

Bennett-Watt Presents:

Discoveries...America

Special Edition

Reviews / Awards

Wall Drug ★★★

"Years ago, the highways of America were dotted with unusual billboards that simply read: Wall Drug, plus the number of miles needed to reach this mecca... What and where is Wall Drug? Located in the flyspeck town of Wall, South Dakota, Wall Drug could very well be characterized as the Holy Grail of kitsch, cornpone humor, and roadside humbug. Sitting off of I-90 between Rapid City and Kadoka, Wall Drug was built in 1931 to serve thirsty travelers--the owners lured motorists to the store with the promise of free ice water--and over the years has added on a book store, art gallery, and a jackalope (legendary antlered rabbits) garden, while still remaining a family-owned business. In this "special edition" from Jim and Kelly Watt's acclaimed, high-definition filmed Discoveries...America series, current manager Ted Husted (grandson of the original owners) takes viewers on a guided tour of Wall Drug, explaining how it has evolved into a major tourist attraction for both U.S. and foreign visitors. An entertaining, humorous, and inspiring example of how a thriving business enterprise was built on the simple premise of giving people what they wanted, this profile of one of the most famous rest stops in America is recommended."



Marbles: Ancient Art & Modern Play

"Part of the Discoveries...America, Special Edition series which focuses upon extraordinarily talented people of America, Marbles: Ancient Art & Modern Play is all about the marvelous toy and collectable that is the marble. A brief exploration of the marble's history since ancient times, when Romans ground stones into a spherical shape for amusement, paves the way for the modern-day National Marbles Tournament, the first and oldest organized children's sporting event for boys and girls ages 7-14. Antique marbles are collected and traded, and two marble making factories survive in the united States; Marbles: Ancient Art & Modern Play even offers a glimpse into how recycled glass is transformed into perfect marbles. The creations of boutique marble makers and glass artists take their place in private collections, galleries, and museums around the world. Marbles: Ancient Art & Modern Play is a truly amazing look into the unplumbed depths of a true collector's hobby."

The Midwest Book Review

SuperMuseum ★★★

"Sure it's kitschy, but what could be more fitting than a museum honoring Superman located in Metropolis, Illinois? Curator Jim Hambrick's SuperMuseum houses the world's largest collection of Superman memorabilia - Clark Kent's glasses, Marlon Brando's wig, the TV telephone booth - with over 100,000 items on display (and another 650,000 in storage for future expansion). Valued at close to \$3 million, the SuperMuseum had a somewhat rocky beginning: in fact, the first statue of Superman was so ugly, it was used for target practice (the current statue is a 15-foot Man of Steel, or rather, bronze). In SuperMuseum - a "special edition" program in Jim and Kelly Watt's acclaimed *Discoveries...America* series - Hambrick takes viewers on an engaging tour of Metropolis' biggest attraction, which brings in fans from around the world. Recommended."



SuperMuseum

"Metropolis, perceived by many Superman fans as a big city, in reality is a small town in Illinois about 7,000 people. It is the home of Superman, and the SuperMuseum one of the largest collections of Superman memorabilia in the world. Metropolis is not on most vacation destination lists, so perhaps your library should provide patrons with the next best thing, Discoveries...America, Special Edition - SuperMuseum, a new DVD tour of the SuperMuseum. Hosted by Jim Hambrick, Curator at SuperMuseum, this 30 minute DVD takes viewers on a walking tour of more than 75,000 Superman related items on display. The DVD features a variety of products that have something to do with Superman including cloths, belts, capes, shoes, dolls, games, puzzles, tops, rings, wristwatches, pictures and paintings, silverware, plates and of course original comic books. During the DVD tours you will see photos, props and wardrobes from Superman movies and television shows and signed pictures from actors that played roles of Clark Kent/Superman, Lois Lane and Jimmy Olsen. The actual office furnishings and equipment used in the 1950's Superman television series *The Adventures of Superman*, starring George Reeves, are on display..."

