

All-stars sing Taylor songs

An all-star concert of James Taylor tunes, **A Musicares Person of the Year Tribute Honoring James Taylor**, has been released by Rhino (UPC#603497164226, \$20). Opening on Bill Clinton's introduction at the 2006 concert in Los Angeles, the 88-minute program segues into a brief summary of Taylor's career and then steps back for the live program (interspersed with other celebrity testimonials) featuring The Dixie Chicks, Bonnie Raitt, India.Arie, Jackson Brown, David Crosby, Sheryl Crow, Sting, Dr. John, Taj Mahal, Alison Krauss (her rendition of *Carolina on My Mind* is one of the show's highlights of highlights), Keith Urban, Bruce Springsteen and Carole King (guess who sneaks up behind her), before giving way to a couple of numbers from Taylor himself. On the whole, the show is not as tight, musically, as more meticulously planned concerts can be, but it makes up for it with its obvious star power.

The picture is in letterboxed format only, with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The image is crisp and smooth. The 5.1-channel Dolby Digital sound is equally sharp and vivid. There is no captioning.

Renewal of Faith

A rare 57-minute film that captured a Blind Faith concert, **Blind Faith London Hyde Park 1969**, is available from Sanctuary Visual Entertainment (UPC#06075884239, \$20). The film also incorporates a documentary that explains how the illustrious members of Blind Faith—Eric Clapton, Ginger Baker, Steve Winwood and Rich Grech—got together and who they had been playing with before. As for the concert, shot in the bright afternoon sun and decorated with Woodstock-style cutting and effects, it is a terrific opportunity to catch a glimpse of the legendary musicians performing numbers that are often heard but almost never seen.

The full screen picture has an aged but well-preserved appearance and is very sharp. The stereo sound is mostly centered, but clear. There is no captioning. Also featured is a 3-minute black-and-white clip of The Spencer Davis Group doing *I'm a Man* with groovy effects, a 2-minute color clip of Traffic performing *Hole in My Shoe* with more psychedelic touches, and a straightforward 2-minute clip of Cream performing that intellectually articulate classic, *I'm So Glad*, along with text backgrounds and some still photos.

All things to all people

A multiple-genre band that calls itself Blues Caravan presents their many faces in a 2005 concert in Germany on **Blues Caravan 2006 The New Generation**, an Inakustik release (UPC#710347301479, \$20). They start out the 124-minute performance as three guitarists, Aynsley Lister, Erja Lyytinen and Ian Parker, playing vaguely country-western style numbers on acoustical guitars, some even seeming to have a spiritual tone to them. Then they shift to a more bluesy folk sound. A keyboardist and drummer then arrive to back them up as they turn to electric and start with several Southern rock-sounding numbers, followed by some bluesy ballads, an MOR dance number, an a cappella gospel-style piece, some near-punk style rock songs, a cover version of *Hush*, and then eventually drift into kind of a blues funk jam. Either they haven't figured out who they are yet, or they just don't want to let anything go, but by the end it feels like a comprehensive program that has given you your money's worth.

The picture is presented in letterboxed format only, with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The color transfer is sharp. There is a 5.1-channel Dolby Digital track and a DTS track, and both deliver solid, clear tones. There is no captioning. Also featured is a 24-minute interview in which several more numbers are performed, 6 minutes of backstage footage and some promotional photos.

For those who weren't planning on visiting Hoover Dam

The pilot episode for a reality TV series set in a brothel, **CatHouse**, is available from HBO Video (UPC#026359256127, \$20). Hidden cameras are set up in the rooms of a Nevada establishment to record the negotiations between employees and customers, and whatever else they can get the customers to sign off on later. Now, not that you would ever actually go to such a place, but if you did, would you really want to go to the one that will end up showing your inveterate infidelity or fiduciary foolishness to thousands of premium cable subscribers? Apparently it didn't impact the place's business, since they went ahead with the show. Anyway, the 2002 episode runs 56 minutes and focuses not on exploring the psyches of those fallen souls who have chosen to sacrifice their virtue for their economic viability, but on the prurient voyeurism inherent in any such transaction. The lack of philosophical reflection seriously limits the show's appeal to a seen-it-once, seen-it-all tenor, but there are undoubtedly those who will appreciate being able to take a peek at what happens in such emporiums without soiling themselves by actually going there.

