

sound check

More than meets the eye



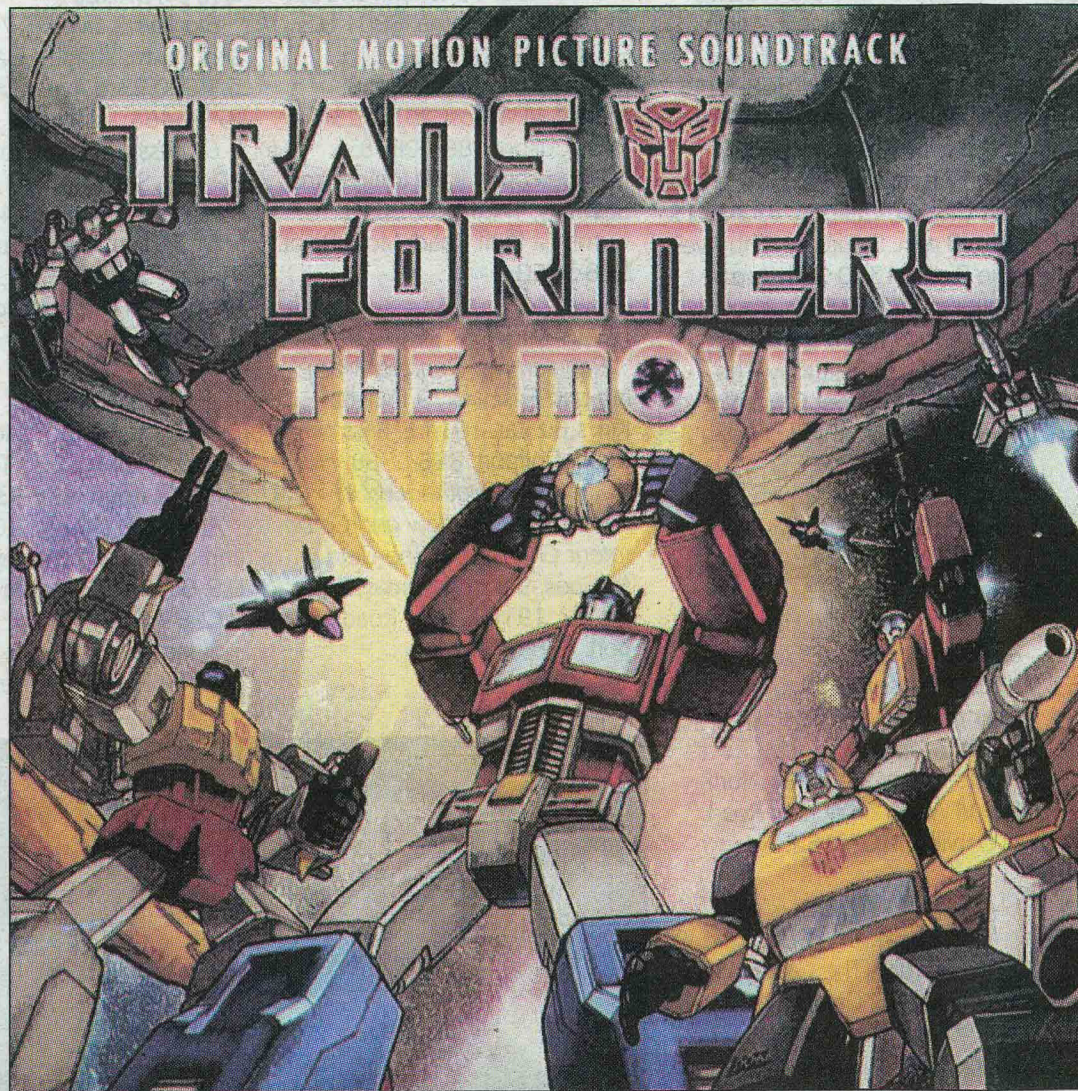
"DVD Collector's Box," U2 (Chrome Dreams/MVD, ★★★)

This two-disc June 5 release was made with fans and collectors in mind, including color picture discs, plus extensive interviews, previously unseen footage and insider information. However, like the Guns & Roses box reviewed awhile back, a disclaimer appears saying that there's no U2 music or performances included.

