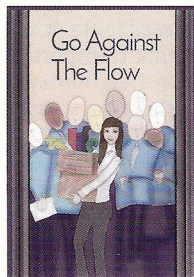


Go Against the Flow ★★★1/2

(2016) 56 min. DVD: \$59.95 (\$199 w/PPR from edu.passionriver.com). Passion River (avail. from most distributors). Closed captioned.

Designed to inspire millennial women to start businesses of their own, filmmaker Charu Sharma's *Go Against the Flow* offers insights and advice from 27 women who have founded or co-founded their own companies. Noting that women are culturally conditioned to nurture others rather than promote themselves—and that they earn an average \$4,600 less than men in their first jobs—the documentary encourages young women to be “disagreeable” in pursuit of success, arguing that entrepreneurial ideas are necessarily untried and unfamiliar, so rejection and pushback are to be expected. Beyond developing the right attitude, working hard, and having a thick skin, the women here serve up some practical advice: talk up plans and get feedback; invest in a technological framework that will grow with your business; and realize that the people you initially hire may not always have a place in your expanding company. One CEO says she faces work/life conflicts in terms of what she'll regret most down the line, missing time with her kids or a business event. Another says there is simply no division between her work and life, but acknowledges that as a business owner she controls more of her time. The interviews are punctuated with humorous set pieces and a dreamy animated sequence of a little girl morphing into a college graduate. Although most of the companies represented here are tech and/or web-based (i.e., Ning, Women 2.0, Getaround, Cloudflare, HerCampus), the business advice shared is universal. From initial inspiration and motivation, to assessing ideas, pitching to potential investors, dealing with discrimination, and recovering from failure, the experiences and perspectives of these women will be useful to anyone thinking of starting a company. Highly recommended. Aud: C, P. (M. Puffer-Rothenberg)



corporate hacks with no computer-culture sense, the Commodore company floundered (although there is no mention of the later Commodore Amiga PC and its breakthrough graphics). Also covered are the notorious, U.K.-originated Timex-Sinclair 1000—with its “membrane” keyboard—that broke the \$100 price-tag barrier, and the Atari gaming line. For viewers who fancy exotic old chipsets and the creative use of minimal kilobytes, this will be gossipy business history and nerd-core nostalgia rolled into one. Recommended. Aud: C, P. (C. Cassidy)

Living in the Age of Airplanes ★★★

(2016) 47 min. DVD: \$24.95, Blu-ray: \$29.95. *The Invisible Highway* (avail. from most distributors). SDH captioned.

Narrated by Harrison Ford, this IMAX travelogue produced by National Geographic and directed by Brian J. Terwilliger tackles the not-exactly-groundbreaking topic of aviation—not with typical history timelines or lovingly-shot hardware, but rather by illustrating how different the world would be...without aircraft. Graphics and journeys to all seven continents make the point that air travel has given modern society easy access to places that, just a few generations ago, were more or less inaccessible. Air-courier-based trade is symbolized by an extravagant sequence of flowers picked in Kenya arriving, still fresh, at a table in a house in Alaska. And seaplanes are practically the only practical way of connecting the island-chain nation of the Maldives. Extras include deleted scenes and behind-the-scenes featurettes, including—for plane-spotters disappointed by the relative lack of tech imagery in the main feature—a number of “partner video” promos provided by collaborators Airbus, FedEx, and GE. Although a bit lite on the subject matter side, this IMAX film does boast characteristically excellent visuals. Recommended, overall. Aud: P. (C. Cassidy)

The Secret Life of Your Clothes ★★★1/2

(2014) 59 min. DVD: \$295. Firecrest Films (dist. by Bullfrog Films). PPR. SDH captioned. ISBN: 1-94154-551-3.

Genial host Ade Adepitan takes viewers on a journey to show what happens to clothing that is donated to charity shops in the U.K. in filmmaker Andy Wells's documentary, part of the BBC-aired *This World* series. Adepitan seems genuinely surprised by the enormous wholesaler operation he sees, which ships the clothes overseas to Ghana, where a reported 30,000 tons arrive annually in the capital city of Accra. Brokers sift through the pallets filled with “obroni wawu” (“dead white men's clothes”), come across name-brand finds, and organize items into 1st-3rd class categories (one man says he's made up to £25,000 [roughly \$30,000] in a day). The trail then passes down to the next level of sellers, where the hopeful will gamble on shipments and the atmosphere is tense if the pickings aren't so good (“Old man, you're lying!” “Sister, you're hurting my arm!”). The film also explores the ways that entrepreneurs refurbish cheaper clothes (including re-fitting and dyeing), the disappearance of culture due to the shift from wearing traditional garb to embracing Western-style clothing, and the money to be made in this relatively-new profession (where even in the poorest regions items cost about 30 cents, and still people go into debt for obroni wawu). Easygoing Adepitan—a Paralympian medalist who offers a bit of an atypical perspective squeezing his wheelchair into staggeringly crowded tight

market spaces—effectively draws out his interview subjects in this thought-provoking documentary that looks at a lesser-known facet of globalization. Highly recommended. Aud: C, P. (J. Williams-Wood)