The picture is presented in full screen format. The color transfer is okay, but there is a lot of smearing and displacement that may be flaws in the video source material rather than the DVD transfer. The monophonic sound is adequate, and there are optional English, French and Spanish subtitles, for those who do not understand the universal language being spoken. A 4-minute interview with the proprietor is also included, but he does not talk

about the moral justifications of the show, only the moral justifications of the services he provides.

DVD Letter

To the Editor:

Do you want your **Mummy**? How badly? How much do YOU care?

Due to sluggish sales of the recent **Dracula** and **Frankenstein** DVD sets, and due to something called "low tracking numbers," Universal is balking at releasing a 75th anniversary DVD with all-new bonus features for the 1932 Boris Karloff classic, **The Mummy**.

Aren't you sick of complaining about endless repackagings when a classic DVD is re-re-released AGAIN with no new features??? Now's your time to voice your opinion, WHILE THERE IS *STILL* TIME.

The Mummy was an instant icon and spawned four 1940s sequels, and numerous remakes and retellings at other studios, but the 1932 film is still undeniably the greatest of them all. SO, GET INVOLVED! If you want to save **The Mummy**, send me an e-mail and tell me so at mummy75th@yahoo.com

TELL YOUR FRIENDS, USERS, READERS, and CONSTITUENTS.

—Scott Essman

DVD News

SETTING THE CLOCK AHEAD: Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment will be releasing the 3-hour **24 Season 6 Premiere** on January 16, two days after it is broadcast.

EXTRA WATER: Warner Home Video's **Lady in Water** will have a couple of featurettes and 5 minutes of deleted scenes. **The Butcher Boy** will have a commentary by Neil Jordan.

POLL WATCH: Remember to fill out our Annual Consumer Poll and return it before February.

CLOSED OUT OF TOWN: *Karas V.1, Karas V.2, Karas V.3, A Playhouse Disney Halloween, Faces of Children, Foot Soldiers, Hot Version Japanese Muscle, Jule Styne in Hollywood, Kacey Jones Sings Mickey Newbury, KRS One, The Real, The Trial (Koch), Bad Guys, Bloodspit, Gambler (Koch), Sick Mix Magazine, The Who 25th Anniversary Reunion Concert, 2 S.I.C.K., Erik the Viking collector's, Dude We're Going to Rio, Earthquake About Got Damn Time, Bela Lugosi Black Dragons/The Naked Mile, Julius Caesar (VCI), and Hot* have been removed from our *Coming Attractions* listing.

DVD and LD Ads

(All DVD and LD Ads are 50 cents a word. Deadline is 5 business days before the end of the month. Address all ads: DVD & LD Ads, The DVD-Laser Disc Newsletter, PO Box 420, East Rockaway NY 11518-0420.)

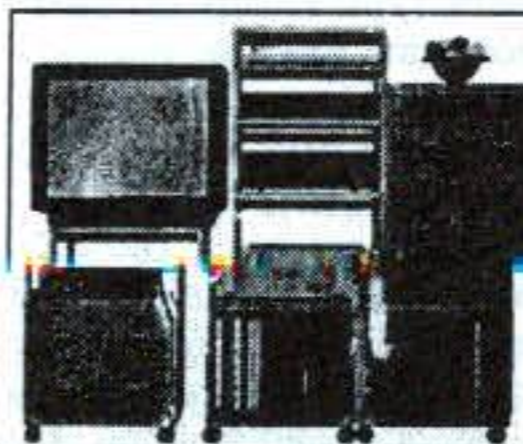
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