bass and drums, *Now He Sings, Now He Sobs Trio*, running 49 minutes and featuring Haynes and Miroslav Vitous; *Chick Corea New Trio* running 52 minutes and featuring Cohen and Ballard; and *Chick Corea Akoustic Band*, running 48 minutes and featuring John Patitucci and Dave Weckl. Although Corea's *Akoustic* programs haven't been among his strongest offerings in the past (and here he does a rendition of *Someday My Prince Will Come*—it's decent, but it's still *Someday My Prince Will Come*), its inclusion is entirely appropriate in the context of the other shows, and Patitucci & Weckl are much stronger individual contributors than Vitous & Haynes or Cohen & Ballard. All three programs tend to showcase Corea more than the duets or his collaboration with the larger bands.

The documentary, entitled *Rendezvous in New York — The Movie*, runs 100 minutes, explaining how the series was set up, going over each collaboration, and providing a healthy sampling of each show.

### Rock stars at play

Essentially an elaborate home movie by a rock band with seemingly nothing better to do, **Where Is Chesterfield King?**, has been released by MVD (DR4465, \$15). Ostensibly, an 'alien'—a guy in a jumpsuit with an aluminum foil, disc-shaped collar—messes with them, and they fight back. Parts of the movie were shot on their off time at various stops around the world during a concert tour (they visit Abbey Road). Presented in intentionally scratchy and somewhat blurry full screen black and white, there are performance sequences in the 70-minute program (the band has a decent, slightly retro rock sound), but most of it is silliness that will delight their friends a great deal more than it will delight the casual viewer.

The 5.1-channel Dolby Digital sound delivers the music well enough, and the badly recorded dialog all too well. There is no captioning. Also featured is a 10-minute clip of stage performances with varying audio quality, a nice 3-minute color music video evoking the late Sixties and light shows, a trailer, and 13 minutes of footage from the premiere of the film in Rochester NY in 2000.

### Upchurch riffs

A pleasant 57-minute jazz guitar set from 1992 is presented on **Phil Upchurch in Concert**, an Inakustik *Ohne Filter Musik Pur* release (INAK65381DVD, \$20). Although Upchurch veers closely at times to the blander sounds of MOR jazz guitar music, he retains just enough blues sensibilities to avoid that pitfall. As pleasant as the music is, too, the images in the intimate *Ohne Filter* performance space are even more engaging, with the editing jumping about to catch vivid close-ups of Upchurch and his backup musicians as they infuse their music with the energy of their enthusiasms.

The full screen picture is reasonably sharp and detailed. The 5.1-channel Dolby Digital sound is clear, with a strong dimensionality. Also

featured is a text profile of Upchurch and the usual 5-minute interview with *Ohne Filter* producer, Michael Au.

### Rubbed the wrong way

A British softcore sex film that goes through the trouble to develop its characters effectively only to place them in a story so blandly predictable that the heroine's emotional funk at the end becomes the viewer's, **Sex Clinic**, is available as a Salvation Films *Jezebel* release (ID0934SGDVD, \$15). The 1971 production begins promisingly with Georgina Ward portraying the owner of a massage emporium who coaxes large sums of money out of her clients and then drops them or blackmails them when they run out of cash. But she meets a wealthy man and falls for him, willingly turning over her savings when his big financial deal hits a snag, and if you can't see what's going to happen next, don't open any e-mails from Africa. The erotic sequences are nicely varied and reasonably paced, and the psychology of each character is adeptly communicated, but it is all a let down when the twists unwind at the end and the previously intelligent heroine turns out to be as stupid as her lowliest trick.

The full screen picture is no stranger to stray speckles and is a little soft at times, but hues and fleshtones are reasonably accurate and appealing. The monophonic sound is tolerable and there is no captioning. The 86-minute program comes with a minute-long montage of promotional materials.

### Don't you miss the Sixties?

Three programs from the days when sex films weren't just about sex are combined on **The Sin Syndicate/Sin Magazine/She Came on the Bus**, a Chiller Theatre Something Weird Video release (ID1232SWDVD, \$20). All three full screen black-and-white features have touches of violence. *The Sin Syndicate*, from 1965, which runs 65 minutes, is about several spiritually lost women who are coerced into working as prostitutes. As they sit around between jobs, each one shares her backstory—one includes fascinating footage taken of the Cuban Revolution; there is also footage from the London Blitz. In *She Came on the Bus* from 1969, running 63 minutes, a group of young thugs terrorize and abuse a housewife and her visitor, and then hijack a bus so they can pick up passengers and abuse them. Somehow, they make it look like it would be a fun thing to do. *Sin Magazine* from 1965, which runs 64 minutes, has the most complex narrative of the three, about a group of would-be magazine publishers who go to an upstate farmhouse to put together a mock up of their first issue. The story explores the dynamics of their personalities and desires as it moves forward coherently with the project of putting the magazine together, until one of the collaborators goes crazy from, well, being exposed to all that sex.

On all three, the source material is battered but watchable. On all three as well, the dialog is in voiceover (*She Came on the Bus* has no dialog at all) and the monophonic sound is wobbly. There is no captioning. Also featured are seven trailers for similar films and a 12-minute montage of exploitation ad art (in alphabetical order for a while), accompanied by exploitation film radio ads.

### Our Ninth Annual Consumer Poll

Warner Home Video captured three of the top five slots in this year's Ninth Annual DVD Consumer Poll. The outstanding two-platter release of the 1933 classic, **King Kong**—last year's most requested title, by the way—received nearly 10% of the votes for the best DVD to be released in 2005, followed by Warner's expanded collector's edition of **The Wizard of Oz**, which had 9.5% of the vote. 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox Home Entertainment's **Star Wars III Revenge of the Sith** was third with about 6% of the votes, followed by Paramount's **Titanic Special Collector's Edition** with 4% and Warner's expanded collector's edition of **Ben-Hur** with 2%. After that comes Warner's expanded collector's edition of **Gone with the Wind** and Walt Disney Home Entertainment's **The Incredibles**, both with 1.5% of the vote, Fox's expanded collector's edition of **The Day After Tomorrow** and DreamWorks Home Entertainment's expanded collector's edition of **Gladiator** with 1% of the vote, and, in descending order, Paramount's release of the **War of the Worlds** remake and Warner's **Greta Garbo The Signature Collection**.

### Twelve Favorite DVDs

1. **The Lord of the Rings**
2. **Gladiator**
3. **The Adventures of Robin Hood**
4. **King Kong**
5. **Gone with the Wind**
6. **The Incredibles**
7. **Lawrence of Arabia**
8. **North by Northwest**
9. **The Wizard of Oz**
10. **The Indiana Jones Trilogy**
11. **Terminator 2 Judgment Day**
12. **Titanic**