COMPUTERS & TECHNOLOGY

8 Bit Generation: The Commodore Wars

★★★

(2016) 100 min. DVD: \$149 (\$349 w/PPR). DRA. BOND/360 (avail. from www.bondeducator.com).

Tomaso Walliser's documentary is the first major release from the “Growing the 8 Bit Generation” project, an ambitious effort to depict the giddy early computer/information technology and video game industry during the 1970s and '80s. While this is hardly a new subject, conventional narratives have tended to focus on the mythic Steve Jobs/Bill Gates rivalry between Apple and Microsoft. Here, the hero is Jack Tramiel, a Polish Holocaust survivor turned typewriter and calculator salesman who masterminded the Commodore computer. Commodore's VIC-20—which competed with the popular but pricey and complicated Apple II—is held up here as the first true home PC, one that lived up to Tramiel's credo of data power “for the masses, not the classes.” Tramiel especially enjoyed destroying Texas Instruments, an old nemesis, when that company sought to enter the home PC field. But when the irascible Tramiel was ousted from the top by elderly

SPORTS, GAMES & RECREATION

Gored: A Love Story ★★★

(2015) 75 min. DVD: \$19.99, Blu-ray: \$37.99. FilmRise (avail. from most distributors). Closed captioned.

Filmmaker Ido Mizrahy profiles handsome toreador Antonio Barrera, known in the annals as the “most gored bullfighter in history.” The son of a bullfighter who groomed Barrera (praising Antonio's “cold heart”) from an early age to perform in the ring, the bullfighter professes to “love” the dangerous bulls he kills and the mythic rituals of the spectacle. But since he has married a rancher's daughter and now has children, fears of mortality—formerly not an issue—now accompany him into the bullring, along with his finery, bravado, and frequent injuries, forcing him to contemplate

a peaceful retirement that he somewhat dreads. Viewers who consider bullfighting a barbarous example of animal cruelty will not find a great defense of their opinion here, although public opposition to the oddly elegant dance of death is acknowledged. Bullring scenes (often grainy and from a distance) indeed show bulls dying and Barrera being hurt, though the bloodletting is not overly graphic, and some will certainly appreciate the transfixing pageantry of bullfighting that has mesmerized artists from Hemingway to Welles to Madonna. Recommended. Aud: C, P. (C. Cassidy)

The Hollywood Shorties ★★★1/2

(2016) 85 min. DVD: \$16.95. BRINKvision (avail. from most distributors).

Filmmaker Ryan Steven Green's documentary presents an enchanting believe-it-or-not sports/showbiz empowerment true story. A spin-off of the Little People of America association co-founded by legendary actor Billy Barty, the Hollywood Shorties were a team of dwarf and midget performers (mostly but not entirely drawn from Hollywood acting and stuntpeople) that began in the 1950s with novelty softball matches. The team's focus expanded—with a brilliant sense of showmanship—into basketball for Harlem Globetrotter-esque semi-scripted charity games that were mostly played in the Southern California area. The Shorties were an athletic outlet for marginalized individuals to show off their hoops prowess, including actors Tony Cox (*Bad Santa*) and Jimmy Briscoe. But during the 1990s, with the rise of the Dwarf Olympics games, the troupe felt bittersweet pressure to leave the politically incorrect gags behind. A highlight

here is a sequence of movie/TV clips showing Christmas elves, McDonaldland denizens, and Sid & Marty Kroft creatures all played by uncredited little-person talents. Extras include audio commentary by the director, deleted scenes, archival game footage, a SXSW Festival Q&A, a vintage Shorties fan letter, and a photo gallery. Highly recommended. Aud: P. (C. Cassidy)

T-Rex ★★★

(2016) 90 min. DVD: \$59.95 (\$299 w/PPR from edu.passionriver.com). Passion River (avail. from most distributors).