The Librarian's Yellow Pages

Mark Twain's Hannibal, A Homecoming

"Modern day Hannibal, MO, is presented in relationship to one of its most famous writers. Richard Garey portrays Mark Twain (aka Samuel L. Clemens), who has returned to Hannibal to reminisce about his growing up on "the most beautiful (waterfront) on the Mississippi." Steamboat dockings from the 1800's are described in detail with the Mississippi River and a steamboat in the background. During a carriage ride through town, several locations important to Twain's writings are pointed out and their history is recounted. Some of the incidents in Twain's boyhood are told along the way, and Garey shares Twain's unique humor through his words. Along with Hannibal's current historic attractions, B&Bs, restaurants, and art galleries are mentioned. Banjo music is featured throughout the production. Twain's southern accent might be difficult to understand in a few instances. A good choice to show classes after reading either *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* or *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, especially since the last scene in the film is from the former novel."

School Library Journal



Mark Twain Himself

"This one-man show is performed by actor and Mark Twain impersonator Richard Garey at the historic Planter's Barn Theater in Hannibal, Missouri. It is a one-camera production performed before a small audience. Garey's selections are a mix of both humorous and serious material combined with autobiographical commentary. In an interview with Garey that is included on the DVD, he provides historical context for the Planter's Barn Theater in Hannibal as well as Mark Twain's role in American literature"

Mark Twain Forum - Books and Media

Mark Twain's Hannibal: A Homecoming

"Mark Twain impersonator Richard Garey takes his act and monologues to the street of Hannibal, Missouri. Along the way he visits some of the historic homes and buildings, local tourist attractions and main street businesses. Notable absent is any visit to Mount Olivet cemetery or the Hannibal public library - two other sites worthy of mention. This production contains some of the same material from Garey's *Mark Twain Himself*".

Mark Twain Forum - Books and Media

Mark Twain Himself

"This quasi-autobiographical one-man, one-act play has been collected and cobbled together from the writings of Mark Twain. Performed by Richard Garey before a scant audience at the historic Planter's Barn in Twain's hometown of Hannibal, Missouri, Garey does a credible job as Twain, using his accent and appearance to good effect. Stating that his lecture could substitute for Sunday services, as it holds many of the same qualities, he goes on to speak on diverse topics, including politics, modesty, public speaking, health, and the state of America. In much the style of the modern day stand-up comic, Garey [as Twain] valiantly tries to engage the audience. However, his [Twain's] convoluted sentence structure and antiquated language often fails to hold their attention...Related in a rambling style with many asides, just as Twain told his stories, the production meanders along with little or no seeming direction, dispensing nuggets of good old-fashioned American wisdom along the way. Garey as Twain concludes his "services" with the funniest bit of the play, a treatise on ways of dying, which include the dreaded 'being talked to death.' A brief concluding interview with Garey sheds some light on Twain's life and hometown..."

School Library Journal

Super Museum

"The Discoveries...America, Special Edition feature of Super Museum is an outstanding exploration of the Metropolis, Illinois museum for America's greatest super hero, Superman. Capturing a significant amount of what makes up over three-million dollars worth of Superman memorabilia, Super Museum is an engaging interpretation of the creative and fun dedication to Superman's history, progression, and memorabilia detailing of the life and adventures of this American popular icon."

The Midwest Book Review/Bookwatch

Marbles: Ancient Art & Modern Play

"Marble enthusiasts will learn a great deal about marbles as a sport and as a hobby in this documentary. The film starts in Wildwood, NJ, at the 82nd National Marbles Tournament where children ages 7 to 14 compete for the grand prize: a \$2,000 college scholarship...children are likely to enjoy the tour of the family-owned and operated Marble King factory in West Virginia. One of only two marble producers in the United States, Marble King makes more than one million marbles per day. Concluding segments with glass artists as they create artistic marbles add a nice touch but make for a lengthy documentary. For serious marble fans or adults studing Americana."

School Library Journal

