



EINSTÜRZENDE NEUBAUTEN
Palast Der Republik
MVD

Einstürzende Neubauten are "world music" in the sense that their music comes from a world only they live in. The veteran German group got its start building percussion instruments from junkyard scraps and power tools, but this is no Stomp-like tedium. Vocalist Blixa Bargeld's lyrics are multilayered and poetic, and the guitarists Jochen Arbeit and Andrew Chudy and bassist Alexander Hacke create alien, yet deeply sad melodies that combine with everything else to conjure a thoroughly unique universe of sound and emotion. They're all about theatricality of presentation—this DVD was recorded live at the Palast Der Republik, formerly the main government building in East Germany. Some of their best-known songs are performed in reimagined versions, and there are some improvised sections, as when they attempt to play the building's metal railings with drumsticks (it doesn't work out as well as they'd apparently hoped). They're even joined for some numbers by a 100-member choir of fans, chosen via the group's website. This is a terrific document for longtime Neubauten devotees, but equally fascinating for newcomers to the group's highly individual aesthetic.



WEATHER REPORT
Live At Montreux 1976
Eagle Vision

Weather Report combined jazz, cutting-edge (for the '70s) electronics, contemporary composition and world music into a blend that was quite beautiful while simultaneously offering enough wild-ass improv and exploration to keep hardcore jazz fans happy. The talent they mustered was impressive by anyone's measure: saxophonist Wayne Shorter, formerly of Miles Davis's band and a longtime leader in his own right; Joe Zawinul, also a Davis collaborator and solo artist; bassist Jaco Pastorius, easily one of the best players to ever pick up the instrument; drummer Alex Acuña and percussionist Manolo Bandrena, the quintet adding up to the same lineup that would record the band's most famous album, *Heavy Weather*, only one year later. Brief snippets of melodies that would appear on that disc—including the group's most famous piece, "Birdland"—can be heard inserted into the performances here. And while Pastorius was still new to the band at this point and thus finding his place, his talent is so obvious that it's as much a joy to listen to what he's playing as it is to cast one's mind forward to what he would play in subsequent years, before his untimely death.



SANTANA
Hymns For Peace: Live At Montreux 2004
Eagle Vision

Mexican-American guitar god Carlos Santana is a far more creative and interesting musician than his most popular records might suggest. Looking only at the unholy trilogy of *Supernatural*, *Shaman* and *All That I Am*, you could easily dismiss him as a hack long past his sell-by date. But the man's got genuine artistry, talent and ambition to spare, and this DVD really brings that to the fore. A one-off concert of songs with a message of peace and love (that sounds cornier than it comes off), the Santana band was augmented by a seriously staggering array of guests, including Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Chick Corea, Ravi Coltrane, John McLaughlin, Nile Rodgers, Patti Austin, and Angelique Kidjo, among others. They run through songs by Bob Marley, Bob Dylan, and John Lennon, among others, but also stretch instrumentally on tracks like "Let Us Go Into The House Of The Lord," "Afro Blue," "In A Silent Way" and a version of John Coltrane's "A Love Supreme" showcasing the legendary saxophonist's son, Ravi. Superb, and highly recommended to anyone who thinks Santana should have hung it up sometime after *Blues For Salvador*.



SHOGUN ASSASSIN
AnimElgo

One of the most influential martial arts films of all time, *Shogun Assassin* was an American movie assembled from the first two films in the Japanese *Lone Wolf And Cub* series. It follows the wanderings of a masterless samurai, an executioner cast out by the shogun for no real reason: the shogun's just going crazy and killing his allies in fits of paranoia. Taking on wave after wave of assassins while traveling the countryside with his infant son, the title character unleashes awesome displays of swordplay and other types of one-on-one violence in a shockingly bloody manner. This movie's been out of print and unavailable for years in the U.S., but its original screenings in the late 1970s inspired many current artists, including hip-hop producer the RZA (who sampled many bits of dialogue for his collaboration with Genius on 1995's *Liquid Swords*) and director Quentin Tarantino, who included footage from the film in *Kill Bill, Vol. 2*. It may not be as highbrow as *The Seven Samurai* or *Kagemusha*, but *Shogun Assassin* is a classic of world cinema in its own splattery way, and this impeccable DVD transfer offers it the respect it deserves.



ROBEZZ: Paradis, Paradise

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