



video

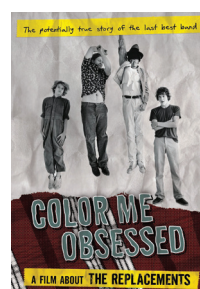
FICTION

Just Henry. color. 100 min. David Moore, ITV Studios, dist. by BFS Entertainment, www.bfsent.com. 2012. DVD UPC 066805311451. \$24.98. F

Fifteen-year-old Henry (Josh Bolt) faces a dreary world in post-World War II England having lost his soldier father, Joey, and acquired a disliked stepfather, Bill, who married his mother, Maureen. Ignorant of the details of his father's death, Henry and his paternal Gran (Sheila Hancock) worship the dead hero, posthumously awarded a medal for bravery. At school, Henry is assigned to a three-person team with Grace, a pretty, smart new girl he admires, and Paul, a boy he hates, as Henry believes Paul's father is a deserter. Henry has recurring nightmares, and he thinks he sees Joey's image in a snapshot of his school team taken at the local cinema. Then Joey returns, claiming amnesia as the reason behind his decade-long disappearance. Furious that the now-pregnant Maureen won't return to him, Joey kidnaps her and Henry, and Henry must decide whom to help and how, simultaneously learning much more about his father. The moral and ethical dilemmas here are real and difficult; the denouement exciting and satisfying. **VERDICT** Based on the 2008 novel by Michelle Magorian, this video is highly recommended for public library youth collections but would be most enjoyable as family fare.—Sheila S. Intner, Prof. Emerita, Simmons GSLIS at Mt. Holyoke Coll., South Hadley, MA

★**Sleep Tight.** color. 102+ min. In Spanish w/English subtitles. Jaume Balagueró, Castelano Pictures, dist. by Dark Sky Films, www.darkskyfilms.com. 2013. DVD UPC 030306820392. \$24.98; Blu-ray UPC 030306186092. \$29.98. HORROR

César (Luis Tosar) is the concierge of an elegant Barcelona apartment building. His tenants are a merry lot, especially the lovely Clara (Marta Etura), a cheerful beauty whose sunny smile lights up a room. César is not a fan of light, however, as we learn when he tells his comatose mother that he has never felt happiness. His mission, therefore, is to destroy the happiness of others, a goal that he accomplishes in a variety of ways: by sending anonymous hate mail, killing the building's plants, and inflicting one elderly tenant's dog with diarrhea. He is especially focused on Clara, and as César attempts to torment her fail, his fixation swells into full-fledged obsession. **VERDICT** Spanish director Balagueró (*Rec*) has crafted an impeccably



Obsessions: a man who hates happiness; a band whose fans can't get enough of them

paced, almost unbearably suspenseful excursion into psychological terror. It preys upon childhood fears of the monster under the bed and does it with a distinctly Hitchcockian flavor in what is one of the most engrossing horror films to come along in years.—Jeanne Bogino, New Lebanon Lib., NY

Stella Days. color. 90+ min. Thaddeus O'Sullivan, Irish Film Board & Newgrange Pictures, dist by Tribeca Film c/o Cinedigm/New Video, 800-314-8822; www.newvideo.com. 2012. DVD ISBN 9781422921999. \$26.95. Closed-captioned. F

Rural Ireland in the 1950s is the beautiful setting for this charming movie based on Michael Doorley's 2011 memoir of the same name. This small town is going to change as electricity is introduced and the modern world approaches. Father Daniel Barry (Martin Sheen), an educated priest who has spent time in America and Rome as a Vatican scholar, finds himself banished to the village of Tipperary. Father Barry's superior, Bishop Hegerty (Tom Hickey), gives the order to raise money for a new church. However, Father Barry believes a better use of the funds would be to construct a community cinema. He is met with opposition from the bishop and local politician Brendan McSweeney (Stephen Rea) as they battle for control of the "hearts and minds" of the people. The struggle for power is central to the plot, but the moments when we are invited into the townspeople's lives and Father Barry's relationships with them are what make this video shine. **VERDICT** With solid production values, this film is recommended for most library collections.—Krissey Cwengros, Scottsdale P.L., AZ

Vera: Set 2. 4 discs. color. 370 min. Peter Hoar & others, ITV Studios, dist. by Acorn Media, 888-870-8047; www.acornonline.com. 2012. DVD ISBN 9781598288209. \$59.99. SDH subtitles. F

Award-winning actress Brenda Blethyn returns for a second season as DCI Vera Stanhope in this popular police procedural. Based on the crime novels of British author Ann Cleeves, the series is set in the excep-

tionally beautiful but often bleak northern England countryside surrounding Northumbria. Each of the 90-minute episodes included here begins with a violent and apparently motiveless murder, and it's up to the bristly and brusque chief inspector and her team to identify the victims and find the culprits. The story lines and dialog are contemporary, and the production is first-rate. Yet the real delight here is the slow and measured backstory development, as each episode reveals a bit of additional information about the characters, and viewers are drawn in for more. Not surprisingly, the series was recently renewed for a third season.

VERDICT Recommended for viewers who enjoy British crime dramas with a strong female lead. Vera solves the case; Blethyn steals the show.—Linda Frederiksen, Washington State Univ. Lib., Vancouver

ARTS & HUMANITIES

The Portrait. color. 30 min. Hubert Davis, Natl. Film Bd. of Canada, www.nfb.com. 2012. DVD UPC 698193275383. \$150. Public performance. ART-GENERAL

Canadian artist Phil Richards (b. 1951) in 2010 received a royal commission to paint a portrait of Queen Elizabeth II in honor of her Diamond Jubilee in 2012. The film follows his approach to the difficult assignment through to the finished painting. Richards, who normally would spend hours with his subject, did not have that opportunity in this case (he had only one brief meeting with the queen) and had to rely on photographs and busts that he created in order to study spatial qualities and shadowing. Richards discusses the influences on his art and the thought processes that go into creating a roughly ten-foot-tall portrait. The unveiling of the work to the queen and the press in June 2012 is included. **VERDICT** This engaging analysis of how a portrait is created will appeal to artists, historians, and general audiences.—Phillip Oliver, Univ. of North Alabama, Florence

Extraordinary Minds: Jacques d'Amboise. color & b/w. 52 min. Rob Massey, Shout! Factory & Ambassador Entertainment, dist. by Kultur, 732-229-2343; www.kultur.com. DVD ISBN 9780769791036. \$19.99. DANCE

This could have been a boring talking heads interview given that it takes place at a table on a stage in front of an audience. Yet the dynamic personality of dancer Jacques d'Amboise and his incredible enthusiasm here when discussing his art form with Howard Gardner, author of more than 25 books including *Extraordinary Minds*, allow it to rise above the format. d'Amboise was born Joseph Jacques Ahearn in Dedham, MA, in 1934 and started dancing at a very early age. He went on to become the first