The first American to win back-to-back gold medals in boxing (in the 2012 and 2016 Olympics), amateur fighter Claressa Shields is the subject of this touching documentary that covers her early years of training up through her 2012 victory (the year the Olympics first included the sport for women athletes). Filmmakers Drea Cooper and Zackary Canepari's *T-Rex* follows Shields's personal trials and her determination during adolescence to overcome a hard life in Flint, MI. In addition to economic distress, there are strong suggestions of problems at home (at one point, Shields's miserable sister loudly calls their mother's live-in boyfriend a "pervert" to his face). But troubles are shoved to the side whenever Shields, a fast and aggressive middleweight, is working in a gym with her coach, Jason Crutchfield. Crutchfield insists that his fighters take on a "business" mentality, letting go of disappointment and defeat and putting personal matters on indefinite hold. When Shields becomes involved with a boy who happens to be her sparring partner, Crutchfield sternly forbids it. Shields goes to China for a pre-Olympics qualifying tourna-

ment, and then on to London for the Olympics, but it's the aftermath of the gold medal win that proves most compelling. Shields discovers that being an African-American female boxer with some swagger does not draw endorsements. And tensions flare between her and an increasingly authoritarian Crutchfield. *T-Rex*—Shields's nickname—is ultimately about a remarkable and likeable young woman who finds herself amidst pressure from all sides. Recommended. Aud: C, P. (T. Keogh)

THE ARTS

An Art That Nature Makes ★★★1/2

(2016) 74 min. DVD: \$149 (\$349 w/PPR). BOND/360 (avail. from <http://bondeducator.com>).

Filmmaker Molly Bernstein's remarkable documentary about Rosamond Purcell—a celebrated photographer specializing in creating images of natural artifacts, junk, and found objects—is wonderfully stimulating, even if the pictures of anomalies and detritus are a little creepy. Purcell herself comes across as a sunny, sensitive, intellectually curious artist who patiently persists at gaining access to her preferred subjects—usually taxonomy collections at natural history museums or found objects in junkyards. *An Art That Nature Makes*, which combines a generous sampling of Purcell's images together with insightful commentary from admiring filmmaker Errol Morris and others, explores how Purcell is able to find strange beauty and secondary purpose in everything from extinct animals to human molars, from shells to the skeletons of conjoined twins. Viewers will also see numerous examples of Purcell's Polaroid shots of oddly juxtaposed materials—torn book pages, the shadows of animal skins, insects—that are both mesmerizing and poetically dreamlike. A revelatory portrait of an artist who presents the daily artifacts that surround us in a whole new way, this is highly recommended. Aud: C, P. (T. Keogh)

Kings of the Pages ★★★

(2015) 24 min. DVD: \$24.99 (\$199 w/PPR). Dreamscape Media. Closed captioned.

Taking on the formidable coffee-table-book topic of the golden age of American newspaper comic strips, filmmaker Robert Lemieux uses a minimalist approach—examining three representative strips to symbolize the many that dominated the "color supplement" funny pages and affected popular culture. The choices are: the gag domestic sitcom *Blondie* (Blondie and Dagwood have an intricate backstory, barely recalled these days), the cop serial *Dick Tracy* (despite its caricatures, creator Chester Gould's strip was a milestone in the depiction of violence and death in comics), and the pioneering space adventure

Free to Run ★★★1/2

(2015) 104 min. DVD: \$24.98. MPI Home Video (avail. from most distributors).

Filmmaker Pierre Morath's documentary traces how long-distance running in the 1960s began to take on a new sociopolitical importance that shaped both the sports world and the wider society. Much of the focus is aimed at the role that running played in encouraging the wider participation of women in sports—particularly in the Boston Marathon, which initially banned women participants. In 1967, Kathrine Switzer entered the race without providing her full name, and her presence was not known until the competition was underway, after which race director Jock Semple tracked her down and attempted to physically eject her from the course. Photographs of Semple tearing at Switzer gave the race the worst imaginable publicity, although the Boston Marathon would not allow women to run until 1972. The film also details efforts to bring a women's marathon to the Olympics, with Joan Benoit winning the first gold in 1984. *Free to Run* provides near-equal attention to notable male athletes as well, such as Steve Prefontaine and Jim Fixx, as it recounts a chronological history that includes the 2012 debate on whether to hold the New York City Marathon one week after Superstorm Sandy, with detractors arguing against diverting funds and police presence (away from the recovery efforts) for the race (which was ultimately cancelled amidst controversy). An interesting documentary that subtly mixes sociology with athletic history, this is highly recommended. Aud: C, P. (P. Hall)

