

AVDVDs

Allen back in game with *Match Point*

While the Oscar voters didn't get it, or didn't want to because it was Woody Allen whose career was being so spectacularly revived, *Match Point* was one of the best films of 2005. Allen did get a nomination for his script, but the rest of it was ignored. Judge for yourself if that was fair now that it's out on DVD.

Match Point, set and filmed in London, England, is the filmmaker's best since *Crimes and Misdemeanors*. Despite the cultural shift and distinct characters, it operates in the same territory, as a character-driven examination of moral turpitude, with structural elements of a thriller.

The ensemble is first-rate, starting with Jonathan Rhys Meyers as a rogue tennis pro with voracious ambitions and an unhealthy appetite for his best friend and brother-in-law's fiancée. That would be Scarlett Johansson, brilliant as the sexually charged American whose love for Matthew Goode can so easily be compromised.

Match Point, which plays as a sports metaphor for the luck in life's game of chance, is sexy, funny and then savage — what no Allen picture has been in years. Too bad the DVD has no bonus materials. Allen likes his movies to speak for themselves — and the transfer here is immaculate — but this is so extreme it's sad.



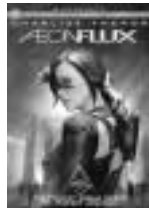
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VINYL VISION

Charlize Theron is one of the great screen beauties — when she is not mutating herself for a role. So slipping her into skin-tight vinyl and leather as a futuristic assassin-rebel in *Aeon Flux* is gilding the lily.

Too bad the movie itself is so silly, even incomprehensible. It is a live-action, big-screen version of Peter Chung's anime shorts from 1990s MTV. They didn't make much sense either, but they won audiences with the cool factor. This *Aeon Flux* fails because the stunning visuals are used in the service of a mediocre story that does not warrant the fuss.

Not that the DVD divas will admit that. Out this week in full and widescreen editions, the *Aeon Flux* DVD is boastful of its accomplishments. The featurettes do provide on-set insights, including the gem that Beatrix Aruna Pasztor's costume designs, bizarrely, were inspired by the 1970 film *The Conformist*. Also noteworthy is Theron's commentary with producer Gale Anne Hurd.



MYTH & MR.

Years ago, Ridley Scott wanted to make *Tristan + Isolde* as a space romance. Instead, he produced director Kevin Reynolds' old-fashioned period piece set in Britain in the Dark Ages. The British tribes have to unite to fight the Irish but plans are thwarted when their greatest warrior (James Franco) falls in



love with the Irish king's daughter (Sophia Myles). Far from the Wagner opera, this *Tristan + Isolde* is a retro Hollywood romantic adventure played just a tad over the top. But it does have

a lot of action appeal.

The DVD is out in full and widescreen editions, with decent extras, including two commentaries — one by the producers, the other by screenwriter Dean Georgaris.



MARTINIZED

Shopgirl, based on Steve Martin's novella, was adapted by Martin, co-stars Martin as one of two men romancing Claire Danes, and his

voice serves as the pretentious narrator, too. So any problems you have with this slight, awkward, if occasionally charming romantic comedy are Martin's responsibility. The DVD is out now with low-rent extras.

MUSIC DVDS



Coachella

Various Artists
Anti- | Epitaph

There may be cooler musical festivals than Coachella. But there ain't many prettier ones. Staged under power-blue skies and palm trees in Southern California, attended by toned, trendy Angelinos, starring the biggest names in alt-rock, the annual weekend festival is like Woodstock as reimagined by DreamWorks. This two-hour DVD cherry-picks the best moments from the six-year-old event, offering up stellar clips of Arcade Fire, Belle & Sebastian, Bright Eyes, The Stooges, Mars Volta, Morrissey, Oasis, a reunited Pixies, Radiohead, Red Hot Chili Peppers, White Stripes and more. On the downside, some of the performances are kinda dated (Polyphonic Spree? Yawn). And while bonus interviews with the likes of Tenacious D., Libertines, Dresden Dolls and more are OK, performances would be better. After six years, there must be better stuff on the cutting room floor than this.

★★★1/2

Gillan
Live Edinburgh 1980
Angel Air | MVD

Of all the Deep Purple offshoots and side projects, singer Ian Gillan's solo albums may not have been the cream of the crop — but they did strike a chord with old-school '80s rock fans who weren't ready to embrace punk and new wave. Many of them seem to have been in the audience for this a half-hour show broadcast on Scottish TV. The band — with Bernie Tormé on guitar — is kicking, the picture and sound quality are decent and the set list includes *Unchain Your Brain* and *No Easy Way*. Too bad it's only five songs. The disc is padded out with more than an hour of interviews with all the musicians besides Gillan, and assorted pix and biographies.

★★★



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Winners must pick up their prizes in person at The Winnipeg Sun, 1700 Church Avenue, before noon on Thursday, May 4th, 2006. Winners must provide personal identification. Prizes must be accepted as awarded and cannot be exchanged for cash.

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