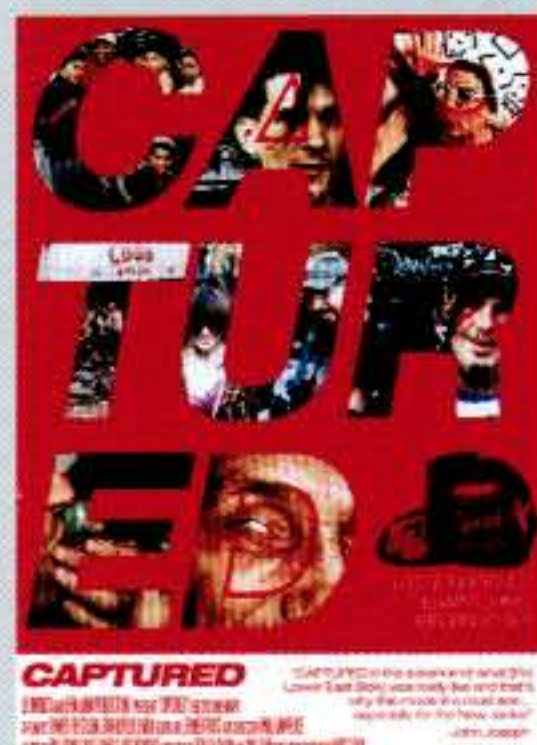


BILLIE HOLIDAY: THE LIFE AND ARTISTRY OF LADY DAY
(IDEM HOME VIDEO)

F If Billie Holiday was “arguably the best female vocalist in jazz history,” and “a legendary performer,” as the back cover of this DVD asserts, then her legacy deserves better than this dreadful documentary. Clocking in at a scant 27 minutes, *The Life and Artistry of Lady Day* sheds no new light on this important musician. There are no new interviews here, no new information offered. Instead, the film strings together a series of classic Holiday appearances (*New Orleans*, *The Sound of Jazz*), all previously available, accompanied by a shallow narration. Overly-simplistic lines like “Billie’s childhood was a horrible nightmare that turned her into a self-destructive person for the rest of her life” and “her teenage mother didn’t know how to take good care of her, thus, she grew up with the feeling of not being loved” are laughable and childish. Also of note are the mysterious origins of this film. There is no director listed, no producer listed, the narrator’s name is not given, and the year of completion is uncertain.

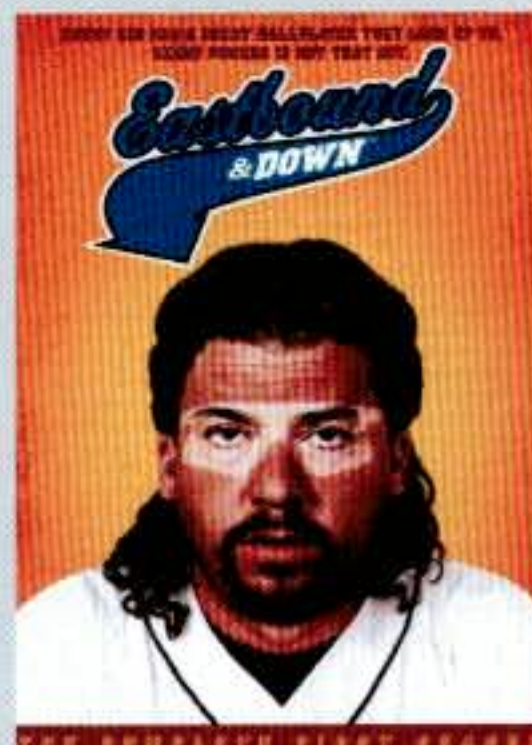
Brad Farberman



CAPTURED
(BEN VS DAN / BLOWBACK)

A Clayton Patterson has been documenting NYC’s ever-changing Lower East Side since arriving in 1979. With his photographic or video camera, Patterson was always on the front line in the war against cops, yuppie scum and gentrification. He gave a voice to the drag queens, hardcore punks, anarchists, homeless, drug addicts, bikers, street kids, immigrants and artists that populated the area, and whose plights and concerns were largely ignored by the city. Himself a self-described “societal outcast,” he connected with the area because “you could almost be anybody you wanted to be on the LES.” Patterson repeatedly knocked heads (quite literally) with police officers and, during a riot in 1988, he captured over four hours of controversial footage, some of which is in *Captured*—a documentary about a man obsessed with documenting. This is a brave attempt at summarizing the evolution and deconstruction of the area through the art and records of its very own outlaw historian. As raw and as radical as its primary subject, the film is eye-opening and often brutally painful.

Amy Dupcak



EASTBOUND & DOWN
(HBO)

A HBO’s *Eastbound & Down* became a smash hit the moment it aired this past February, with millions of Americans inviting their new favorite foul-mouthed asshole, Kenny Powers (Danny McBride), into their homes every Sunday. And with the first season now on DVD, Kenny Powers can be a permanent houseguest (or home wrecker). The misadventures of this love-struck, washed-up failure of a baseball pitcher don’t lose steam the second, third or fourth time around, and the brevity of the season (only six episodes) makes it easy to actually sit down and watch the whole damn thing! The special features are well worth it, as some of the greatest moments are hidden in the outtakes—like eternally drugged-out Clegg (Ben Best) admitting he can’t remember where he was on 9/11, or Kenny’s little bitch Stevie (Steve Little) telling the guys his deep, dark secret. Behind-the-scenes looks, interviews and bloopers round out the hilarity, and are especially riotous when Will Ferrell shows up. The bilingual option is also a treat ‘cause the shit’s even funnier in Spanish.

Kyle Timlin



WARRING FACTIONS
(J. MASHOUF)

B *Warring Factions* tells the story of Justin Mashouf, an Iranian-American b-boy, and his quest for peace within himself as his cultures seem to be perpetually at war. It is strikingly honest, and Justin makes no attempts at concealing his personal politics. But then again, why should he? Justin must react and show his reactions because the film, despite its connections to current U.S.-Iranian relations, is about Justin Mashouf. It is about how he deals with multi-nationalism, and it is about the inner struggle he faces because of it. With its verité style and scattered studio re-enactments, the film tells us things without saying them—it shows us the way that Justin’s mind processes experience. It is raw, but with a shocking maturity for such a young documentarian. Justin uses b-boying as the language of his story—the language of a dance that has blended cultures since its moment of inception. But the film, again, is about Justin, and it is an honest look at the psychology of one torn by—as the DVD puts it—“dual nationality.”

Andoni Elias Nava