

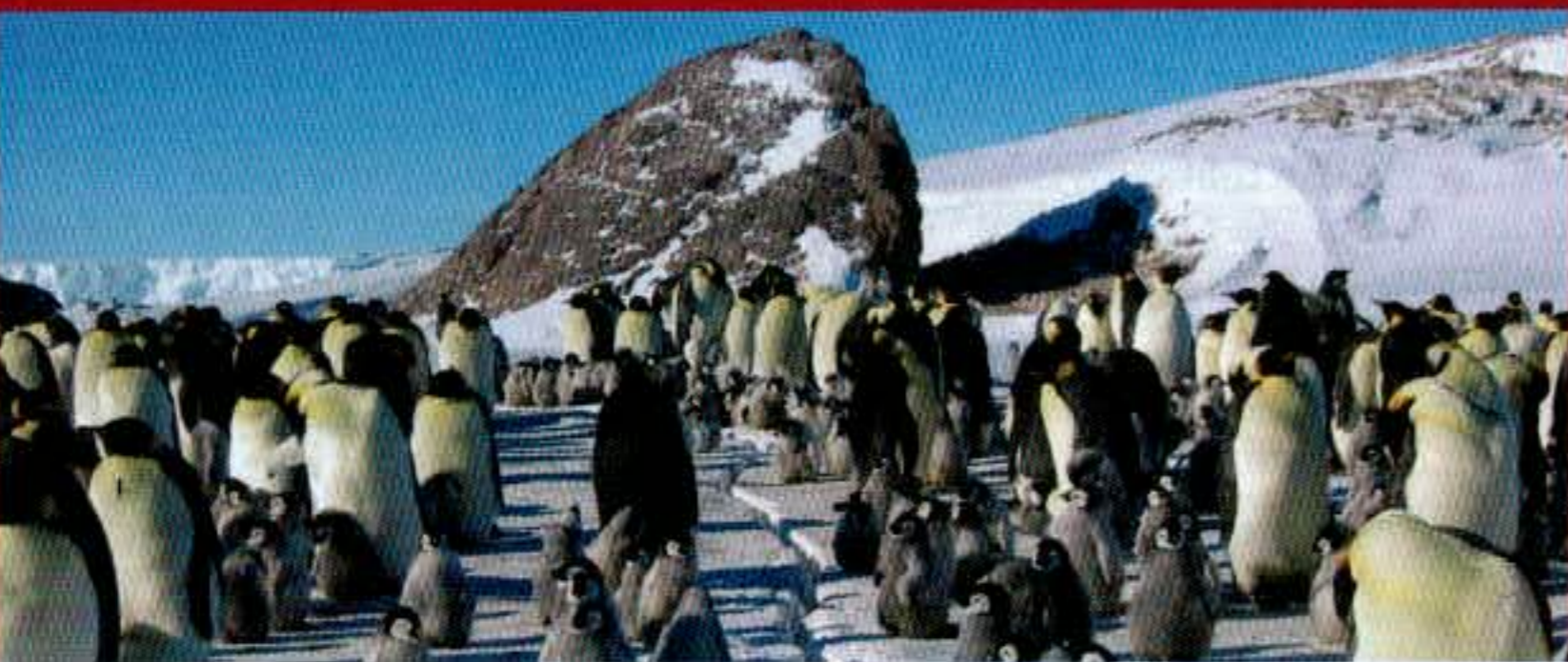
Reviews by Darren Ressler

HIP HOP TIME CAPSULE THE BEST OF RETV - 1993

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Hip-Hop Time Capsule: The Best of RETV - 1993 (RETV)

This DVD looks back on 1993—an extremely important year in hip-hop's development—as seen through the eyes of the staff of New Jersey-based cable access program, *RETV*. *Hip-Hop Time Capsule* is packed with videos from Redman, Dr. Dre., Paris, 2Pac and Naughty By Nature—all of these songs still sound damn good. Also included are rare interviews with Charlie Murphy (promoting *CB4*, of all things), Boss, Kool G. Rap & Polo, and live performances by Onyx and MC Lyte. If the producers would've included the video of Black Sheep's "Strobelight Honey," this DVD would've received a perfect score.



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March of the Penguins (Warner Bros.) You don't have to be a Hollywood producer to know that a film about cute animals that waddle combined with narration from Morgan Freeman equal a hit movie. Though the formula is indeed in place on *March of the Penguins*, the film does a remarkable job of explaining the penguins' astonishing, often grueling yearly mating ritual that includes a single file, 70-mile march into the coldest, darkest and driest place on Earth. In *National Geographic* style, *Penguins* is beautifully filmed amid some of the toughest conditions known to man. An incredible feat of movie-making, it's no wonder that this film left critics with a lot to quack about.

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World Traveller Adventures (Uncivilized World) Billed as "a bunch of individuals who tried to make the difference," *World Traveller Adventures* contains four documentaries about travelling groups within Europe's free-party scene. *23 Minute Warning* profiles Spiral Tribe, a UK soundsystem that battled the English government for its right to throw raves in the early '90s. The protagonists on *23 Minute Warning* and the three other documentaries—*Storming Sarajevo*, *Mission to India* and *African Expedisound*—mostly use video diaries to tell their stories. While their intent is admirable, the big problem is that the camerawork on all four clips (which is often shot out of a moving car) isn't very good, nor is the music. In terms of storytelling, at times you aren't even quite sure who or why someone is being interviewed. The trailer for future releases by Femi Kutti and Jeff Mills look far more interesting and musically substantial.



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Devo: Live 1980 (Devo Inc.) Recorded live at the Phoenix Theatre in Petaluma on August 17, 1980, *Live 1980* captures Devo in concert at its musical and professional peak. Riding on high on the success of "Whip It" from *Freedom of Choice*, their performance is good, but hardly mind-blowing by today's standards. Their excellent rendition of "Girl U Want" and a cheeky cover of "Secret Agent Man" are fine moments, but the shoddy camerawork all too often gets in the way.



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Mr. Bongo: Brazilian Beats (Mr. Bongo) For the past 15 years, Mr. Bongo has documented Brazil's buyout music scene. This DVD features three informative BBC-style documentaries—"Marcelo D2," "Clube do Branco," and "Street Angels"—that profile the musicians who make samba music and its various hybrid genres that mix it up with hip-hop and rock. In addition to audio snippets from the label's catalog, there's a half-dozen fantastic samba videos. Mostly notable are the clip of the Fatboy Slim remix of Tejo, Black Alien & Speeds's "Follow Me Follow Me" and the video of "Natural High," a song from Ive Mendes, a beautiful songstress, who tastefully performs her song in the nude.



★★★★

« A fascinating DVD »
—Mojo