



relatives' objections to their relationship, mostly because of the age difference. Once Ed is more or less accepted, the rest of the episodes involve family members in absurd situations. The behavior of all of the characters is exaggerated and cliché and excessive even for television comedy. Somehow, the romance survives six episodes, but, by the end, viewers likely won't care what happens to any of them. **VERDICT** This short-lived British series is also short on humor and believable characters; not recommended.—**Joan Greenberg, Warminster, PA**

ARTS & HUMANITIES

The Great Confusion: The 1913 Armory Show. color & b/w. 84 min. **Michael Maglaras, 217 Films, www.two17films.com. 2014. DVD UPC 793573880086. \$20.**

ART-GENERAL

This documentary traces the history and effect of the first major exhibit of modern art. Developed by American artists Arthur B. Davies and Walt Kuhn and opened in New York City in 1913, it was called the "Armory Show," since it was held in a U.S. National Guard armory. The groundbreaking event featured approximately 1,300 paintings, sculptures, and decorative works by more than 300 avant-garde European and American artists. The exhibition was immensely popular and drew emotions ranging from astonishment and dismay to outrage from the American public, most of whom were accustomed to realistic art. The most polarizing reaction came as a result of "Gallery I," which displayed cubist art, most notably Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* (one critic referred to it as "an explosion in a shingle factory"). More than 60 works are featured in the film, including pieces by Matisse, van Gogh, and Picasso. **VERDICT** An excellent analysis of an event that changed the art world, this production will be of interest to historians and art fans.—**Phillip Oliver, Univ. of North Alabama, Florence**

Furious Beauty: A Hip Hop Family. color. 88+ min. **Calvin Leung, Plixyl Studios, dist. by Cinema Libre Studio, www.cinematolibrestudio.com. 2013. DVD UPC 881394118621. \$19.95. DANCE**

Furious Beauty documents the history, philosophy, and performances of the Los Angeles dance group Versa-Style. Following their credo to "put your heart on the dance floor," the dancers here develop and rehearse for their second major show. Company principals Jackie "Miss Funk" Lopez and Leigh "Breeze-Lee" Foaad are personable, driven, articulate, and emotional. The heart of the film lies in their efforts to mentor young dancers from the lower

end of the economic spectrum while creating a sense of family and a shared vision. Director Leung provides a fine balance of performance footage and interviews in this delightful portrait of the social and artistic triumph of the genre. **VERDICT** A joyful tribute to a community of dancers, *Furious Beauty* is, like the troupe, a winner.—**Bill Baars, Lake Oswego P.L., OR**

Betty Boop: The Essential Collection.

Vol. 3. b/w. 81 min. Dave Fleischer, dist. by Olive Films, www.olivefilms.com. 2014. DVD UPC 887090070904. \$24.99; Blu-ray UPC 887090071000. \$29.95. FILM/ANIMATION

This early star of animation and perennial icon of femininity returns with another volume of her collected shorts, looking and sounding better in high-definition than one could hope from 80-year-old original material. Betty's creators, Max Fleischer and his brother Dave, render her and her exploits (in the city and in even rougher country) exotic and even modern: Betty is beguiling and resourceful but vulnerable, sometimes naïve but no fool, eliciting unwanted attention but also the benevolence of friends and new acquaintances, just the ticket for having fun and getting into and then out of trouble. The animation makes up for limitations of technique and technology with hilariously unsubtle symbols and sight gags, and the music (Louis Armstrong and Cab Calloway make appearances) ain't bad either. Suitable for all viewers; the occasional suggestive portions of the content will fly over children's heads, although the more surreal moments might cause concern. **VERDICT** Betty's boop-oop-a-doop appeal proves ageless; recommended for animation buffs and curious general audiences.—**J. Osicki, Saint John Free P.L., NB**

Dragon City: Punk Rock in China! 75+ min. In Chinese & English w/ English subtitles. Darryl Pestilence, KickAss. DVD UPC 760137585220. \$12.95. Punk in Africa: Three Chords, Three Countries, One Revolution.... 82+ min. Keith Jones & Deon Maas, Meerkat Media, Peligroso Prods., & Bohemian Lion. DVD UPC 760137618997. \$16.95.

ea. vol: color. dist. by MVDvisual, 800-888-0486; www.mvdb2b.com. 2014. MUSIC Director Pestilence's *Dragon City* consists of a series of faux live performance music videos by Chinese punk band No Name Band, strung together by a threadbare narrative that tries to be edgy and arty but is merely a rambling, pretentious mess. Band members, who prove to be much better musicians than actors, aimlessly wander around a postapocalyptic wasteland until stumbling

upon a mysterious Westerner spouting tripe such as "nostalgia is a bitter mistress." This unnamed, undeveloped character talks his new friends into playing a few songs, which attracts growing crowds, and then the film mercifully ends. The concert footage is fine, but the rest makes little sense. Pestilence, in a refreshingly candid director's commentary included as a bonus feature, admits the film's shortcomings and explains why *Dragon City* didn't turn out as he had planned.

Punk in Africa is a much more rational, substantial, and ultimately entertaining showcase for non-Western punk, putting a rare but well-deserved spotlight on four decades of underground music in South Africa, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. The film does an excellent job of putting punk and youth culture into historical and political context, showing how bands such as Wild Youth, Power Age, and the Rudimentals supported social and political change through their loud and aggressive songs. Much of the film centers on the South African punk scene, tracing its roots to the early 1970s and following it through its late 1970s peak and on to the present. Jones and Maas let the participants tell their own stories, with new interviews intercut with exciting archival and new live footage that features blends of traditional African sounds and Western guitar-fueled punk. The Mozambique and Zimbabwe segments focus on current bands facing the same issues and fighting the same fight as their South African counterparts. This film reminds viewers that punk is a global phenomenon and is and has been an outlet for youthful rebellion and expression throughout the world. Includes a large collection of bonus live footage. **VERDICT** *Dragon City* is an overlong bore whose only possible appeal would be to devoted fans of the No Name Band; their live performances are nicely filmed and showcase their musical talents. *Punk in Africa* is intelligent and entertaining and recommended to anyone interested in learning about thriving punk scenes in unexpected places.—**Douglas King, Univ. of South Carolina Lib., Columbia**

Suzanne Vega: Solitude Standing. color. 62+ min. Wienerworld, dist. by MVDvisual, 800-888-0486; www.mvdb2b.com. 2014. DVD UPC 5018755258213. \$14.95. MUSIC Suzanne Vega (b. 1959) is an internationally known songwriter and performer. In summer 2003, she toured Italy; her performance in an auditorium in Rome is showcased here—and what a fabulous night it was. A rapport and bond rarely seen with an audience can be attributed to the tempo of a