



**Island at War**

★★★★★  
If you missed this recent "Masterpiece Theatre" miniseries about a British island in the English Channel under Nazi occupation during WWII, now's your chance. A complex, entertaining drama (Acorn; \$59.99), it's unquestionably going to be remembered as one of — if not the best — miniseries of the year. Other top-notch TV just out: "SCTV Volume 3" (Shout; \$89.98) and "Popular Second Season" (Touchstone; \$59.99).

**Stage Beauty**

★★  
Billy Crudup is one of the most frustrating talents working today. He is incandescent on stage, but when it comes to movies, he is somehow opaque. Despite one memorable scene in which he auditions for the king, the same is true here in this period drama. But there's no puzzle this time: Crudup is haplessly miscast as a cross-dressing performer. He is never convincing as a woman, much less "the most beautiful woman on the London stage." Minor extras include a commentary by director Richard Eyre.

**21 Jump Street: Second Season**

★★1/2  
Johnny Depp can't seem to go through an interview without trashing "21 Jump Street" (Anchor Bay; \$44.98), the silly yet harmless drama about cops going undercover at a high school. He should be kinder to the show that turned him into a star and gave early breaks to Jason Priestley, Brad Pitt and others. Other star-making series just out: "Felicity Senior Year" (Touchstone; \$59.99) and "Xena: The Final Season" (Anchor Bay; \$79.98).

**Piccadilly**

★★★  
Louise Brooks. Josephine Baker. And now Anna May Wong. Yes, sex always sells and the sirens of yesteryear are ripe for rediscovery. Wong is the latest, with her

turn as scullery maid turned overnight sensation in 1929's "Piccadilly" (Image; \$29.99). Fine extras include many stills, the original British press kit from 1929, a mini-documentary on the score and a panel discussion on Wong led by B. Ruby Rich.



**Ladder 49**

★  
Firefighting is inherently cinematic and stirring. So why hasn't there ever been a great movie about firefighters? That sad trend continues with "Ladder 49" (Touchstone; \$29.99), an almost woefully by-the-numbers drama about a new rookie (Joaquin Phoenix) who joins his band of brothers. Playful hazing, a fallen comrade, a wedding and a sad but heroic finale: It's all dutifully here. Extras include a commentary track and — best of all — real stories by real firefighters.