

of the southern Serengeti region, specifically scenes of the natural annual migration habits of wildebeest, zebra, and gazelles...as well as their predators. Traveling along with guides, the program showcases lions, the bat-eared fox, giraffes, ostriches, and brightly-hued love birds, before taking a side trip to the Serengeti National Park World Heritage Site. Additional sights and topics include the Maasai Market in Tanzania's Arusha, a look at traditional African instruments (including the marimba), and a segment on Tanzanian art focusing on the Makonde wood carving tradition and Edward Tingatinga's stylish oil paintings (originally designed as tourist souvenirs). A colorful, nicely filmed travelogue backed by appropriate world music, this will be of interest to both armchair travelers and nature enthusiasts. Recommended. Aud: P. (J. Williams-Wood)

Visit Wales ★★★

(2007) 60 min. DVD: \$24.95. Janson Media. PPR. ISBN: 978-1-56839-307-5.

In this beautifully filmed and informative travelogue visit to Wales—a part of the United Kingdom, but officially bilingual (Welsh and English)—former BBC presenter Rachel Hicks takes viewers on a guided tour of sites ranging from ancient dwellings to huge castles and modern marvels. While the Egyptians were building the pyramids, settlers in Wales were constructing burial monuments resembling Stonehenge, with multi-ton rocks intricately placed one atop another in a remarkable feat of engineering. The Welsh castles, of course, offer rugged reminders of how lords and kings relied on a show of might to keep the populace in order, yet today, some of these crumbling remains are used for tourists and residents to don wetsuits and take a plunge into the cold ocean waters. Remnants of the Industrial Age also live on, with steam-powered trains (perfectly restored and transporting passengers), museums dedicated to the early mining industry, and aqueducts still in operation. Wales is also known as the land of song, and for arguably its most famous son—writer and poet (and inspiration-to-Bob) Dylan Thomas. Here, viewers will see the boathouse in Laugharne, Carmarthenshire where Thomas wrote *Under Milk Wood*, a play chronicling a day in the life of an imaginary Welsh seaside village. A fine addition for travel collections, this is recommended. Aud: P. (C. Block)

BIOGRAPHY

Billie Holiday: The Life and Artistry of Lady Day ★★★½

(2004) 28 min. DVD: \$19.95. Music Video Distributors (avail. from most distributors).

If ever there were a poster child for the notion that great art requires great suffering,

jazz singer Billie Holiday was that person. Raped at age 10, jailed for prostitution at 14, Holiday's childhood was "a horrible nightmare." Raised by a teen mother who didn't know how to take care of her, Holiday endured a life of suffering, some of it self-inflicted (heroin addiction), some of it visited upon her (a string of abusive relationships). Holiday died in 1959—only 44 but looking much older—with a cop stationed outside her hospital room, arrested on her deathbed for narcotics possession. But during her troubled life, Holiday also managed to create some great music. After her "discovery" by the legendary John Hammond when she was 18, Holiday worked with giants like Duke Ellington, Count Basie (whose tenor saxophonist, Lester Young, anointed her "Lady Day"), and Artie Shaw, as well as leading her own band and writing ("God Bless the Child") and performing some of the greatest standards ("Lover Man," "Strange Fruit") in the American music catalogue. All of this material is covered in *Billie Holiday: The Life and Artistry of Lady Day*, which breaks no new ground (and contains no interviews), but features great film footage, including a segment with Ellington and some excerpts from *Scenes of New Orleans*, a 1947 film that features Holiday performing with Louis Armstrong. A strong optional purchase. Aud: C, P. (S. Graham)

Fritz: The Walter Mondale Story ★★★

(2008) 86 min. DVD: \$20: individuals; \$99.99 w/PPR: public libraries; \$199 w/PPR: colleges & universities. Darn Good Documentaries.

A living reminder of an earlier period in American political history, Walter "Fritz" Mondale is an unapologetic liberal, a "voice of conscience" who was raised to believe that politics is a calling with a mission to help America's less fortunate citizens. Melody Gilbert's documentary *Fritz*, narrated by Mondale's daughter Eleanor, takes an affectionate look back at Mondale's 50-year career in public life. Growing up in Depression-era Minnesota, the adult Mondale would practice law for a few years before being tapped as Minnesota's attorney general. Like many others, Mondale was inspired by Hubert Humphrey's passionate 1948 speech advocating civil rights at the Democratic Party's national convention, later assuming the happy warrior's Senate seat when Humphrey became Vice President under Lyndon Johnson. For Mondale, the '60s were turbulent but exciting years, as he helped shepherd many of LBJ's "Great Society" programs through Congress (including Medicare and Medicaid), as well as legislation related to voting rights and occupational safety. An early and eloquent believer in consumer protection, environmentalism, and equal rights for women,

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