



THE RETURN OF THE TITANIC

TITANIC finally gets the special collector's edition treatment it deserves and is loaded with over 3 hours of footage.

TITANIC (SPECIAL COLLECTORS EDITION)

194 minutes, PG-13, Paramount

I admit... I've watched the film *TITANIC* three times in the theater and hunted city after city for the *TITANIC* soundtrack for that one Celine Dion song.

After all, this movie was hyped as a mega blockbuster that would later become a winner of 11 Academy Awards including Best Picture.

I also waited in line with almost a hundred other fans to get the VHS release but when the first DVD release came out, I didn't buy it.

I was a bit dismayed by the lack of special features and the fact that the film was divided into two discs.

Knowing that popular DVD's tend to be re-released in different incarnations with a "deluxe this"

or "premium that", *TITANIC* has finally returned as a Special Collector's Edition.

The Special Collector's Edition does not disappoint as it is loaded with over 3 hours of special features.

Included in this special version are cast and crew commentaries by director James Cameron, Kate Winslet, Gloria Stuart, Lewis Abernathy, Jon Landau and Rae Sanchini. Historical commentary by Doon Lynch and Ken Marschall.

To my disappointment, the movie again is split up into two discs. Thus you will need to get up from your seat to change the DVD when you get close to the two hour mark.

But fortunately, DVD space is utilized well with the inclusion of branching technology, so when ever

you want to know how certain scenes were made, you have an option to watch the behind-the-scenes featurettes while watching the movie.

The DVD looks great and audiophiles should be pleased to learn that Dolby Digital 5.1 ES and also 6.1 DTS ES is available.

Disc 2 includes the alternate ending titled "Brock's Epiphany" which is based on the original script. Which I'm glad that Jim Cameron edited out of the final version. Also, included on this disc is the music video of Celine Dion's "My Heart Will Go On". But I'm a bit surprised how dated the music video looks.

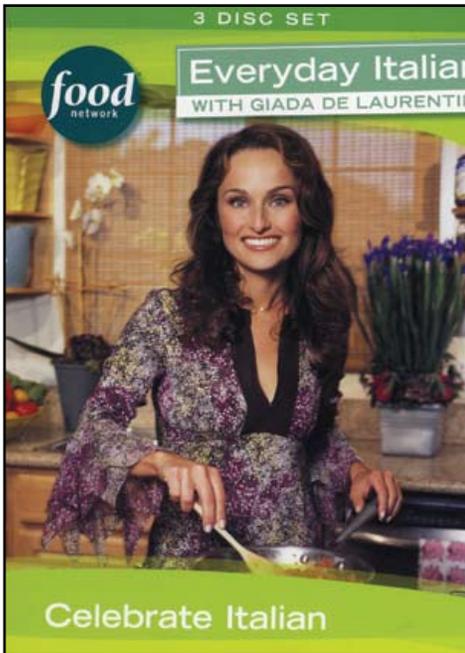
On Disc 3, this disc features all the *TITANIC* goodies with 45 minutes of never-before-seen deleted scenes with optional commentary. This was actually very interesting to watch and listen to why James Cameron removed those scenes. Included also was the FOX special "Breaking New Ground", press kit featurettes, 1912 newsreel which was more of taking footage of the actors in costume and making it look like footage from 1912. Construction timelapse, deep dive presentation, video matics, video effects breakdowns, still galleries and so much more.

In closing, I admit that I was originally dismayed that the movie was split into two disc's but with the addition of the behind-the-scene branching featurettes with the film, I can understand why.

The number of *TITANIC* footage on this Special Collector's Edition is simply amazing.

If you are a big fan of this *TITANIC* film, this DVD Special Collector's Edition is definitely a must-buy!

A —DENNIS A. AMITH



EVERYDAY ITALIAN
12 Episodes, Food Network

My grandfather was a chef that specialized in Italian food. I grew up in a food friendly environment and also enjoy cooking.

