

DVDs this week

The Complete Superman Collection (Warner Bros.; \$79.92)

Many people would argue that *Superman II* is the rare sequel that's better than the original. But *Superman: The Movie* is hard to top. No comic book adaptation since then — not *Batman*, *X-Men* or *Blade* — has come close to it. Director Richard Donner combines the gee-whiz charm of the comics with a sophisticated romantic comedy to superb effect. And, yes, Christopher Reeve is terrific as the nebbishy Clark Kent. But surely playing the Man of Steel is even harder and he does it brilliantly. *Superman II* is a terrific followup. But only fanatics would want *Superman III* (with Richard Pryor) or the dreadful final entry. All the goodies (documentaries, commentary tracks) are on the first movie and each film is available singly.

The Emperor's New Groove Ultimate Edition (Buena Vista; \$39.99)

Before it came out, Disney practically disowned this unassuming comedic spin on the Hope/Crosby "Road" movies. But it garnered some of their best reviews since *The Lion King*, chugged along at the box office to gross almost \$150 million worldwide, and outshined DreamWorks' similarly themed *The Road to El Dorado*. The voice talent is good — especially Eartha Kitt, who's always seemed overanimated, even in real life. Like most Disney flicks, it comes in both a regular version and this elaborate deluxe edition which offers an in-depth look at how these movies are made.



The Jewel in the Crown (A&E; \$79.95)

When you think of "Masterpiece Theatre" on PBS, a handful of miniseries spring to mind: *Brideshead Revisited*; *I, Claudius*; *Elizabeth R*; *Upstairs, Downstairs*; and this one, *Happily, I, Claudius* is already out on DVD and *Elizabeth R* is scheduled for later this year. Beating it out of the gate is this enthralling story of the final days of British rule in India. Beautifully cast, it's a faultless adaptation in 14 parts featuring a sadistic British villain, romance and action in spades. Now where's *Brideshead*?

Triumph of the Will (Synapse; \$34.98)

Leni Riefenstahl's brilliant bit of propoganda turned Hitler's Nuremberg rallies into a cinematic spectacle that has influenced everything from commercial advertising to *Starship Troopers*. Finally available for viewing (it used to be accessible only in poorly dubbed prints on video from seedy mail order companies), *Triumph* remains visually stunning. It's most effective if you watch it first with the English subtitles off and focus on the theatrics.

— Michael Giltz