Disc one, "The Unforgettable Journey," traces U2's career from their beginnings near a Dublin school where drummer Larry Mullen, Jr., was advertising for band members. The disc makes a lot of stops along the way, talking with knowledgeable people. But, it gives no hints of what U2 may be up to next. Their "back to basics" album, "All That I Can't Leave Behind," is the last one mentioned.

The pretentiously-titled second disc, "Bono: God's Favourite Son," enlightens us on why Bono is a tireless crusader for African AIDS Relief, Greenpeace and other causes. Both discs feature U2 acquaintances, friends, music business colleagues and workers from various Bono-sanctioned charities. The band also donates big money to various causes that don't make the donations public.

This is a good collector's item, so grab it locally or online at www.mvdvisual.com.

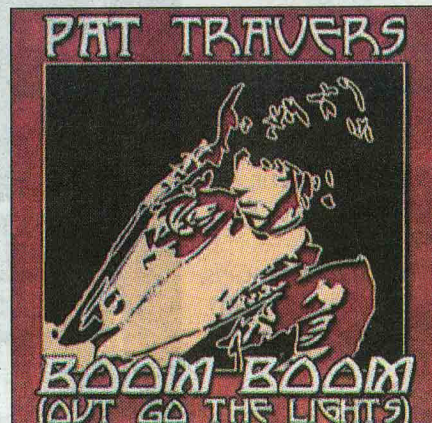


"Transformers: The Movie-20th Anniversary Special Edition," (Volcano/Legacy, ★★★)

U2 and the toy robots that could be transformed into cars, dinosaurs, planes and other things arrived in my life during the early 1980s, when I taught at a Maryland school with a "no toys in class" policy. This young teacher was required to confiscate the toys, return them at the end of the day, and if they continued to show up, call parents to retrieve them. So, I began to examine the Transformers, and found them to be pretty cool.

The 1986 movie, featuring the voices of Eric Idle, Leonard Nimoy and others, was released on DVD last fall, selling over 250,000 copies.

With a new Spielberg live-action version coming in July, this is a perfect time for fans to get on the bandwagon, since the Transformers are hugely popular



across the worlds of comics, cartoons, toys and other media. The popular theme song is here in two different versions, and there's lots of serviceable '80s metal and soundtrack music here, all composed by Vince DiCola. Get your copy locally or online at www.legacyrecordings.com

"Boom Boom (Out Go the Lights)," Pat Travers (MVDaudio, ★★★)

Canadian guitar hero Pat Travers had FM radio success during my teen years, including the original recordings of some songs here, such as the title tune. The balance of this album is Pat and band covering tunes from hard rock's "golden era."

Sounds like a good idea, and it is. But these faithful cover versions don't add much to the originals. Travers' take on Aerosmith's "Last Child" is a little quicker, but the absence of Steven Tyler's distinctive vocal style is a drawback. I heard local bar bands play the two ZZ Top songs proficiently back in the day, as well as one of my favorite Lynrd Skynrd tunes featured here, "Gimme Back My Bullets."

The highlight for me is the powerful closer,

UFO's "Lights Out," where Pat's crew does a good job of replicating the rush of the British band featuring Michael Schenker on one of his many guitar showcases.

Still, many listeners will dig these songs on one package. Snag it locally or online at www.mvdaudio.com.

The name of a song was misspelled in last week's column. The correct spelling is "Diddy Wah Diddy." Ricky Flake is a former punk rocker, working musician (he sings with South Mississippi's Tribute to the Ramones, COMMANDOS; and, drums with the Deacons) and music fan who lives in Biloxi. Reach him at lobotomy3857@wmconnect.com.

