

Al Capone: Icon ★★★

(2014) 60 min. DVD: \$24.99 (\$54.99 w/PPR). PBS Video. SDH captioned. ISBN: 978-1-62789-122-6.

An unlikely figure to become one of America's most infamous, feared mob bosses, Al Capone descended from a family of pasta makers in a small Italian town, although his father became a barber in America. This PBS-aired documentary profiles the man who dominated and personified gangsta style during Chicago's Roaring Twenties. Like many immigrants, young Al pursued the American Dream, but quickly fell into a life of petty thievery, running with gangs in New York's "Five Points," and working as a bouncer in a saloon, where he acquired the nickname "Scarface Al" after a fellow hood slashed him during a brawl. When events required him to make a quick exit for Chicago, Capone was able to take advantage of the opportunities opened up by Prohibition—smuggling and distributing alcohol, while also promoting attendant vices (it helped that police and politicians accepted bribes). Hoodlums like Capone eagerly sought celebrity status, bragging that they simply provided what the public craved. In the emerging tabloid culture, Capone became the kingpin after mob boss Johnny Torrio fled the country and "retired," following a failed mob hit. Historian interviewees here describe the

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Altina ★★★

(2013) 89 min. DVD: \$27.95. First Run Features (avail. from most distributors). Closed captioned.

In a life spanning nearly the entire 20th century, Altina Schinasi played many roles. Born in 1907, the youngest daughter of a Jewish-Turkish mogul who invented pre-rolled cigarettes, Schinasi enjoyed a privileged New York childhood but later defied convention by striking out on her own—di-

