

## The Residents Find a Home on DVD

Written by John James

Tuesday, 30 January 2001 18:00

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Back when MTV weaved its way into the cable-ready homes of America in 1981, the industry machine of producing music videos was just beginning, and if you were there in those early broadcast hours, you surely remember the strange flow of primitive imagery that made the magic box such a mesmerizing experience. Like many new concepts, the art form was ahead of the business curve, with fantastic mini-movies of the most bizarre ilk teasing the imagination of the newly addicted. With 24 hours to fill around the jovial video jockeys, it was a fantastic time when almost anything made the grade. The enigmatic Ralph Records label supplied much of the most unconventional video fare to grace that first season, with mini-nightmares courtesy of Renaldo & the Loaf, Snakefinger, and the label's mysterious Dada eyeball superstars The Residents. This secret collective of conceptual artists from San Mateo, California, began mixing up its own particular avant-garde stew in 1970, using early black-and-white video equipment, and later some of the first four- and eight-track home-studio gear available on the consumer market. In 1971, the group's unnamed demo tape to Warner Brothers was rejected and returned addressed simply to "Residents" – thus a moniker and a history born. Yeah, so your band has a Web site, but have your videos been accepted as a part of the permanent collection of The Museum of Modern Art? Well, The Residents' "Third Reich Rock N' Roll" and "One Minute Movies" were given that honor in 1982. Fast forward to 2001, and the slickest little technology to lick your imagination: the DVD. When suggested that the group collect all its rare visual fare in one DVD collection, a cry of protest folded the idea, until it was decided that this new technology could hold an entirely new sister soundtrack to all the old videos. Shazam! You, my digital friend, are in for a big sticky treat with the *Icky Flix* anthology. With a more-than-100-minute running time, and two complete soundtracks to enjoy, I can't thrust my thumbs high enough in salute. Pop these visuals into the background of your next get-together of misfits and let the eyeballs melt away. Featured are video versions of the band's CD-ROMs, four never-before-seen music videos, and a newly restored edit of "Vileness Fats," the group's first-ever video experiment. Let your freak flag fly!

The fine folks at *Goldmine* have just issued a new book collecting many of the best articles on the Beatles that have graced the record collectors' journal. Entitled *The Beatles Digest*, this 316-page love letter of history, interviews, photos, and critical analyses is nicely done. *Goldmine* has always flown a little under the radar of casual music fans, with its mind-numbing marketplace stuffed full every two weeks with rarities for sale between record dealers and

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collectors. But underneath all that newsprint has been some of the best rock writing to be found, and it's shown off here in one volume. I enjoyed reliving the skinny on John Lennon's and Yoko Ono's week as guest hosts on the Mike Douglas Show in 1972, Paul McCartney's 1970 lawsuit calling for the dissolution of the band, the making of 1995's

### *Anthology*

video set, the boys' meeting with the then-18-year-old Andrew Loog Oldham, and producer George Martin's reflections on the view from the Abbey Road studios. Also featured is a complete price guide for all Beatles, Apple Records, and solo recordings, and a listing of Beatles fan clubs and publications. Speaking of price guides,

### *Goldmine*

has also just released the second edition of its

### *Standard Catalog of American Records*

– a weighty 1,294-page tome that covers more than 100,000 LPs, 45s, and EPs. Listed in value by three levels of condition, this new volume features thousands of entries not found in other price guides. Arm yourself with this mother the next time you're out garage-sale shopping; you might find a gem in the rough.

## Television Alert:

*The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* welcomes Beck on Thursday and Green Day on Friday; *The Late Show with David Letterman*

hosts Aimee Mann on Friday, and Erykah Badu on Monday;

*The Late Late Show With Craig Kilborn*

has They Might Be Giants on Thursday overnight and Vast on Friday overnight; and

*Saturday Night Live*

's musical guest this weekend is AC/DC.

## New Releases Coming Tuesday, February 6

*and like the winds, young grasshopper, are subject to change ...*

Ataris – End Is Forever (Kung Fu)

Bad Astronaut – Acrophobe (Honest Don's) new band from Joey and Derrick from Lagwagon featuring a cover of Elliott Smith's "Needle In the Hay"

Jeff Beck – You Had It Coming (Epic Legacy) all new release well-timed with his nationwide headlining tour beginning February 15

Blessid Union of Souls – The Singles (V2) with new and live rarities

Cameo – 20th Century Masters: The Millennium Collection (Mercury) groundbreaking high concept funk from Atlanta featuring big hits like "She's Strange" and "Word Up"

Double Trouble – Been a Long Time (Tone-Cool) reunion of Chris Layton, Tommy Shannon, Charlie Sexton, and Doyle Bramhall II featuring a cover of Led Zeppelin's "Rock and Roll" with

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guest Susan Tedeschi

Dropkick Murphys – Sing Loud, Sing Proud (Hellcat) featuring vocalist Shane McGowen of the Pogues!; throw yer beer mug in the air like ya just don't care!

Electric Frankenstein – Annie's Grave (Victory) produced by Phil Caivano of Monster Magnet, this ear-bleeder features a cover of the Dead Boys' "Third Generation Nation"

The Frogs – Hopscotch Lollipop Sunday Surprise (Scratchie) featuring a cover a Bob Dylan's "Billy"

The Gap Band – Ultimate Collection (Hip-O) 19 tracks of rubber-burnin' funk featuring undeniable crowd-pleasers like "You Dropped A Bomb On Me" and "Early in the Morning"

GWAR – It's Sleazy (Metal Blade) new VHS video featuring the return of Sleazy P. Martini and the band's take on shock-TV talk shows

Low – Things We Lost in the Fire (Kranky)

Malcolm In the Middle – original television soundtrack (Restless) with music by They Might Be Giants, Barenaked Ladies, Baha Men, Eagle Eye Cherry, and the Dust Brothers

Melvins – Electroretard (Man's Ruin) featuring cover versions of songs by Pink Floyd, the Wipers, and the Cows

Moe – Dither (Fat Boy/Red Ink) first new studio album in three years

The Motels – Anthologyland (Oglio) two-CD set of rarities and hits like "Only the Lonely"

The Orange Peels – So Far (Spin Art)

Propagandhi – Today's Empires, Tomorrow's Ashes (Fat Wreck) 14 new tracks and interactive CD-ROM material

Raised Fist – Ignoring the Guidelines (Burning Heart)

Scorpions – Moment of Glory Live (Eagle Vision) DVD of the band's homecoming concert with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra

Stetsasonic – In Full Gear and On Fire (Tommy Boy) re-issues

Rod Stewart – Human (Atlantic) featuring the track "Smitten," which was written by Macy Gray, and guest guitarists Mark Knopfler and Slash

David Thomas & the Two Pale Boys – Surfs Up (Thirsty Ear)

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Tram – Frequently Asked Questions (Jetset) featuring a cover of Tim Buckley’s “Once I Was”

Tricky – “Mission Accomplished” (Anti/Epitaph) four-track EP featuring his first new studio work in two years

various artists – Turntables By the Bay: All This Scratchin’ Is Makin’ Me Bitch (Hip Hop Slam) debut of this new vinyl-only series featuring Peanut Butter Wolf, DJ Shadow, Invisibl Skratch Piklz, and more

The Wesley Willis Fiasco – Live EP (Cornerstone/Ras) idiot savant or poetic innocent? Believe it or not, this is his 43rd album of crazed street yodeling