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Soundtracks and romantic songs

By Tom Von Malder

OWLS HEAD (Jan 18): Underworld: Rise of the Lycans (Lakeshore CD, 63:51). Yet another "Underworld" film, this one a prequel to the 2003 film "Underworld" and its 2006 sequel "Underworld: Evolution." Like the other two soundtracks in the film series, this disc features a mix of rock, goth and industrial acts remixed by the album's producer, Danny Lohner. Lohner is a former member of Nine Inch Nails and has performed with many of the artists who appear on the soundtrack, including Puscifer and Black Light Burns. As a remixer, Lohner uses the name of Renholder (re d.lohner backwards).

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Puscifer is the alias of Tool and A Perfect Circle's Maynard James Keenan, who contributes two of the highlights here: "Lighten Up Francis," a very dirty-sounding, very-processed dub mix by JLE; and performing with actress/singer Milla Jovovich on a Renholder remix of The Cure's "Underneath the Stars." Exclusive to the soundtrack is "Deathclub" by William Control, a side project of Aiden's front man wiL Francis. The song also features Wes Borland (Limp Bizkit, Black Light Burns) on guitar and Matt Skiba (Alkaline Trio) on backing vocals. Other highlights include AFI's "Miss Murder" (a VNV Nation Remix), which has a propulsive club mix, King Black Acid's "Let's Burn" and Ghosts on the Radio's melodic "Steal My Romance." AFI singer Davey Havok also is represented by his side project Blaqk Audio in the Junior Sanchez remix of "Stiff Kittens."



The soundtrack of the third "Underworld" film has been released, and is heavy on goth and industrial music.(Photo by Lakeshore Records)

Much of the disc, however, is very downbeat, including Perry Farrell's "Nasty Little Perv" (although it is bouncy), Deftones' "Hole in the Earth" all Alkaline Trio's "Over and Out," all remixed by Renholder. He also remixed the mechanical, twisted sounds of Genghis Tron's "Board Up the House" and the annoyingly distorted "Two Birds, One Stone" by Drop Dead, Gorgeous. Grade: B-

Various Artists: Slumdog Millionaire, Music from the Motion Picture (n.e.e.t./Interscope/Celador/Film 4 CD, 50:57). The film, often mentioned as a possible nominee for Best Picture at the upcoming Academy Awards, includes some wonderful Indian-flavored music by A.R. Rahman (he scores dozens of films a year in his native India; he wrote the music for Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Bombay Dreams" musical), including the simple "Riots" and the more action film-oriented "Mausam & Escape," with

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Vidvues and Tom's Picks Tom Von Malder of Owls Head has reviewed music since 1972. He has reviewed videos/DVDs since 1988. His columns, VidVues and Tom's Picks, have been a fixture in The Courier-Gazette since 1979. He also writes about television and books on occasion.

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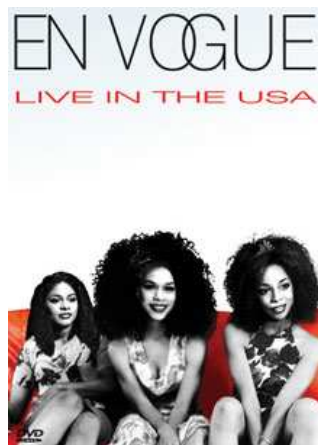
nice upfront sitar and backing vocals. The strong opening track, "O ... Saya," incorporates M.I.A. into the sound . M.I.A. also is heard, on their own, on "Paper Planes," presented in two versions, with the second being a remix by DFA. It features gunshot-like sounds on the chorus, along with a child-sounding chorus. The remix has a nice piano solo section.



Bollywood meets hip-hop in the Golden Globe-winning soundtrack of "Slumdog Millionaire."(Photo by Interscope Records)

Addictive is "Ringa Ringa" with female vocals by Alka Yagnik and Ila Arun (think Bollywood musicals). There is a cross between hip-hop and wonderful strings on "Liquid Dance," featuring Rahman, Palakkad Sriram and Madhumitha. Very smooth, yet up-tempo, and appealing is "Aaj Ki Raat," featuring Sonu Nigam, Mahalaxmi Iyer and Alisha Chinai, as well as Rahman and Suzanne on the silky "Dreams on Fire." More Bollywood is the male-sung closing track, "Jai Ho" with Rahman, Sukhvinder Singh and Iyer. There even is a funky track "Gangsta Blues," featuring Rahman, Blaaze and Tanvi Shah. This soundtrack recently won a Golden Globe for best original score. **Grade: A-**

