

they feed on. Carlisle plays two roles, a jaded bisexual female model named Margaret and sneering, drug-addicted androgynous male model Jimmy, who dresses like David Bowie. The story follows Margaret's strange odyssey as she sees all of her sexual partners die in front of her. A surreal sci-fi flick that straddles American underground rebellion and European art movie, the film's performances are highly stylized, and Tsukerman uses video thermal imagery and abstract computer video art for the alien POV. Both a fascinating artifact from a specific cultural moment and a unique piece of independent filmmaking, *Liquid Sky*—unavailable on home video for years—has been newly restored for this special edition that features extras including audio commentary by Tsukerman, interviews with the director and Carlisle, a new documentary by Tsukerman, a Q&A from a 2017 screening, behind-the-scenes rehearsal footage, outtakes, an isolated soundtrack, and a stills gallery. Recommended. (S. Axmaker)

### Manhandled ★★★

Kino Lorber, 63 min., not rated, DVD: \$19.99, Blu-ray: \$29.99

The third of eight films that Gloria Swanson made with favorite director Allan Dwan, *Manhandled* gave the Hollywood superstar a chance to break out of costume dramas and her image as a glamour queen. In this 1924 comedy she plays Tessie, a sweetly clumsy department store salesgirl who crashes high society. Swanson's working-class character in a flapper bob is adorably down to earth: she snaps gum, wears cheap frocks, and endures the indignities of urban life, from pushy customers at the bargain tables of her store to the crush of subway commuters who knock her around on the ride home. Tired of being neglected by her boyfriend, Tessie accepts an invitation to a high society party and parlays her comic impression of a Russian countess into a job at a tea room in a posh dress shop. But she also finds herself fighting off a succession of society "gentlemen" who treat this working girl like a sexual plaything. The mix of hardscrabble working-class life, high society satire, and slapstick humor is balanced beautifully by Dwan, and the society sequences give Swanson moments of high glamour (even while playing the scenes for humor). Featuring an original piano score composed and performed by Makia Matsu-mura, extras include an audio commentary by film scholar Gaylyn Studlar, and a booklet. Recommended. (S. Axmaker)

### My Father the Hero ★★1/2

Kino Lorber, 90 min., PG, DVD: \$11.99, Blu-ray: \$19.99

International superstar Gerard Depardieu played the lead in this movie not once but twice: first in the original 1991 French

version, and then again in this 1994 American remake costarring a teenage Katherine Heigl. Depardieu plays Andre, an always-touring concert pianist who only occasionally sees his once worshipful, now resentful daughter, Nicole (Heigl). Hoping he can make up for lost time, Andre takes an unwilling Nicole to an upscale beach resort, where she feigns eye-rolling misery every moment that she has to spend with him. When a handsome local (and apparently rich) boy named Ben (Dalton James) takes some interest in Nicole, Andre puts up roadblocks to any developing relationship. But then Andre gets caught up in Nicole's various lies to Ben about her dad—especially that Andre is her lover—and madness ensues. Journeyman director Steve Miner's *My Father the Hero* is a reasonably entertaining bit of comic fluff that hits several very funny notes (a scene where Andre performs "Thank Heaven for Little Girls" is especially good) and boasts a number of sharp character actors (including Stephen Tobolowsky). Extras include audio commentary by Miner. A strong optional purchase. (T. Keogh)

### No Orchids for Miss Blandish ★★1/2

Kino Lorber, 103 min., not rated, DVD: \$19.99, Blu-ray: \$24.99

This 1948 adaptation of James Hadley Chase's 1939 novel offers a British take on a noir-tinged crime drama with lurid edges in an American setting that is never quite convincing. The film stars Jack La Rue—an American B-actor imported from Hollywood who looks like a poor man's Humphrey Bogart—as nightclub impresario and gangster Slim Grisson, who kidnaps the titular jaded heiress (Linden Travers) and, much to the frustration of his partners, falls in love with her. Hollywood wouldn't touch the book because it was so lascivious and the film was condemned by British politicians, not just because of the illicit affair between Grisson and Blandish. There's also a reporter (Hugh McDermott) who peeps on a showgirl getting undressed and gang members shacking up with their latest conquests. The leads have little chemistry and the odd accents of a predominantly British cast playing Americans against a backdrop of generic city streets, roadside gas stations, and country hideouts all created in the studio to mimic American culture give the film a slightly abstract and unreal quality. The direction by St. John Legh Clowes fails to bring much passion to the supposedly mad love or a savage edge to the mercenary twists, and his script dialogue is an awkward impression of American gangster talk. Still, this is a minor cult item, notable for

its sleazy milieu. A strong optional purchase. (S. Axmaker)

### Sacha Guitry: Four Films 1936-1938 ★★1/2

Arrow, 4 discs, 381 min., in French w/English subtitles, not rated, Blu-ray/DVD Combo: \$69.99

Sacha Guitry was a prolific playwright and busy stage actor who brought his boulevardier persona to the cinema as star, writer, and director of sly drawing-room comedies and costume pictures. This four-film set makes a great companion piece to Criterion's Eclipse DVD set *Presenting Sacha Guitry* (VL Online-9/10), offering more films from the late 1930s—Guitry's most prolific period—all adapted from his own plays and costarring his then-wife, Jacqueline Delubac. *Indiscretions* (1936), his first solo directorial effort, is a comedy of manners between two society couples. Apart from a prologue in Paris traffic, Guitry makes no effort to break out of the drawing room set-up, but his direction is crisp and he moves the dialogue-driven film at a lively clip. *My Father Was Right* (1936) is a sour comedy about a father teaching his son to be wary of women, which features a misogynistic streak running through the witty dialogue. *Let's Make a Dream* (1936) centers on the seduction of a married woman and is largely stagebound, but Guitry plays with the limitations in a clever way. Finally, *Up the Champs-Élysées* (1938) breaks with the drawing-room comedies to tell of the famous titular Parisian street as a history lesson by way of a costume pageant. Delubac costars in each film, which are all entertaining but also lesser efforts than the ones in the Eclipse set. Presented in a Blu-ray/DVD Combo edition, extras include an introduction and select scene commentaries by French film historian Ginette Vincendeau, video essays, and interviews. A strong optional purchase. (S. Axmaker)

### Shakespeare Wallah ★★1/2

Cohen, 122 min., in English & Hindi w/English subtitles, not rated, DVD: \$25.99, Blu-ray: \$30.99

The second feature film collaboration between producer Ismail Merchant, director James Ivory, and screenwriter Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, *Shakespeare Wallah* (1965) is loosely based on the experiences of British actors Geoffrey Kendal and Laura Liddell, who ran a traveling theater company that staged Shakespearean works in rural India. The pair play versions of themselves here, along with their daughter Felicity Kendal, who makes her film debut at the age of 17 as Lizzie. The film is roughly divided between the travails of the company as it tries to eke out an existence in an environment

