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# DVDs THIS WEEK

by Michael Giltz



Keisha Castle-Hughes as Pai, a young Maori girl fated to become leader of her village, in "Whale Rider."

## "WHALE RIDER"

An honest-to-goodness sleeper hit, "Whale Rider" (\$26.95, Columbia TriStar) is the captivating, sweet story of Pai, a young Maori girl (**Keisha Castle-Hughes**) who yearns to carry on the traditions of her people. Most young kids can't be bothered with the old ways, but Pai's earnest desire faces the stubborn resistance of her loving grandfather (**Rawiri Paratene**), who can't recognize that she is fated to be the leader of their village. Based on an ancient legend, it's one of the delights of the year.

## "LOONEY TUNES GOLDEN COLLECTION"

Anyone with kids should rush out and buy this collection of classic Looney Tunes shorts. Anyone who doesn't have kids should rush out and get one so they can have an excuse to buy this four-DVD set (\$64.92, Warner Bros.). It's bursting with 56 hilarious, uncut classics like "Rabbit of Seville," "Duck Dodgers in the 24<sup>1/2</sup> Century," "For Scent-imental Reasons" and many more. One complaint: they should have called this "Golden Collection Volume One" — leaving off "One Froggy Evening" and the single greatest Looney Tune of all time, the Wagner spoof "What's Opera, Doc?," makes clear this is just the first of several.

## "THE SOPRANOS": Complete Fourth Season "HOMICIDE": Complete Season Three

"The Sopranos" was treading water during most of its fourth season (\$99.98, HBO). But you did finally get to watch things fall apart at the seams, namely Ralphie's body (**Joe Pantoliano**) and the marriage of Tony and Carmela, which imploded during a white-hot season finale that gave **James Gandolfini** and **Edie Falco** the best showcase of their careers. For a thoughtful and more consistent show, check out season three of the acclaimed "Homicide: Life on the Street" (\$99.95, A&E). It never enjoyed the popularity of "The Sopranos," but it went about its business creating classic TV anyway.

## "THE WORK OF DIRECTOR SPIKE JONZE"

Smart artists like **Bjork**, the **Beastie Boys**, **Madonna** and the **White Stripes** employ cutting-edge directors to deliver four-minute works of art. Along with the **Spike Jonze** compilation (featuring that **Fatboy Slim** video with a dancing **Christopher Walken**, the **Beastie Boys'** homage to '70s cop shows, "Sabotage," and the charming **Bjork** mini-musical, "It's Oh So Quiet"), you can also get the equally terrific work of **Chris Cunningham** and **Michel Gondry** (\$19.99 each, Palm Pictures), with loads of extras. Beautifully packaged and a great bargain to boot.

### Also out:

"**The Hulk**" (\$26.98, Universal) is already a dim memory, but it comes out on DVD anyway; fans are better off with "**The Incredible Hulk: Original TV Episodes**" (\$69.98, Universal), a six-disc collection of the best episodes from the **Bill Bixby** series; "**The Sherlock Holmes Collection**" (\$69.98; MPI) is a top-notch set of four **Basil Rathbone** features from the '40s; everyone's favorite geek pulls it together for "**SpongeBob SquarePants: The Complete First Season**" (\$49.99, Paramount); and the trippy 1974 cult classic "**Space is the Place**" (\$24.95, Plexifilm), features the legendary **Sun Ra** in concert.

### Out next week:

The top-grossing animated movie of all time, "**Little Nemo**"; **Bogie** and **Bacall** set off sparks in their terrific first pairing "**To Have and Have Not**"; and "**The Honeymooners: Classic 39 Episodes**" will send you straight to the moon with joy.