**The Dead Pool: The Original Score by Lalo Schifrin Aleph CD, 40:11).** This is the first CD release for the soundtrack to the 1988 film, which was part of actor Clint Eastwood's "Dirty Harry" series, in which he played Inspector Harry Callahan. This is the film in which Harry is chased up and down San Francisco streets by a devilish toy car, operated by remote-control and loaded with explosives (in effect a riff on the car chase in "Bullitt with Steve McQueen). Unlike the suspense scores of today, there is a lot of "space" here, as in "High and Dry." There also is a jazz feel to "Something in Return" and simple piano in "The Rules." Very nice is the closing theme, "The Pier, The Bridge and The City," while "The Car" is punctuated first by short blaring horns and then stabbing strings. Schifrin scored four of the five "Dirty Harry" films and here he composed 35 minutes for the 91-minute film. With many of the cues of limited duration, they have been edited into longer "suites," each representing a chronological section of the film. Every note is here, including some small sections of "The Car" that were deleted from the final release prints. Schifrin himself conducted the orchestra. **Grade: B**



A 2002 concert by En Vogue is presented on this DVD.(Photo by MVD Visual)

**En Vogue: Live in the USA (Charly/MVD Visual DVD, 167 min.).** The core of this DVD is the 61-minute Dec. 6, 2002 concert in Birmingham, Ala. Originally a quartet when formed in 1989, the group then included original members Cindy Herron-Braggs (a former

Miss San Francisco and Miss Black California) and Terry Ellis, as well as Amanda Cole, then with the group only about 18 months and who would depart in the following year. The concert is quite good, with the three performing all six of their Top Ten hits in this country, including "Hold On," "My Lovin' (Never Gonna Get It)," "Don't Let Go" and "Whatta Man." Two other highlights are "Free Your Mind," with its heavier beat and anti-stereotypes message, and the 10-minute, seven-song "diva" medley that includes "Best of My Love," "I Heard It Through the Grapevine," "Respect," "Layd Marmalade," "Tell Me Something Good," "Free" and "Square Biz." As the group had a Christmas album coming out at the time, they perform two of its songs: "Merry Christmas" and "That's What Christmas Means To Me." The latter is where the group sounds most like The Supremes, the 1960s group that served as their template when put together by Denzil Foster and Thomas McElroy, also known as Club Nouveau.

Interestingly, there is more supplementary material than concert footage, including 55 minutes of interviews, a 16-minute backstage look and 54 minutes following them promoting the Christmas album in New York and Los Angeles, including appearances on "Live with Regis & Kelly," "BET Tonight with Ed Gordon" and at the Brian Boytano Skating Spectacular. **Grade: A-**

**Ice T: Live at Montreux 1995 (Charly/MVD Visual, 2 DVDs, 192 min.).** The first disc captures the rapper's solid July 10, 1995 show at The Miles Davis Hall in Montreux, Switzerland, including the songs "Zip-Lock," "You Played Yourself," "Freestyle" featuring DJ Evil E doing some rap, "Peel Their Caps Back" and the closing medley of "O.G. Original Gangster/New Jack Hustler/Colors." The 17-song program also includes a very nice incorporation of Curtis Mayfield's "Puser Man" in "I'm Your Pusher," with such cool rhymes as "I'm the kingpin when the wax spin" (a reference to vinyl records). The concert is 71 minutes long, so again there is more bonus material.

Disc one contains a discography and biography, while disc two includes two bits with Ice T's much harder rock band, Body Count. It is a nice idea, but the 40-minute Body Count concert segment has very poor sound (sometimes you can hardly hear Ice T's vocal) and is filmed from the back of the stage. The other, 78 minutes, is a look at shooting a Body Count music video. It was his recordings with Body Count -- in particular the song "Cop Killer" -- that created a storm of controversy and, briefly, made Ice T unofficial public enemy number one. His record label even disowned him. **Grade: B**

**Frank Sinatra: Seduction, Sinatra Sings of Love (Reprise/Frank Sinatra CD, 68:05).** Much like Elvis Presley, it seems there is and will be endless repackaging of Sinatra's catalog. There are two alone in this column. This first is based on his Reprise recordings, with Reprise being his own label, distributed by Warner Brothers. This release is available in two versions: this 22-song standard edition; and a two-disc version with 10 bonus tracks (both also are available in digital formats at a considerable savings).

