



## OH, YES... SHE'S VERY HOT!

Before Farrah Fawcett and Cheryl Ladd, TV audiences during in the mid-70's had **WONDER WOMAN** to go gaga over!

### WONDER WOMAN: THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON

725 minutes, pilot movie and 13 episodes, 2004, Warner Bros.

Wonder Woman is known in the comics world as one of the big three of DC Comics along with Superman and Batman.

With the current popularity of the Amazon princess in DC Comics as the hero who will cross the line by killing, it's a perfect time for a DVD release of the 70's television series.

Wonder Woman was originated by William Moulton Marston, a lawyer and psychologist whose work was instrumental in the creation of the polygraph (lie-detector) machine and originally debuting in comic books in 1941.

Where Superman and Batman have gone through many actors, Wonder Woman will be remem-

bered for the woman who played the character which was former Miss USA Lynda Carter.

With the search for the right woman, Lynda Carter was the perfect person for the job. Tall, beautiful, buxumous and literally the girl next door, no matter how campy the storylines were at the time, male audiences loved watching Lynda Carter and female audiences were inspired by the positive, strong female role that Lynda Carter portrayed in the *Wonder Woman* series

In the first season pilot which aired Nov. 1975 on ABC, the show centered around the WWII era as pilot Steve Trevor (played by Lyle Waggoner) who narrowly escaped death from gun shots from a nazi pilot.

Landing in Paradise Island, inhabited by only women, Diana Prince rescues the pilot, nurses him

and is chosen to bring the injured pilot back to the US and later help America defeat the evil nazi regime.

Upon watching the episodes, I was amazed at how campy the series was. From the storyline, fighting sequences to the special effects. It's amazing to see how far special effects on television has evolved in the last 30 years.

The video (4:3), surprisingly for a 70's television show, looks good. Audio is presented in mono.

As for special features, the pilot episode commentary with series executive producer Douglas S. Cramer and Lynda Carter features a lot of behind-the-scenes information on the series.

But what made it much more enjoyable was to listen to the two in awe for not having seen the pilot for nearly 30 years.

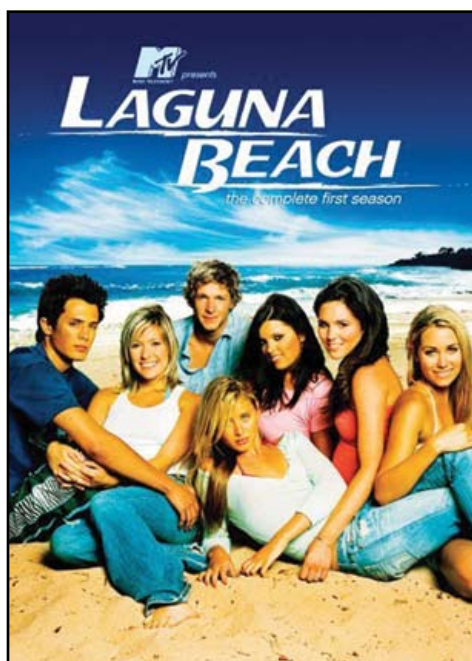
Also, very fun to watch was the documentary *Beauty, Brawn and Bulletproof Bracelets: A Wonder Woman Retrospective* featuring Lynda Carter, Douglas S. Cramer Alex Ross and many more.

You really got to learn how many celebrities wanted to have a guest appearance on the series. How the spinning transformation and the sparking bracelets came about. How *Wonder Woman* was supported by women and feminists to Debra Winger's role as Wonder Girl. And much more.

Watching *Wonder Woman* sure has brought a lot of memories and watching it decades later was still fun and enjoyable.

Definitely recommended for fans of the series and fans of *Wonder Woman*. It's a fun, yet campy series from the 70's, made even more enjoyable on DVD with the commentary and documentary. Check it out!

**B-** —DENNIS A. AMITH



**LAGUNA BEACH: THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON**

11 Episodes, 2005, MTV

As a big fan of the FOX TV series *The OC*, promos for MTV's *Laguna Beach: The Real OC* caught my interest because it was promoted as a reality TV show about the real life drama of high school students in the OC.

For many people not familiar with Orange County in Southern California, Laguna Beach is a beautiful and expensive place to live.

With the rich living on the hillside and the skim and bodyboarders on 10th St., it's an awesome beach town that is a bit more liberal than conservative.

With *The OC* featuring the affluent families of Newport Beach, MTV wanted to focus on the real lives of high school students from affluent families in Laguna Beach.

