

# Star Wars trilogy gets digital makeover

dvd



Fanboy's patience with the whole Star Wars thing has been severely tested over the past few years. Forgetting the absolute suckiness of *The Phantom Menace* and *Attack of the Clones*, there's also been George Lucas's continual mucking about with the original films to deal with as well. He's been at it again recently, tinkering with the classics and readying them for this well overdue DVD release.

To be honest a lot of the changes are welcome. The three original films, *Star Wars: A New Hope*, *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*, have undergone a digital makeover, which has seen George Lucas' team removing all the grainy imperfections from every single shot of all three films. This mind-boggling task has left a picture quality that, for films almost 30 years old, is simply astounding.

The lightsaber duels are now super sharp, and the X-Wing vs. Tie Fighter space dogfights now



look pretty damn awesome. In short, the Star Wars series has never looked better.

Matching the awesome visuals is the sound. This has been boosted to 5.1 surround and is certainly impressive, although at times the levels adjust randomly.

Each film sports an excellent commentary track that has

George Lucas, Carrie Fisher and the technical types that worked on the films sharing their thoughts.

Bundled into the super-cool, glitzy box is a fourth bonus disc crammed with extra features, including *The Empire of Dreams*, an in-depth 150-minute documentary that examines the whole Star Wars phenomenon. It

rounds off this impressive collection nicely.

As for the films, a whole host of changes and enhancements have been implemented, some obvious and some not so.

The pathetically awful Jabba that was inserted into *A New Hope* has been redone so it actually looks like Jabba. It's still gratuitous but at least it doesn't look shit-awful any more.

Unsurprisingly, *Empire* hasn't been fiddled with too much, but if you haven't enjoyed Hayden Christensen's recent performance as Anakin Skywalker then you certainly won't enjoy seeing his grinning mug beaming away with the ghosts at the end of *Jedi*.

But what are you gonna do? This is Star Wars and it's on DVD. Enough said.

— By Karl Puschmann

# New Deschlers vibe – no jazz, bad cocktails

food & drink

**Deschlers**  
High Street, city.

As I walk into the newly renovated Deschlers on High St, I can't help thinking of the old adage – "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

Admittedly the previous décor was starting to look tired...but nothing that a couple of happy hour cocktails couldn't fix.

But Deschlers' management decided to close shop for a week and refit the 50s-themed bar. No longer is it the old jazz haunt and live music venue. Rather, it is a dimly lit, smoke-filled box that has finally surrendered to the pressures of mainstream mediocracy.

While the removal of the stage area has opened the bar up, they have foolishly reduced the number of booth seats and tables that made Deschlers such a popular drinking spot. The

platform and stairs have been re-carpeted in a want-to-be-plush (but really quite vulgar) scarlet hue, and the light fittings have been replaced with what can only be described as enlarged tin cans punctured with random patterns.

They have retained the seductive 1950s film noir feel, through the use of minimal lighting but have introduced a new mirrored wall behind the bar. Never a good idea. Surely they know better than to combine drunk people with their reflections.

Fortunately, some things never change and management did have the good sense to keep its infamous 3-7pm happy hours, complete with \$8 cocktails. But without the booth seats, it's just not the same. The strawberry daiquiris weren't as sweet and



the mango had a distinct vodka tang that did not make it the treat it should have been. The bar staff were as attentive and personable as always, but overall Deschlers has lost its old familiar charm.

Perhaps there was justification for the revamp, but time and/or financial constraints have left Deschlers a little bit tacky

and distinctively Tayloresque – i.e. one face lift too many. If you're after a cocktail, I suggest you try Honey down the road. They may be more expensive but they're a hundred times better...and the bartenders are cuter.

— By Jo Hunkin

## ART, THEATRE, MUSIC, FILM, SHOWS, ART, THEATRE, MUSIC, FILM, SHOWS, ART, THEATRE, MUSIC, FILM,

### EXHIBITIONS

**NZ birds and prestigious Victorian books** — In the age of modernism, thirst for knowledge of the antipodes was unquenchable. This exhibition illustrates the contemporary artistic flavours and the key aspects of scientific thought of the Victorian age. On display until 28 November. Auckland Museum, Auckland Domain, ph 306 7067.

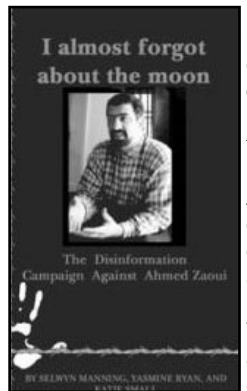
**Shirin Neshat** — Iranian born artist Shirin Neshat's beautiful work addresses the place of women in Islamic society. In a time when many misconceptions are being documented in the media, Neshat's work makes for refreshing viewing. On show until November 7, Auckland Art Gallery, cnr Wellesley & Kitchener Streets, ph 307 7700.



### BOOKS

***I Almost Forgot about the Moon*** — This book is a detailed examination of the human rights farce that has become the Ahmed Zaoui case. The co-authors, Selwyn Manning, Yasmine Ryan and Katie Small, shine considerable light on a case that has tarnished New Zealand's human rights record.

Since Zaoui's arrival in New Zealand, he has not been charged with any crime, despite being imprisoned for reasons unknown to himself and his lawyers. He remains in prison nearly two years later. With an indepth look into the French, Belgian and Swiss cases, *I Almost Forgot about the Moon* conveys to the average reader the severe deficiencies



in New Zealand's human rights law. Self published. Order online: selwyn@coop.co.nz Also available from Unity Books.

***Simon Gault Cooks*** — you bet he does! I once cooked for him myself in a former life... and he had the manners to come into the kitchen, with a glass of wine in his hand and a

girl on his arm, to thank me. So when he releases a cook book, I sit up and take notice. The guy is a kitchen wizard. This book includes some great recipes, not just for that casual Sunday lunch but also a few dishes that you'd cook up for your inlaws — when you know they're in a bad mood with you. Dishes are also designed for the health nazis but the rich tapestries of flavour are not compensated. Published by Random House.



### MUSIC

**David Kilgour** — the guitarist and singer from the legendary New Zealand band *The Clean* has just released his latest solo album, *Frozen Orange*. The album features his distinctive washy pop sound that has continued to influence the New Zealand music scene. Recorded in Nashville, *Frozen Orange* is a soothing, enjoyable listen. Record label: Merge Records



**Bethchadupa** — *Aiming For Your Head* is the band's second album,

crammed with a kaleidoscope of different sounds, ranging from jangling surf guitars to Led Zeppelin-like riffs. As the name suggests, the album challenges the listener with its multitude of styles. The band is now based in Melbourne, where the live music scene is actually alive. Record Label: Liberation

**Tom Waits** — From the veteran of noise-blues comes a new album, *Real Gone*. In the realm of modern blues, Waits is God, combining tribal drum beats, jangly blues riffs and his gravel voice. *Real Gone* delivers traditional ballads with unique Tom Waits twists. The stripped-back tracks with no frills attached, *Real Gone* has an exciting organic flavour. Record label: Shock Records

