

Brian Eno: Music for Airports ★★1/2

(1999) 107 min. DVD: \$24.99 (booklet included). Ideale Audience International (dist. by Naxos of America).



Music for Airports features a double-bill from Dutch filmmaker Frank Scheffer. In the title piece, which premiered at 1999's Holland Festival, Scheffer's abstract video imagery provides the visuals for New York's six-piece Bang on a Can performance of Brian Eno's 1978 ambient music album (this version was also released on CD in 1998). Divided into four parts, each section features an arrangement by a different member: Michael Gordon, David Lang, Julia Wolfe, and Evan Ziporyn. Since the musicians themselves remain off-screen—viewers are instead treated to out-of-focus shots of passengers and airplanes arriving and departing from Amsterdam's Schiphol airport—the end result feels more like an art installation than a concert. As for the music itself, Eno explained in the liner notes to the original record that “it must be as ignorable as it is interesting,” which about sums it up. The second Scheffer film—2001's *In the Ocean*—takes a wide-ranging look at contemporary avant-garde/minimalist music, focusing on the story of Bang on a Can, while offering commentary from peers and influences such as Eno, John Cage, Steve Reich, Philip Glass, Elliot Carter, and Louis Andriessen. Music samples and scenes of bustling Big Apple street life are interspersed throughout. Modern music collections will want to consider—more for the informative documentary than the lackluster title piece—but this is optional elsewhere. Aud: C, P. (K. Fennessy)

ragged-but-right Terry/Woode vocal duet), and “Satin Doll” (featuring an amusing bass solo). A shorter second set features Jordan, who played with Charlie Parker in the '40s and appeared on some of Bird's most famous Dial recordings. Paired with a very capable Danish rhythm section, the pianist plays a couple of originals (including “Jordu,” his best known composition and a bona fide jazz standard) and more Ellington. Presented in Dolby Digital 5.1 surround sound, this is recommended. Aud: P. (S. Graham)

En Vogue: Live in the USA ★★★

(2002) 61 min. DVD: \$19.95. Music Video Distributors (avail. from most distributors).



Although the title *En Vogue: Live in the USA* might seem to suggest a nationwide tour, this is actually a sole 2002 concert date, opening with interviews and footage of the photogenic trio—Terry Ellis, Cindy Herron-Braggs, and Amanda Cole—backed by a six-piece band in rehearsal before taking the stage at the Alabama State Fairgrounds in Birmingham to perform 16 tracks, including the hit single “What a Man” (which appears surprisingly early in the proceedings—always a risk, lest everything else seem anti-climatic). Unlike many other female R&B outfits, En Vogue aren't afraid to enter down and dirty territory, as on the Funkadelic-inspired “Free Your Mind,” which recalls Patti Labelle, to whom they pay tribute through a cover of “Lady Marmalade”—part of a “funky divas” medley featuring songs by Aretha Franklin, Chaka Khan, and the Emotions. Since the group were on tour in support of *The Gift of Christmas*, a couple of holiday numbers are featured in the repertoire, and an appreciative fan is brought onstage for “Giving Him Something He Can Feel.” Overall, *Live in the USA*, presented with Dolby Digital 5.1 and stereo options, offers breezy entertainment, backed by a bevy of DVD extras including backstage footage, interviews, a band history (which covers the departures of Dawn Robinson and Maxine Jones), a discography, and the video for N-Jay's “Never Stop” featuring Ellis. Recommended. Aud: P. (K. Fennessy)

Clark Terry Quartet and the Duke Jordan Trio: Live in Copenhagen 1985 ★★★

(1985) 75 min. DVD: \$14.99. Storyville Films (dist. by Naxos of America).



Anyone who considers jazz to be a cerebral art form inaccessible to the average music listener need only spend a few minutes here with Clark Terry and friends to realize just how wrong that assessment can be: recorded in a Danish nightclub in 1985, the veteran trumpeter's 45-minute set is marvelously entertaining. Terry and his cohorts (including pianist Duke Jordan, bassist Jimmy Woode, and local drummer Svend Norregaard) swing straight through a clutch of jazz classics with infectious fun. Terry, in his mid-60s at the time of this gig, played with Duke Ellington in the '50s (as did Woode), and the six-song set includes no less than four Ellington classics: “In a Mellotone” (with Terry on flugelhorn), “Mood Indigo” (an interesting arrangement with multiple tempo changes), “Just Squeeze Me” (with a

Freddie Hubbard: One of a Kind ★★★

(1980) 78 min. DVD: \$19.98. Arkadia DVD (avail. from most distributors). ISBN: 0-8030-7035-7.



Compiling two episodes from *Ad Lib*, a 1980 TV series hosted by arranger/composer Phil Moore (Duke Ellington, Tommy Dorsey) that featured jazz, blues, and soul musicians performing in a live setting, *Freddie Hubbard: One of a Kind* showcases the Grammy Award-winning trumpeter. After honing his chops

with Wes and Monk Montgomery, Sonny Rollins, Art Blakey, and other greats, the Indiana-born Hubbard struck out on his own. Despite playing on freestyle jazz classics, like John Coltrane's *Ascension* and former roommate Eric Dolphy's *Out to Lunch*, Hubbard specialized in post-bop and hard bop. Here, his sidemen include Billy Childs on piano, Stephen Houghton on drums, Buck Clark on percussion (mostly congas), and Larry Klein on bass (both electric and stand-up), with the first set serving up four tracks, and the second offering an additional three, plus a short interview. Like many of the best leaders, Hubbard allows his band mates ample opportunity to shine, particularly Childs, whose rapid-fire playing propels these sets that include “First Light,” “Love Connection,” and the title track. Despite the occasional acceleration in tempo, the overall mood is relaxed and funky on this Dolby Digital stereo presentation. DVD extras include a text-based biography and an *Ad Lib* highlights reel. A solid bet for jazz aficionados, this is recommended. Aud: P. (K. Fennessy)

Gospel According to Al Green ★★★1/2

(1984) 96 min. DVD: \$24.99. Acorn Media (avail. from most distributors).



Those who watched Al Green perform on the 2009 Grammy Awards telecast saw that even at 62, the man can still bring it—or at least enough of it to put young whippersnappers like Justin Timberlake in their place. But that was nothing compared to Al Green during his 1970s and '80s heyday, when his palpable charisma and oozing sexuality made droves of women quite literally swoon. This 25th anniversary reissue of the 1984 documentary by filmmaker Robert Mugge (whose dozens of top notch music films include *Sonny Rollins: Saxophone Colossus*, also reviewed in this issue) captures Green roughly a decade after a self-described conflict between the sensual and the spiritual led to his renouncement of popular music (although not for good; a recording studio interview finds him singing “Tired of Being Alone” solo and “Let's Stay Together” with a group). While the Rev. Green's account of the infamous incident during which a crazed former girlfriend doused him with boiling grits before shooting herself to death is naturally fascinating, the best moments here come from a gig at Bolling Air Force Base in Washington, D.C., where Green invests his gospel music—including versions of “People Get Ready” and “Amazing Grace”—with even more febrile, funky, rocking grooves than he brought to the pop stuff. And when he serves up that relentless, rhythmic, chanted testifying favored by gospel preachers, the result is extraordinarily powerful. Presented in stereo, DVD extras include a 90-minute