SOME FILMS SET IN THE ROMANTIC PERIOD

“The Romantic Spirit”—13-episode series from A&E covering the entire sweep of British and European Romanticism

Abel Gance’s “Napoleon” (4+ hour epic silent film on Napoleon’s rise to power), with the aptly named Albert Dieudonné in the title role

“Danton”—Foreign film with subtitles, set during the French Revolution, starring Gérard Dépardieu in the title role

“La Nuit de Varennes”—Foreign film with subtitles, bringing together some important persons who lived during the French Revolution (Tom Paine, Restif de la Bretonne, the aging Casanova) in a series of imaginary discussions, set around the time of Louis XVI’s attempted flight from France; starring Harvey Keitel among others

“That Hamilton Woman”—sentimental but largely accurate film starring Vivien Leigh in the title role as Emma, Lady Hamilton, and Laurence Olivier as her lover, Lord Nelson

“Lady Caroline Lamb”—over-the-top English film starring Sarah Miles in the title role of the society darling who pursued Lord Byron (Richard Chamberlain) with a vengeance and created one of the great scandals of the period; also with Laurence Olivier, this time as the Duke of Wellington

“Pandaemonium”—English film starring Linus Roache as Coleridge, Julien Temple as Wordsworth, Samantha Morton as Sarah Coleridge, Emily Woof as Dorothy Wordsworth, Samuel West as Robert Southey (unintentionally funny, often inaccurate, yet also suggestive of the problems and rivalries that dogged them; STC’s drug-induced visions are rather well done)

“Rowing with the Wind”—English film starring Hugh Grant as Lord Byron, Elizabeth Hurley as his lover Claire Claremont; Percy and Mary Shelley and their friend Dr. Polidori (who wrote The Vampyre) cavort with Byron and Claire at Villa Diodati and elsewhere

“Gothic”—Ken Russell’s amusing but perverse vision of the goings-on at Villa Diodati that led to the famous ghost-story-telling competition that gave rise to Frankenstein, Dr. Polidori’s The Vampyre, and much else—among Byron (Gabriel Byrne), Mary Shelley (Natasha Richardson), and Percy Shelley (Julian Sands)

“Impromptu”—hilarious, often factual account of the volatile relationships among novelist George Sand (Judy Davis), composers Chopin (Hugh Grant) and Liszt (Julian Sands), Countess Marie d’Agoult (Bernadette Peters), and poet Alfred de Musset (Mandy Patinkin)

“The Madness of King George”—An interesting take on the purported madness of George III and the character of his son, the Prince Regent, starring Nigel Hawthorne and Helen Mirren
“Sharpe’s Rifles”—PBS series starring Sean Bean, based on a series of novels by Bernard Cornwell, set during the Peninsular War in the age of Napoleon

“Pride and Prejudice”—based on Jane Austen’s novel, starring Colin Firth as Mr. Darcy and Jennifer Ehle as Elizabeth Bennett

“Mansfield Park”—based on Jane Austen’s novel, starring Frances O’Connor and Embeth Davidtz, foregrounding a feminist/post-colonial subtext that often goes beyond the scope of Austen’s novel

“Frankenstein”—pick a version: they all miss the boat in one way or another, but Kenneth Branagh’s “Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein” brings the 19th-century euphoria/anxiety about science and the latent incest theme to the fore; with Helena Bonham Carter as Elizabeth, Branagh as Victor Frankenstein, and Robert DeNiro as the Creature.

**a few to be shown in section; all but the A&E series available at most video stores**