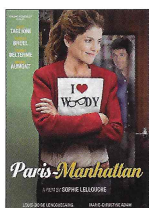


that was without modern precedent.) Other Cantor Fitzgerald employees and family members faced extraordinary pressures in the aftermath of 9/11, including agonizing decisions over which memorial services and funerals to attend (which at one point averaged 10 per day). Offering a heartbreaking view of a horrible event witnessed through the prism of one terribly hard-hit company, this is highly recommended. (P. Hall)

Paris-Manhattan ★★★

Strand, 77 min., in French w/English subtitles, not rated, DVD: \$27.99

A sweet, often clever French comedy about a single pharmacist named Alice (Alice Taglioni), who is guided through life by the films of Woody Allen, *Paris-Manhattan* feels like one of Allen's own Europe-set recent works. Alice (who imagines having conversations about life and love with Allen, who actually does voice work for these scenes) is trying hard to comply with her parents' wishes that she date a man they like and settle down. But fate intervenes when Alice meets Victor (Patrick Bruel), a burglar alarm specialist with a somewhat brusque and opinionated manner—a man she is thrown together with repeatedly on various misadventures. The seemingly rocky relationship between Alice's sister and her husband makes for an amusing subplot, as do old grievances between Alice's mother and father. Writer-director Sophie Lellouche's *Paris-Manhattan* ultimately casts a sophisticated and bittersweet romantic spell that should appeal to fans of Allen. Recommended. (T. Keogh)

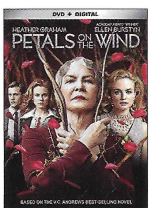


Petals on the Wind

★★★1/2

Lionsgate, 90 min., not rated, DVD: \$14.98

A sequel to this year's *Flowers in the Attic*, this Lifetime-aired movie based on V.C. Andrews's 1980 second novel in the Dollanganger series is set years after the children escaped from being held captive in a mansion as part of an inheritance scheme hatched by their troubled mother (Heather Graham). *Petals on the Wind* centers on Cathy (now played by Rose McIver), whose quest to become a prima ballerina never quite displaces her thirst for revenge against her family (including Ellen Burstyn as the evil grandmother). Cathy still maintains a creepy requited jones for her brother Chris (Wyatt Nash), even if their incestuous romance receives competition from an abusive danseur (Will Kemp) and their own lawyer stepfather (Dylan Bruce). This will appeal mostly to fans, who can also look ahead to Lifetime's promised movies for the sequels *If There Be Thorns* and *Seeds of Yes-*



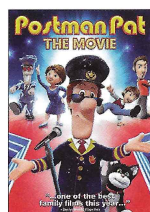
terday in 2015. A strong optional purchase. (J. Williams-Wood)

Postman Pat: The Movie

★★★★

Paramount, 87 min., not rated, DVD: \$19.99

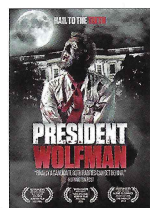
Based on a popular British children's animated TV series airing off and on since 1981, *Postman Pat: The Movie* is set in a small English village, where the titular mailman (voiced by Stephen Mangan)—who works for Special Delivery Service (SDS)—delivers parcels to his friends and neighbors. Accompanied by his trusty sidekick, a black-and-white cat named Jess, beloved Postman Pat's life is suddenly complicated by two events. First, an *X Factor*-like televised talent show (hosted by the cynical Simon Cowbell) comes to Pat's village in search of a rising star. Second, an efficiency expert with plans to eliminate all human employees (including postmen) at SDS replaces Pat with a lookalike robot. Seeking to win a trip to Italy for his family by competing in the talent program as a singer, Pat is drawn away from his home, reluctantly becoming a national celebrity. Meanwhile, robot Pat is wreaking havoc on the real Pat's delivery route, upsetting people who don't realize that they're dealing with a machine. Also featuring the voice talents of *Harry Potter* alumni Jim Broadbent, Rupert Grint, and David Tennant, this amiable family film is recommended. (T. Keogh)



President Wolfman ★★

Wild Eye, 80 min., not rated, DVD: \$14.95

Zany but not exactly inspired, *President Wolfman* is comprised of clips from public domain movies—including 1973's *The Werewolf of Washington*, starring Dean Stockwell in the title role—and other rights-free footage. Director Mike Davis and a talented vocal cast dub new dialogue over the visual mash-up to create a random story about an American president (Stockwell, alternating with another actor who looks nothing like him) turning into a werewolf at the exact moment that a rogue vice-president is trying to sell America to China. A beauty pageant and the president's 8-year-old son (a target for murder) are also added to the mix in this gimmicky film featuring jokes that come fast and furious but are more often white noise than winning material. Optional. (T. Keogh)

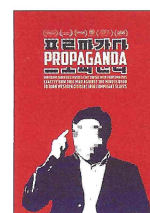


Propaganda ★★1/2

MVD, 96 min., not rated, DVD: \$19.95

Borrowing themes from *Fahrenheit 9/11*, *Capitalism: A Love Story*, *The Corporation*, and many other left-wing features—and then

cranking them past 11—filmmaker Slavko Martinov's angry diatribe dresses up a lot of Occupy Wall Street complaints in an iffy mockumentary gimmick: as a film smuggled out of insular North Korea, in which agents for the Pyongyang dictatorship have scrutinized the West and now (with an English-language voiceover) report to comrades about how the "democratic" world works. Item: it appears that a tiny, unaccountable, criminal super-rich minority—all Big-Business capitalists—run everything. Item: U.S. presidents (Obama included) and U.K. prime ministers are all corporate-controlled puppet warmonger imperialists and protectors of the Rothschild terrorist rogue-state Israel. Item: the American people remain docile, stupid, and ignorant of the actual world situation thanks to trash-reality TV, violent video games, and consumer-brainwash ads (replacing the state's old brainwash method, namely religion). The satirical message seems to be that even the ultimate outsider, Kim Jung-un, can have a better idea of what's going on than the entertainment-numbered masses in the "free world." Take note that the media-barrage style of news clips and illustrative footage can sometimes be hideously violent (including footage of mutilated Palestinians and abused animals). Disturbing but also thought-provoking, this is a strong optional purchase. (C. Cassidy)



Proxy ★★★

IFC, 122 min., not rated, DVD: \$24.98, Blu-ray: \$29.98

Indie filmmaker Zack Parker's psychological thriller *Proxy* carries a bit of the sinister vibe found in early works of Brian De Palma and David Cronenberg, although it possesses neither the former's stylistic flamboyance nor the latter's intellectual depth. The story begins with a horrific scene in which a pregnant woman named Esther (Alexia Rasmussen) is brutally attacked by a hooded figure after leaving her doctor's office, and loses the baby. While attending a group meeting for grieving parents, Esther encounters Melanie (Alexa Havins), whose child was abducted, and the pair become fast friends. But neither woman is who she seems, and the plot turns that involve both will gradually lead to ever more disturbing revelations and gruesome acts of violence—especially after a third woman, Anika (Kristina Klebe), an angry sociopath recently released from prison, enters the scene, culminating in a surprise ending that is charged with irony. While the performances are not top-drawer and viewers can never be sure whether the hints of dark humor are intentional or accidental, these are qualities characteristic of low-budget guilty