Being a big fan of Food Network through their variety of programs such as *\$40 a Day*, *Iron Chef* and *Iron Chef America* to name a few, one of my favorites on the network is *Everyday Italian* hosted by Giada De Laurentiis.

A hip cooking show which Giada shows the viewers how to cook Italian dishes and you get to learn a little bit about Italy and its food.

With this 3-disc set, we are presented four episodes that take on three themes holidays (cocktail party, holiday dinner party, holiday side dishes and Easter celebration), Italian classics (Al fresco dining, power of pesto, Italian American night and seafood delights) and parties (antipasti, dessert party, chocolate and birthday party).

The video quality of the DVD was not as clear as I was expecting

and was wondering if there was a bit of compression because some sections looked a bit washed out. I found myself at times looking at the shows on my PVR comparing them to my DVD.

But then again, I'm quite nitpicky on video quality and after all, this is a cooking show and not a film or big budget television show.

One of the benefits of the DVD is the added bonus footage. Along with Giada's bio, you do get extra footage of her cooking other dishes which is a pretty cool added bonus to the DVD.

To make this DVD much more attractive is that it is exclusive to Target stores and the price was only \$19.99.

All in all, if you love food and you love to cook it, *Everyday Italian* does a great job in being a hip cooking show with great Italian food, cool atmosphere and a beautiful host which makes the series that much enjoyable.

A- —DENNIS A. AMITH

SHADOW SKILL
VOLUME 1: FIGHT FOR
THE ONES YOU LOVE

4 Episodes, 100 minutes, rated TV PG V (ADV Films)

In 1998, the television series *SHADOW SKILL* (produced by Studio Deen) was released in Japan based on the manga by Megumu Okada.

With 26-episodes in all, it's finally coming to North America through ADV Films in November.

The series focuses on Elle Ragu, the 59th Sevalle a.k.a. Shadow Skill. The Sevalle are feared because they are an elite breed of men and wom-



en who have mastered the martial arts. Alongside with her is her brother Gau and Faurink Maya who try to keep her out of trouble and to not cause so much damage (because she is in so much debt and has a tendency to get drunk a lot).

Trying to find odd jobs to pay off her debt and make a living, with each day of travel, the heroes meet new companions and also face deadly opponents in the kingdom of Karuda.

SHADOW SKILL is a fun, adventurous anime which combines addicting battles combined with an enjoyable storyline.

I found the characters for the series enjoyable and the action is balanced with the comedy and humor.

But the television series is not all about Elle, there appears to be some reason why the mysterious Scarface has taken an interest in Elle's brother Gau. Why is that?

As for the DVD, *SHADOW SKILL* shares the same quality as many anime that were shown dur-

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NeoSoul
The first compilation of the brightest stars in Japanese Hip Hop and R+B! Crystal Kay, Miss Monday, Sowelu, Rhymester, MICHICO, CHEMISTRY, SOULHEAD, Toshi Kubota, SOUL'd OUT, Loop Junktion, Ken Hirai, and other top names! TOF006



Japan For Sale, Vol. 4
Selections from all corners of Japanese music, bringing together a plethora of eclectic sounds! Tommy heavenly6, Rhymester, Guitar Wolf, Aika Higurashi, ORANGE RANGE, Boom Boom Satellites, DJ KRUSH and more! TOF014



Applesed OST
The soundtrack to one of the most anticipated Anime features of 2005. Boom Boom Satellites, Basement Jaxx, Paul Oakenfold and more! TOF014

X(JAPAN)



Best
Arguably the most influential rock band in the history of Asian music, X(JAPAN) is now available in the US from Tofu Records. This set contains one CD with twelve hits spanning their career and on DVD with eight music videos. TOF005

T.M.REVOLUTION



Vertical Infinity NEW!
The new album, featuring the hit singles Ignited, from Gundam Seed Destiny, and Web of Night, used in the Japanese release of Spiderman 2. The US release features a bonus DVD with the hit Albireo performed live in Japan! TOF019



