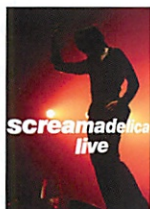


and stereo on DVD, and DTS HD 5.1, Dolby Digital 5.1, and PCM stereo on Blu-ray, this is recommended. (B. Gibron)

Screamadelica Live

★★★

(2010) 79 min. DVD or Blu-ray: \$19.98. Eagle Rock Entertainment (avail. from most distributors).



British neo-psychedelic rock outfit Primal Scream perform their 1991 album *Screamadelica* in its entirety in this 2010 concert filmed at London's Olympia venue. Although Primal Scream never really broke up, the band has seen numerous personnel changes and long periods between projects. But the group is in fine form for this 10-song set featuring frontman Bobby Gillespie, guitarists Andrew Innes and Barrie Cadogan, keyboardist Martin Duffy, bassist Gary "Mani" Mounfield, and drummer Darrin Mooney. The shaggy danceability of wonderful workout songs like "Don't Fight It, Feel It," "Shine Like Stars," and "Loaded" keep the crowd moving, while a gospel choir, brass section, and films by artist Jim Lambie projected onto a backdrop add to the exuberance. Presented in Dolby Digital 5.1 and stereo on DVD, and DTS-HD 5.1, Dolby Digital 5.1, and LPCM stereo on Blu-ray, extras include a 40-minute "rock and roll" set (with tracks including "Accelerator," "Burning Wheel," and "Suicide Bomb"), and the behind-the-scenes documentary "Classic Albums—Screamadelic." Recommended. (B. Gibron)

Spectacle: Elvis Costello with... Season Two

★★★★1/2

(2009) 2 discs. 350 min. DVD: \$29.95, Blu-ray: \$39.95. Music Video Distributors (avail. from most distributors).



Elvis Costello returns with more big names in this seven-episode 2009 second season compilation from his acclaimed Sundance series combining music and interviews filmed in Toronto's Masonic Temple and New York's Apollo. With personal favorites like producer Nick Lowe among the guests, Costello doesn't feign objectivity, but he still asks questions that are more educated than ingratiating. In the first episode, Costello welcomes U2's Bono and The Edge, who talk about their work with Brian Eno, Daniel Lanois, and Steve Lillywhite. In addition to performing their set, the pair cite the Clash and Costello's Attractions as inspirations (Costello performs "Mysterious Ways" before they come onstage). In another segment, Costello and Bruce Springsteen enjoy a two-part mutual admiration session sure to please fans of both musicians. When Costello puts together a "guitar pull," he chats with the artists between songs, including Sheryl Crow

(who performs "If It Makes You Happy"), Ron Sexsmith, Neko Case, and Jesse Winchester. Sometimes audience members rival the performers in terms of fame, as when Steve Buscemi appears during the episode with Lowe, Richard Thompson, Allen Toussaint, and Levon Helm. Ray LaMontagne shows up at the end of this episode to add vocals to The Band's "The Weight," then returns for the show with John Prine and Lyle Lovett. Costello himself takes the spotlight in one installment, reminiscing about Paul McCartney and Burt Bacharach while being interviewed by Mary-Louise Parker. Presented with Dolby Digital 5.1 and stereo options on DVD, and DTS-HD 5.1 and LPCM stereo options on Blu-ray, extras include a behind-the-scenes documentary and three bonus songs. Highly recommended. (K. Fennessy)

Theodora ★★★

(2009) 189 min. DVD: 2 discs, \$39.99, Blu-ray: \$39.99. Unitel Classica (dist. by Naxos of America).



With today's audiences demanding more visual excitement in classical concerts, it's become increasingly common for oratorios to be staged as though they were operas. In that vein, this 2009 Salzburg Festival production of Handel's 1750 work about Theodora, a fourth-century Christian martyr, and Didymus, a Roman soldier who chooses to die with her, is dramatized somewhat here by performers wearing tuxedos and evening dresses. Christof Loy's staging has the soloists gesticulating more than usual and the chorus moving chairs around the stage to no apparent purpose. We also witness countertenor Bejun Mehta (who offers stirring vocalism as Didymus) strip to his underwear and then don the red dress worn by Theodora (sung well by Christine Schäfer), presumably to signify his embrace of shared martyrdom. The balance of the solo singing is also excellent, with particularly fine performances by Joseph Kaiser as Didymus' friend Septimius, and Johannes Martin Kränzle as lustful Roman governor Valens. The Salzburg Bach Chorus and the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra (playing on original instruments) shine under conductor Ivor Bolton. One of Handel's late masterpieces, *Theodora* is presented in DTS 5.1 and PCM stereo on DVD, and DTS-HD 5.1 on Blu-ray. Recommended. (F. Swietek)

Tosca ★★★

(2006) 119 min. In Italian w/ English subtitles. DVD: \$32.98, Blu-ray: \$45.98. Arthaus Musik (dist. by Naxos of America).



The most notable aspect of this 2006 performance of Puccini's popular opera—about the titular diva who goes to extreme lengths to try to save her lover, the painter

Cavaradossi, from the machinations of the evil baron Scarpia—is the locale: the huge outdoor Arena di Verona, which dates from Roman times and accommodates an audience of some 20,000, an enormous venue that allows for a sumptuous physical production. The set is dominated by the gigantic bust of an ancient statue, with one hand holding a sword and the other a cross, to which are added extraordinarily elegant furnishings and costumes, resulting in a visually striking performance, especially since the camerawork keeps us close to the action. Vocally the star is unquestionably Marcelo Álvarez, whose ringing tenor makes him a superb Cavaradossi. In the title role, Fiorenza Cedolins brings great intensity to her singing, but her tone goes hard and wobbly in the upper registers; and while veteran Ruggero Raimondi oozes malevolence as Scarpia, his voice sounds rather gravelly. The orchestra plays with bite and power under Daniel Oren's baton, nicely captured in the audio options that include Dolby Digital 5.1, DTS 5.1, and LPCM stereo on DVD, and DTS-HD 5.1 and PCM stereo on Blu-ray. Recommended. (F. Swietek)

Willie and the Poor Boys: One Night Only ★★1/2

(1985) 60 min. DVD: \$19.95. Music Video Distributors (avail. from most distributors).



You could say that *Willie and the Poor Boys* captures an unprecedented gathering of rock royalty, with members of the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, Faces, the Who, Bad Company, and even Jimmy Page joining forces for an evocation of rock 'n' roll's golden era, all for charity—and you'd be half right. The purpose was to raise funds for research on multiple sclerosis, the disease that would eventually claim bassist Ronnie Lane. The titular core band, with the Stones' Bill Wyman and Charlie Watts accompanied by veteran sidemen like guitarist Andy Fairweather-Low and pianist Geraint Watkins, recorded decent versions of Chuck Berry's "You Never Can Tell," Otis Redding's "These Arms of Mine," the blues standard "Baby Please Don't Go," and others. But the performances here, filmed in 1985 in a setting designed to re-create a '50s sock hop, are poorly lip-synced and unexciting (although the dancing is cool). And that all-star lineup touted on the cover? Well, guitarist Ron Wood plays saxophone, drummer Kenney Jones bangs a tambourine, and the Who's John Entwistle stands in the audience, drinking a beer. Guitarist-songwriter Page and singer Paul Rodgers don't actually appear at all, but are heard on a single tune on the soundtrack. And the Beatles-Stones "collaboration" is a joke: Ringo Starr has about six lines of dialogue at the very end, when Wyman and Watts are long gone. Presented in DTS 5.1, Dolby Digital 5.1 and stereo, DVD extras include a "making-of" featurette. Optional. (S. Graham)