The first season revolves around the love triangle between Lauren "LC" (who narrates the first season), Stephen (the guy she likes and had a short fling with) and Kristin

(Stephen's girlfriend). Needless to say, LC and Kristin hate each other's guts.

The show also features their friends and the teen angst that they are going through. From high school activities, trying to get grades enough to graduate, preparing for prom, trying to get into college and spring break in Cabo.

Where most shows have covered the struggles of teen angst and financial challenges, *Laguna Beach: The Real OC* gives viewers a different perspective through their lives and what the affluent and popular teens of that city do for fun and how they live their lives.

As for the DVD, all eleven episodes from the first season is featured.

The video quality is very good showcasing the brilliant colors of the shoreline, the surf to sunsets.

As for audio, audio is in stereo but if there is one major complaint, its that some of the music has been changed for the DVD release.

One of the highlights of Laguna Beach is the use of current popular music at that time.

From Yellowcard, Maroon 5 to the Black Eyed Peas. The music really enhanced the viewability and fun factor of the show. Unfortunately, some of the cool songs have been replaced.

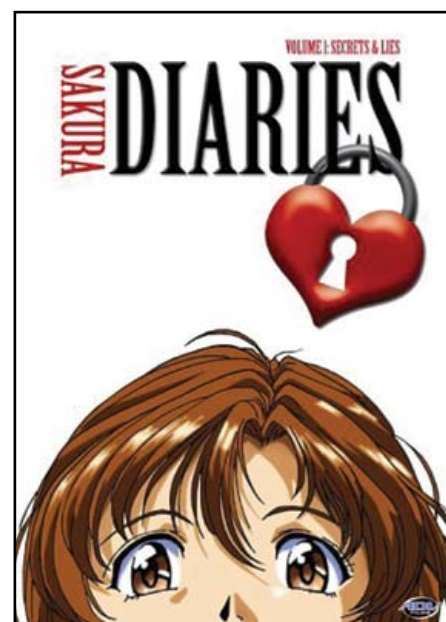
As for special features, although short, this is where the DVD set shines. Included is a tour of LC's house, Lo showing us her favorite spots in Laguna Beach, casting tapes which provide information on the love triangle. Behind-the-scenes of the season one finale, deleted scenes (which you get to see) and a really interesting interview on how the in-

dividuals felt about the show and about other people on the show.

Also featured is short featurettes taken from the episodes. Plus seven music videos featuring the indie artists whose music was used on the DVD and VIP membership to MTV.com.

This DVD set (and even the series) may not be for everyone. But I enjoyed watching a different perspective of teen angst. Lush visuals, loads of drama and good music makes *Laguna Beach: The Real OC* quite enjoyable.

**B+** —DENNIS A. AMITH



**SAKURA DIARIES VOLUME 1: SECRETS & LIES**

6 Episodes, 150 minutes, rated TV 14 SD (ADV Films).

In 1997, an anime adapted from the popular UJIN manga series, Sakura Diaries was released as an 12-episode OAV (also heavily edited for television) series which focused on the life of 18-year-old virgin, Touma who is trying to get

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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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into college by trying to pass the exams.

His parents want him to run the family's INN but Touma really wants to get into a prestigious college in Tokyo.

One day, a girl named Urara comes to his room and starts taking off his clothes.

Unfortunately, this has become a distraction for Touma and he fails getting into two of the three colleges.

During his third and final try, he meets the beautiful Mieko who he starts to become attracted to but he fails getting into the third college and lies to Mieko that he passes. So, he pretends to be a student of the college and tries to get close to Mieko.

As for Urara, Touma doesn't want anything to do with her because he

thinks she is a stalker responsible for taking his focus away from the entrance exams.

What he doesn't know (or remember) is that Urara, is a distant cousin who happens to have feelings for him.

The original *Sakura Diaries* DVD was released in 2001 in America with three episodes (a total 12 episodes in all) but the new 2005 release features six episodes.

The DVD video quality is typical of the quality of anime TV series from the 90's. And for an older anime, I enjoyed the animation.

The audio quality is 5.1 in English and Japanese 2.0. I watched both languages and I was pleased with the English dub.

The special features included an

unused closing theme, liner notes and clean opening and closing themes.

*Sakura Diaries* is actually a very fun and enjoyable anime. It does fall in the category of typical anime featuring the plot of girl likes guy, girl is from guy's past but guy is totally oblivious of what's going on.

But of course being adapted from a UJIN manga, it's a musthave for a UJIN manga and anime to have perverted comedy, loads of fan service and nudity.

So, If you are in the mood for a fun, yet perverted anime, definitely check out *Sakura Diaries*.

**B-** —DENNIS A. AMITH

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