

on and we hear the familiar speculation that he might have had a sexually-transmitted disease that impacted First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy's difficult pregnancies. Rather, the emphasis here is more on Kennedy's role as a family man, finding time for his two children and for gathering with the extended Kennedy clan on weekends. Along the way, it also looks at his many medical problems, including the chronic back pain for which he was secretly taking up to a dozen medications. The personal ripple effect of national issues—especially the Cuban Missile Crisis—on the families of JFK and his brother, attorney general Robert Kennedy, are also examined. Home movies of Kennedy at play and in relaxation, particularly the last such footage before his assassination, are touching. Sure to appeal to history buffs and Kennedy dynasty followers, this personal look inside the world of Camelot is highly recommended. Aud: C, P (T. Keogh)

### Looking for Johnny: The Legend of Johnny Thunders ★★★

(2014) 98 min. DVD: \$16.95. Music Video Distributors (avail. from most distributors).

The talented and troubled Johnny Thunders is profiled in filmmaker Danny Garcia's

oral history-style documentary, which spends almost as much time on its subject's drug abuse as his music career (not that there was much of an option). Thunders began life in Queens in 1952 as Johnny Genzale, growing up to become a rabid music fan, playing guitar in high school bands, and—in 1971—joining the legendary glam rock group the New York Dolls. Richard Lloyd (Television) and Lenny Kaye (Patti Smith Group) talk about the self-serious music scene in the early '70s, which benefited from the anything-goes fun that the Dolls provided. Although known for being late and sloppy, the band managed to find an enthusiastic audience, but never completely recovered from the drug-related death of 21-year-old drummer Billy Murcia. With replacement player Jerry Nolan, the Dolls secured a record deal, but bad luck and worse decisions bedeviled them. After their breakup, Thunders formed other bands, including the Heartbreakers and Gang War, but he worked best as a solo artist (band mates Richard Hell and Wayne Kramer are notable here by their absence). Although Thunders recorded classic songs, including "Chinese Rocks" and "You Can't Put Your Arms Around a Memory," his

personal life was a disheveled affair with short-lived moments of sobriety and stability; he even drove his children away, which only led to greater drug use, and an early death in 1991. Also featuring archival audio of Thunders and late manager Malcolm McLaren, DVD extras include a behind-the-scenes featurette, deleted scenes, and bonus performances. A solid profile, this is recommended. Aud: P. (K. Fennessy)

### Secretariat's Jockey Ron Turcotte ★★★

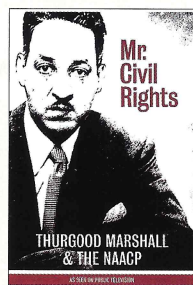
(2013) 75 min. DVD: \$195. DRA. National Film Board of Canada. PPR. Closed captioned.

In 1973, Canadian-born jockey Ron Turcotte made history, guiding Secretariat to consecutive victories in the Kentucky Derby, the Preakness, and the Belmont Stakes—scoring the first Triple Crown in thoroughbred racing after a 25-year gap. Five years later, his career came to an abrupt end when a fall from a horse during a race left him a paraplegic. Phil Comeau's documentary catches up with Turcotte in 2012, as the latter visits the tracks hosting that year's Triple Crown events, meeting with jockeys and trainers. Turcotte also chats with Penny Chenery, owner of Secretariat, and with former jockeys Jean Cruguet and Steve Cauthen, who won the Triple Crown in 1977 and 1978, respectively (no Triple Crown winner has emerged since Cauthen's triumph). Horse racing enthusiasts will certainly enjoy Turcotte's stories—backed by wonderful archival footage—about his illustrious professional life, which included more than 3,000 victories. Oddly, no mention is made of Turcotte's career in the interval between the Secretariat tour de force and the 1978 accident, and Turcotte occasionally seems to exhibit a grudgingly polite tolerance of Comeau's camera. Regardless, this is a handsome tribute to one of the sport's true legends. Recommended. Aud: C, P. (P. Hall)

### Mr. Civil Rights: Thurgood Marshall & The NAACP ★★★

(2014) 60 min. DVD: \$24.99 (\$54.99 w/PPR). PBS Video. SDH captioned. ISBN: 978-1-62789-086-1.

In 1915, when D.W. Griffith's Civil War epic *The Birth of a Nation* debuted—depicting the Ku Klux Klan as a heroic force—Jim Crow segregation laws were firmly entrenched in the South and much of the North. Blacks had no political representation and could not vote in the South, where only a relatively small number of black lawyers served, mostly working on routine matters such as wills and estate inheritance. This was the world in which a young Baltimore-raised Thurgood Marshall grew up. *Mr. Civil Rights*, aired on PBS, illustrates how Marshall and a small number of NAACP activists took on the issue of segregation, case by case, culminating in the landmark Supreme Court case *Brown vs. Board of Education*, which struck down the doctrine of "separate but equal" laid down in the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision. Unable to attend a Maryland university law school due to his race, Marshall enrolled at Howard University, where he was mentored by Charles Hamilton Houston, who believed that the court system was the only true avenue for change for blacks. Houston, Marshall, and others would try to stand the law on its head, demanding that truly equal schools and other public buildings be made available to all. In a motor tour of the Deep South, Marshall found that black schools were little more than tarpaper shacks—with no electricity or running water—where students used old textbooks and were taught by poorly paid and trained teachers. Such visits were often perilous: in one instance, when Marshall had to slip into town hidden in a hearse, he was pursued by police, and even threatened with lynching. The documentary chronicles the NAACP's strategy to make lawyers "social engineers" and agents for change, detailing how Marshall's legal work helped lay the foundations for the 1965 Voting Rights Act, among other measures, but the main goal was always equal education opportunities. Supreme Court justices John Paul Stevens and Elena Kagan, along with civil rights leaders including Vernon Jordan, here recall Marshall as a gifted raconteur, who blended humor with passion for the cause. Although the program reveals little of Marshall's private life and doesn't cover his later career as a Supreme Court justice, it does a solid job of detailing Marshall's role in key developments during the fight for civil rights. DVD extras include a conversation with Stevens and Kagan. Recommended. Aud: H, C, P. (S. Rees)



### Sol LeWitt ★★★

(2012) 72 min. DVD: \$24.98 (avail. from most distributors), \$398 w/PPR (avail. from www.icarusfilms.com). Icarus Films Home Video. Closed captioned.

Filmmaker Chris Teerink approaches the career of the influential conceptual artist with the same avoidance of convention and self-promotion that subject Solomon "Sol" LeWitt brought to his own career. LeWitt, who died in 2007, resolutely avoided the public eye, refusing even to attend openings of his work; since many of his pieces were constructed at a considerable remove—via lists of specific instructions to museum staff members who did the actual labor—his physical touch was often not even actually involved in the result. Teerink shows admirable respect for LeWitt's desire for privacy; although he includes excerpts of interviews with friends, colleagues, and