

and Darfur, but the emotions and general harshness of the situation come through all the same—as does the courage of Rotem and his team. Recommended. Aud: C, P. (T. Keogh)

## THE ARTS

### Brillo Box (3¢ Off) ★★★

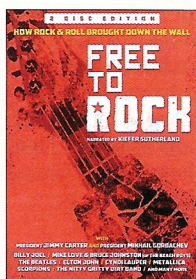
(2017) 40 min. DVD: \$99.95; public libraries; \$295; colleges & universities. The Cinema Guild. PPR. Closed captioned. ISBN: 0-7815-1567-X.

Aired on HBO, filmmaker Lisanne Skyler's documentary takes viewers on a fun and personal excursion into the weird world of modern art. Lisanne was an infant in 1969 when her parents purchased for \$1,000 a signed Andy Warhol—one of the eccentric young artist's silk-screened copies of a Brillo pad box. While the cultured Skylers appreciated the piece, Warhol's pop art bewildered the mainstream; some even thought this was some kind of aesthetic hoax. Ultimately, the family traded their Brillo Box for another artist's painting, and four decades later this celebrated Warhol object sold at auction for \$3 million. Along the way, the narrative questions the highly subjective value and definition of "art," with a (Campbell's?) soupçon of Andy Warhol biography/appreciation mixed in, featuring interviews of critic Irving Sandler, author Kenny Schachter, and artists Nancy Mozur and Peter Young. An interesting story about the Brillo Box's journey within a changing art marketplace told through the perspective of one woman's bittersweet memories, this is recommended. Aud: C, P. (C. Cassidy)

### Cymbeline ★★1/2

(2016) 188 min. DVD: \$24.99, Blu-ray: \$42.99. Opus Arte (dist. by Naxos of America).

While one can appreciate directorial imagination in staging Shakespeare, Melly Still overdoes it in her 2016 Royal Shakespeare Company production at Stratford-upon-Avon of one of the Bard's more problematic efforts: *Cymbeline*, which juggles elements of history, tragedy, romance, and comedy while also adding to the mix hints of past plays (*Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Othello*, and *Romeo and Juliet*). The director increases the complexity by turning the conflict between the ancient Britons and the Roman Empire into a reflection of the divisions in Brexit-torn Europe, situating the action—judging by the look of the costumes—in some sort of post-apocalyptic future. She also changes the gender of characters, including the titular king, now Queen Cymbeline (Gillian Bevan) and the monarch's spouse, now a duke (James Clyde), and one of Cymbeline's lost sons here becomes a fierce daughter (Natalie Simpson). The romantic triangle of Cymbeline's other daughter Innogen (Bethan Cullinane), her Roman husband (Hiran Abeysekera), and his underhanded



### Free to Rock ★★★1/2

(2014) 2 discs. 56 min. DVD: \$19.95. Music Video Distributors (avail. from most distributors).

You might not expect former President Jimmy Carter and former General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev to have much to say about rock 'n' roll. But in filmmaker Jim Brown's fascinating and illuminating documentary *Free to Rock*, narrated by Kiefer Sutherland, both are compelling spokesmen regarding the significant role that rock music played in the Soviet sphere's gradual opening to the outside world. Being in charge of the world's great superpowers during a slice of the Cold War, Carter and Gorbachev were paying attention to the influence of music on a younger generation not just in Russia but also every satellite nation in the Eastern Bloc. Rock 'n' roll became the soundtrack for the fall of the Berlin Wall and subsequent collapse of the Soviet empire. The film traces the long, often brutal history of rock music in the Soviet world, beginning with the violent suppression of anyone showing interest in listening to or performing rock after it debuted in the 1950s. With the arrival of the Beatles, a passion for both Western and homegrown rock led to a surge in underground music scenes and a black market in "bone records"—bootlegged recordings printed onto old X-rays. There are interesting chapters here on Soviet efforts to placate rock fans with official bands playing catchy tunes featuring uplifting socialist messages, and a grudging acceptance bestowed on groups pedaling a soft, non-threatening sound (one such band pulled a switch in later, rougher albums, only to be shut down). Footage of concerts performed in Russia, East Berlin, and elsewhere by Elton John, Bruce Springsteen, the Beach Boys, and Scorpions capture the pent-up energy of rock fans who were generally denied such experiences. But there are also darker stories of legendary bands such as Plastic People of the Universe, a Czech ensemble frequently arrested and tortured. Extras include the feature-length behind-the-scenes documentary *Rockin the Kremlin*. A fast-paced, informative look at rock music's impact in the U.S.S.R. during the last half of the last century, this is highly recommended. Aud: C, P. (T. Keogh)

friend (Oliver Johnstone) remains intact. The text, however, does not: not only are gender terms naturally altered, but while most of the dialogue remains English, some is translated into Latin, Italian, and French, with the original lines projected onto walls. Also added are modern music and vigorous ensemble dances. Some of the performances are quite good, and the multiple resolutions at the close retain their dramatic power, but one doubts this *Cymbeline* will wear well, particularly since the provincial Brexit references are bound to date it. Extras include audio commentary by and an interview with Still, the featurette "Shakespeare's Ancient Britain," and a cast gallery. A strong optional purchase. Aud: H, C, P. (F. Swietek)

### Eight Films by Jean Rouch ★★★1/2

(2017) 4 discs. 604 min. In French w/English subtitles. DVD: \$44.98 (\$598 w/PPR from www.icarusfilms.com). Icarus Films Home Video (available from most distributors).

Jean Rouch, who died at the age of 86 in 2004, was a multi-talented filmmaker: a founder of the *cinéma vérité* movement in France, a pioneer in the hand-held jump-cut techniques characteristic of the French Nouvelle Vague, and the father of Nigerian filmmaking. This set, celebrating the centennial of his birth, offers a selection of films that demonstrate the evolution of his style over the 1950s and '60s. *Mammy*

*Water* (1955) is a relatively straightforward documentary short about "water surfers" on the Gulf of Guinea, while *The Mad Masters* (1956) is Rouch's earliest work of so-called ethnofiction (combining documentary and fiction), portraying a Nigerian ritual ridiculing British colonial rule. More ethnographic features followed: *Moi, Un Noir* (1958), an improvisational tale of three Nigerian immigrants in a colonial port; *The Human Pyramid* (1961), about an experiment designed to develop friendships between black and white students; and *The Lion Hunters* (1965), following a tribe as it tracks down a lion that has attacked their cattle. *Jaguar*, released in 1967 although filmed over many years, charts the efforts of three young Nigerians to build a successful business, while its sequel—*Little by Little* (1969)—accompanies one of the trio to visit Paris to study French culture and business. Finally, *The Punishment* (1962) represents Rouch's purely fictional work: a psychodrama centered on a young woman who is expelled from school for tardiness and spends the day conversing with a succession of men. *Jean Rouch: The Adventurous Filmmaker*, a fine 2017 documentary by Laurent Védrine emphasizing Rouch's importance in the development of Nigerian filmmaking, completes this excellent introduction to the work of a man whose influence took many forms. Highly recommended. Aud: C, P. (F. Swietek)