SEVENTH HEAVEN
The follow up to the hit album coordinate, featuring the hits Albireo and Zips! TOF008



coordinate
T.M.Revolution's hit US debut album, featuring INVOKE, as heard on Mobilesult Gundam Seed, and Heart of Sword -Yoake Mae, from Rurouni Kenshin! TOF002



SUMMER CRUSH DVD
Two Disc, Live DVD set featuring concert footage of T.M.Revolution's top hits spanning his career, as well as bonus behind the scenes footage! TOF003



Sonic Warp DVD
This limited edition DVD features six video tracks, including Heart of Sword - Yoake Mae from Rurouni Kenshin, performed live at OTAKON 2003. English and Roma-ji subtitles, and a Roma-ji lyrics sheet. TOF004

NAMI TAMAKI



Greeting
The highly anticipated debut album from JPOP Princess Nami Tamaki features the hit songs Believe and Realize, both title songs from Mobilesult Gundam Seed. TOF007

L'ARC*EN*CIEL



AWAKE NEW! OUT 9/20/05
The new full-length album features the hit singles Invitation to Freedom -Jiyuu eno shoutai, Killing Me, New World, and Poem -JOJOSH-I, plus the bonus track, HEAVEN'S DRIVE, performed live in Japan! TOF021



SMILE
SMILE features READY STEADY GO as heard on Fullmetal Alchemist. The US version includes the bonus track READY STEADY GO (hydeless version) so you can sing along! TOF010



Clicked Singles Best 13
A special reissue of Clicked Singles Best 13, with the original booklet and artwork, plus a never before released Roma-ji lyrics booklet. Own the best of L'Arc-en-Ciel, as chosen by the fans! TOF011



LIVE IN USA at 1st Mariner Arena
The New DVD from the biggest rock band in Japan featuring footage from their groundbreaking performance at OTAKON 2005, plus a bonus DVD with REVELATION, performed live in Japan! TOF017

ASIAN KUNG-FU GENERATION



Sol-fa NEW! OUT 10/18/05
Introducing the popular alternative rock band from Japan, whose song Rewrite can be heard as the new theme song to Fullmetal Alchemist. This version contains a special bonus DVD featuring two live performances! TOF022

POLYSICS



POLYSICS OR DIE!!!!
Don't miss your chance to bask in the glory of POLYSICS and their latest album, POLYSICS OR DIE!!!! Rest assured of imminent doom should you forego this spectacular record. TOF015

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ing the late 90's.

Although, some sequences do show the usual television style type of video quality, on episodes such as episode Four, "What My Father Left Me", there is a sequence where the color and animation style changes for some unknown reason.

As for audio, I was surprised that the English dub track was not in 5.1 and that both English and Japanese tracks are in 2.0. Also, there are no special features at all.

Now for those of you who are interested in the *SHADOW SKILL* series, I highly recommend watching the television series first and afterwards the OAV series.

The OAV version of *SHADOW SKILL* was released by Manga Enter-

tainment several years ago and compiled into a movie.

The OAV series (the movie version released in the US) takes place after the television series but focuses on a major change in the relationship between Elle and Gau. I'll leave it at that.

But the English dub was not to my liking on Manga Entertainment's release but fortunately you had the option to choose the Japanese track and you can't go wrong with with Megumi Hayashibara (*Ranma 1/2*, *Slayers*, *Blue Seed*, *Video Girl Ai*, etc.) doing the voice acting for Elle.

Fortunately, the television series released by ADV Films has great voice acting for both Japanese and English dub tracks.

Young Gau actually sounds like a teenage boy instead of an older man this time around and I was very pleased with the voice acting with the English dub track.

All in all, *SHADOW SKILL* is an enjoyable anime series. The characters are very interesting and each episode is enjoyable.

The anime gets high marks but with no special features and the lack of the usual ADV 5.1 English dub track, I was a bit surprised by that.

If you are a fan of anime such as *Slayers*, *Inuyasha* and *Fushigi Yuugi*, I definitely recommend checking out *SHADOW SKILL*.

B—DENNIS A. AMITH

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