Of most interest to collectors will be an alternate version of Rodgers and Hart's "My Funny Valentine." All the songs are remastered and there are nine collaborations with arranger Nelson Riddle, including "I've Got You Under My Skin," "Witchcraft" and "It Had To Be You." The collection is book ended by "Prisoner of Love" and "That's All," songs from 1962's "Sinatra & Strings" album, which featured lush arrangements by Don Costa. Collaborations include "More" (the theme from the 1962 Italian movie "Mondo Cane") with Count Basie and His Orchestra and Brazilian guitarist and composer Antonio Carlos Jobim on "I Concentrate on You" and "This Happy Madness (Estrada Branca)." Other highlights include "Love Is a Many-Splendored Thing," "I Concentrate on You," "All the Way" and "The Second Time Around." **Grade: A+**



Miles Davis is among the "From the Heart" series of releases. (Photo by Legacy Recordings)

**Various Artists: From the Heart collection.** These nine albums, available digitally and in new eco-friendly packaging with a sticker on front in which to write a personal message, have been previously been issued as either part of the Love Songs releases or the Ballads & Love Songs Releases. They have 12 to 16 songs apiece and are intended for the Valentine's Day market, as well as Mother's Day and Black Music Month.






The Frank Sinatra disc (Columbia/RCA Victor/Legacy) reaches back to the 1940s and 1950s

and includes "Blue Skies," "Star Dust," "Night and Day," "Dream (When You're Feeling Blue)," "Lost in the Stars," "Stella By Starlight," "Laura," "Autumn in New York," "Begin the Beguine," "Hello, Young Lovers" and "I've Got a Crush on You," among others. **Grade: A+**

Another standout collection is the Aretha Franklin disc (Arista/Legacy), including "Freeway of Love," "Love Me Right" and "Until You Say You Love Me," as well as the "Gimme Your Love" duet with James Brown. The collections includes some of her earliest pop recordings at Columbia in the 1960s, as well as early 1980s work with Luther Vandross and later Eighties work with producer Narada Michael Walden. Staying on the soul train are collections featuring The Isley Brothers (Epic/Legacy), with slow jams from their T-Neck and Epic years of the 1970s and '80s, focusing on non-single releases, including five album tracks from "Live It Up" (1974) and "Winner Takes All" (1979); and Baby face (Epic), aka Kenny Edmonds (the only person to win Producer of the Year Grammy Awards in three consecutive years, 1995-97), with the emphasis here on his first albums as a solo artist on the Solar and Epic labels, including a cover of the Stylistics' "You Make Me Feel Bran New," his 11-week chart-topping "Whip Appeal" and the collaboration with LL Cool J on "This Is For the Lover in You."

Moving to blues and classics, there are collections of Etta James (RCA Victor/Legacy), Billie Holiday (Columbia/Legacy) and Miles Davis (Columbia/Legacy). James disc accentuates the Great American Songbook, backed by such jazz luminaries as pianist-arranger Cedar Walton, tenor saxophonists Eddie Harris, Red Holloway and Herman Riley, and bassist John Clayton. There are the ballads "I'll Be Seeing You" and "Body and Soul," as well as the burners, such as "Night and Day." on the R&B side, there are standout versions of Otis Redding's "I've Been Lovin' You Too Long" and Brook Benton's "I'll Take Care of You." Holiday, otherwise known as Lady Day, recorded 153 songs for the Brunswick and Vocalion labels from 1933 to 1944, again heavy on the Great American Songbook, here represented by Cole Porter's "Night and Day," the Gershwins' "Summertime" and "The Man I Love," Johnny Mercer's "If You Were Mine" and Irving Berlin's "I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm." There also is her final recording from her last Columbia recording session, Sammy Cahn's "Until the Real Thing Comes Along." The Davis collection spans three decades at Columbia, from "Round Midnight" with John Coltrane in 1956 to "Stella By Starlight" two years later and 1959's "Blue in Green" with his first great quintet (Coltrane, Cannonball Adderley and Bill Evans) to work with arranger Gil Evans on "I Loves You Porgy," "Bess, You Is My Woman Now," "My Ship" and the Jobim tune "Corcovado." There also is a rare 1965 live version of "My Funny Valentine" and his take on Cyndi Lauper's "Time After Time," which turned the song into a jazz standard.

Finally, there are discs by Air Supply (Arista/Legacy) and Dolly Parton (RCA Nashville/Legacy). Australians Russell Hitchcock and main songwriter Graham Russell debuted as Air Supply in this country in 1980 with "Lost in Love." They eventually had seven consecutive Top Five hits. Among the hits included here are "Every Woman in the World," "The One That You Love," "All Out of Love," "Making Love Out of Nothing," "Even the Nights Are Better" and "Sweet Dreams." "Miracles" was a previously unreleased track. The Parton collection includes three of the five consecutive No. 1 Country hits that launched her career in 1973-75: the original version of "I Will Always Love You," "Please Don't Stop Loving Me" (with Porter Wagoner) and "Love Is Like a Butterfly." In all, there are 12 No. 1 Country hits here, exactly half of her career total of 24. Others include the landmark duets with Kenny Rogers on "Islands in the Stream" (written and produced by the Bee Gees) and "Real Love," as well as her Grammy Award-winning "Here You Come Again." All are from the 1970s and '80s.

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