

to the hall: pop and Broadway beckoned. He was smart enough to know the training he was getting would ultimately help him write and perform the music he really loved. Interspersed with the many remembrances are Hamlisch's own brilliant and very watchable interviews. And, of course, there are numerous performances of his gorgeous compositions (e.g., "The Way We Were," "Nobody Does It Better," and "I Finally Found Someone"). Hamlisch later returned to his roots conducting philharmonic and symphony orchestras in hugely successful concerts worldwide. **VERDICT** This documentary is every bit as entertaining and warmhearted as the man it portrays.—Gerald A. Notaro, emeritus, Univ. of South Florida Lib., St. Petersburg

**Men at Lunch: The Untold Story of a City's Legend.** color & b/w. 67+ min. Sean Ó Cualáin, dist. by First Run Features, 800-229-8575; www.firstrunfeatures.com. 3013. DVD UPC 720229915779. \$24.95. PHOTOG/HIST

You've seen the vertigo-inducing 1932 photograph: workers sitting atop a steel construction beam, casually enjoying lunch and a cigarette break, boots dangling in the air, with New York City hundreds of feet below. This documentary tells the story of that image and attempts to chronicle how it might have been taken, who the mystery photographer was, and who the men in the picture were. The photo archives of the holder of the original negative reveals clues about the identity of the men involved, and from there filmmaker Cualáin pursues their friends and relatives in order to establish the facts. **VERDICT** While backtracking the story of this particular photo, Ó Cualáin also tells the story of immigration, particularly from Ireland, and its importance in shaping New York City. A fun ride for fans of the Big Apple and the role Ireland played in its history. [See Trailers, *LJ* 11/1/13.]—Ellen Druda, Half Hollow Hills Community Lib., Dix Hills, NY

**African Christianity Rising.** 2 discs. color. 150 min. James Ault, James Ault Prods., www.jamesault.com. 2013. DVD UPC 727985015194. \$50; acad. libs. \$175; Complete Educational Edition. 4 discs. 150+ min. \$85; acad. libs. \$240. Public performance. REL/INT AFFAIRS

Filmmaker Ault, with a PhD in sociology, uses footage of churches in Ghana and Zimbabwe to present the various manifestations of a thriving African Christianity, including mainstream churches, Pentecostal churches, and independent/prophet-led congregations. In each case, African elements have been added to the worship. Interviews with major church leaders and theologians are interspersed with those of laypersons,

often in very intimate settings. Scenes of official services are mixed with those of house gatherings and counseling sessions. Ault does not intrude on his subjects but lets the various stories come to light on their own. The Complete Educational Edition includes two discs of extra material, such as entire interviews excerpted for the film, footage of follow-up visits, and reflections from a Princeton Theological Seminary professor who taught in Sierra Leone in the 1950s and 1960s. **VERDICT** Ault's expertise in selecting the telling scene and the quality of his camera work make this compelling documentary appealing to anyone interested in modern African culture or the history of Christianity and to those First World Christians who are willing to learn from the African experience.—Augustine J. Curley, Newark Abbey, NJ

**Band of Sisters: The Remarkable Journey of Catholic Nuns in the United States.** color. 88 min. Mary Fishman, dist. by Band of Sisters Ltd., bandofsistersmovie.com. 2013. DVD ISBN 9780615971315. \$95; acad. libs. \$295; w/digital streaming \$495. Public performance. REL

Using archival photos, interspersed with interviews of sisters who experienced the transition that followed Vatican II and scenes of their work now, Fishman, in her debut film, offers insight into the lives and mission of contemporary American women religious. Fishman and those she speaks with here show that giving up the habit did not mean that the sisters gave up their commitment to the work of the church. From school- and hospital-based activities, they moved to advocacy for the poor, the homeless, detained immigrants, and the earth itself. None of the women come across as angry or bitter, and all see their current occupations as being in the spirit of their respective founders. The segments on the sisters working with detainees demonstrate their patient faith as they are both rejected by the authorities when they wish to offer spiritual counsel yet also welcomed as partners. **VERDICT** A poetic tribute to the work of women religious who have made a transition to the contemporary world without losing their vision.—Augustine J. Curley, Newark Abbey, NJ

★**Ping Pong.** color. 76 min. Anson & Hugh Hartford, Banyak Films & Britdoc, dist. Cinedigm c/o Docurama, docurama.com. 2013. DVD UPC 767685293164. \$29.95. Closed-captioned. SPORTS/RECREATION

This very fine, offbeat film will inspire aging viewers and provide food for thought (and chuckles) for the rest of us. Subject to the restrictions that aging puts on their senses, flexibility, mobility, and balance,

eight seniors, ranging from 81 to 100 years of age, from six countries vie for singles and doubles table tennis gold in Outer Mongolia...for real, and, yes, *that* Outer Mongolia. Filmed on four continents, in outdoor and indoor locations, including the huge championship arena in Mongolia, the documentary features superb cinematography and sound quality. Considering the subject and potential audience, English SDH subtitles would have been a welcome addition. **VERDICT** Very highly recommended for general collections; viewers will appreciate the effort of these octogenarian-plus competitors.—Cliff Glaviano, formerly with Bowling Green State Univ. Libs., OH

## SOCIAL SCIENCES

**An Encounter with Simone Weil.** color. 85 min. In English & French w/English subtitles. Julia Haslett, Line Street Prods., dist. by Passion River, 732-321-0711; orders@passionriver.com. 2014. DVD UPC 091037723826. \$24.95. BIOG

French philosopher and activist Simone Weil (1909–43) is probably unfamiliar to most people. Narrated by filmmaker Haslett, this documentary offers an engaging portrait of Weil's life and ideas. One of her strongest beliefs was that one cannot truly understand suffering unless one experiences it, and she lived and eventually died following that philosophy. The film travels back and forth through time and compares some of Weil's ideas on war, labor, and suffering with present-day politics and events such as the Iraq War. Haslett, who is trying to identify with Weil in order to learn more about herself, her family, and the world around her, interviews people who knew Weil in an effort to understand her better. **VERDICT** Weil was a fascinating person, and this DVD will stay with the viewer long after the last frame. An excellent program for anyone interested in French history and philosophy and the world around them.—Christine Rigda, Univ. of Toledo

**The Ultimate Guide to Passing Your Law Enforcement Oral Board for the Entry Level Applicant in Any State.** color. 60 min. Justin Campbell, 40 Cal. Prods., www.lawenforcementinterviews.com; also available from Midwest Tape, 800-875-2785; www.midwesttapes.com. 2013. DVD ISBN 9780988818804. \$39.95. CRIMINOLOGY/CAREERS

The goal of this instructional video is to prepare applicants for the oral interviews required to obtain positions in law enforcement agencies. Host Jacob Mueller, a former police officer, shares inside information on the processes that may be expected for positions such as police, sheriff, highway patrol, game warden, border patrol, and park ranger. Viewers are advised on the impor-