WHAT IS YOGA? Mystic Movie Guide
$6.95, $14.98
In the spirit of its subject matter, this program presents a fairly free-form conversation about yoga with a variety of practitioners, including the founders of New York's Jivamukti Center, Willem Dafoe, dancer and singer Bhagavan Das, and some people next-door types. There is no attempt in this recording of arguments regarding the discipline and culture of yoga, leaving viewers to pick and choose which issues, if any, make the most sense to them. A kaleidoscope of footage ranging from yoga classes to the streets of New York captures the strong production values and an excellent background soundtrack, making this program a terrific keepsake for everyone from the casual yoga user to devoted followers. Contact: 800-282-9901.

MYSTIC ORIGINS OF THE MARTIAL ARTS
100 minutes, $19.98
Through the centuries, the martial arts disciplines have safeguarded secrets of a few masters to a class most people can take at their neighbor- borhood gym. But many of those who practice some version of martial arts today don’t know its genesis or the important role it continues to play in our culture. This comprehensive program answers just about every question hobbyists may have about the martial arts. From the origins of the martial art of karate to the spread of various disciplines to other countries, the tape delves into all aspects of the spiritual art form through archival materials and interviews with current martial artists. There’s also a segment that reveals the history of various disciplines, ranging from kung-fu to tao kwan do to karate to judo, as well as an elaborate kung fu demonstration.

MICHAEL CRAWFORD IN CONCERT
Warner Video
For a jazz album that has a title as similarly jazz traditional as "Take Me Home Again Kathleen," Crawford and the world of music are a jazzy match. The intimate setting of a small club in Los Angeles' Cerillos Center provides an elegant setting for this multifaceted collection of songs from the repertoire, including show tunes like "Gethsemane" and "Music Of The Night," which he performs in a duet with Dale Christian, who plays Christine in the Broadway production of "Phantom Of The Opera." Pop songs such as "Shallow" and "My Girl" have jazz-oriented numbers such as "I’ll Take You Home Again Kathleen" included, and Crawford also showcases a song from his new album, "On Eagle’s Wings." Aside from the music, the tape has a treat for those who have only now discovered in disguise as the Phantom, Crawford, who got his start in the BBC-TV comedy "Some Mothers Do ‘Ain’t Em," has an excellent sense of humor and a real talent for story-telling through the vehicle of which he weaves his into.

KEIKO MATUSI: LIGHT ABOVE THE TREES
Fox Video Home Entertainment
60 minutes, $9.98
The impetuous artistry of Keiko Matsui is not likely to please most fans of electronic jazz. This video, which captures the keyboardist/pianist during a national concert held recently in Sydney, Australia, has the potential to expose Matsui to a much broader audience. This program was initially aired on PBS but the tape includes six addi- tional songs, plus some behind-the-scenes images of Matsui and his crew. What makes it all worthwhile is the appearance on a Bay Area morning program just before her concert. Dressed in a very casual style, the classically trained pianist lights up the theater with a joyous string of selections. Even the service announcement is a small parcel of footage included in the video of Matsui performing solo piano in one of his performances. But it's worthwhile to see how Matsui prides himself on leaving his trademark blue paw print on all the floors he steps on. Here, he begins playing to a sellout crowd of 5000 in an open-air Ikuishima Shrine on Japan's Miyajima Island. Framed by lights shinn- ing at the water (as water is Matsui's favorite complement to an authentic Kyogen dancer, she shines brilliantly.

BLUES CUES: STORY TIME
Turner Home Video
50 minutes, $9.95
NAFCS, Inc.
Missed, puzzle-solving dog has millions of preschoolers feeling "Blue" and loving it. Sales of this tape, which is a children's jazz video, should be no mystery to retailers. The show's host, Steve, is a real-life guy who lives in an animated storybook world where he must constantly figure out what his puppy pal Blue has on his mind. The pup helps Blue by leaving her trademark blue paw print on all the floors he steps on. Here, he begins playing to a sellout crowd of 5000 in an open-air Ikuishima Shrine on Japan's Miyajima Island. Framed by lights shining at the water (as water is Matsui's favorite complement to an authentic Kyogen dancer, she shines brilliantly.

KURT AND COURTNEY
Directed by Nick Broomfield
Produced by Tom Van Den Brande, Michael D'Acosta
95 minutes, in select cities
Loaded with controversy and mixed with a good dose of tabloid journalism, "Kurt And Courtney" is an entertaining but lame examination of the warped relationship between late Nirvana front man Kurt Cobain and Courtney Love, his volatile but ambitious rock world. Pulled from this summer's Sundance Film Festival After Love threatened to sue director Nick Broomfield, the film has recently found distribution with San Francisco-based Roxie Releasing. The movie, though, isn't likely hold much interest beyond curious seekers.

Documentary filmmaking is compelling when credible witnesses and investigative reporting unveil the truth about its subject. But here Broomfield relies on too many facts and plays to either have an axe to grind or appear too stoned to put together a cohesive thought. Love refused to grant him an inter- view and forced him to pull a num- ber of Nirvana songs that were originally to be in the film. A half of the movie attempts to shed light some doom on Cobain's life, which ended in April 1994, when he committed suicide. As a child in Aberdeen, Wash., Cobain was kicked out of his home when his parents split up, and he ended up living with his principal's family. Periodically, he lived under a bridge near the principal's home, which is now littered with gracious messages to the dead rock icon. The only credible witness Broomfield tracks down is Cobain's Aunt Mary, who let his band rehearse and record in a makeshift studio located in her home. "He always wanted the house at dawn," Steve fondly recalls. Aunt Mary also contributes a rec- ording of a 2-year-old Cobain singing a Beatles song, the only music in the movie featuring Cobain's voice.

There are also some interviews with an old girlfriend and other friends that offer little insight, other than that Cobain felt "embar- rassed by the trappings of fame." The film uncovers little about its subjects, except for Love's disdain for the press.

A phone message from Love to Vanity Fair writer Lynn Hirsch- berg illustrates the point. Using one profanity after another, Love threatens the writer repeatedly about her scathing article, which claimed the Hole singer used hero- in while pregnant with Frances Bean. Broomfield also reveals that Love tried to attack Hirschberg at the Academy Awards using Quentin Tarantino's Oscar, a weapon.

On some levels, the film is more about Broomfield's tug-of-war with Love than her relationship with Cobain. Love is surrounded by her friends and family, who claim her to be a quasi-legendary figure in the world of music. At the event, a former nanny talks about Love's obsession with Cobain and that her relationship will just weeks before his death.

Broomfield's search for the real story gets even more clouded when he hooks up with the late punk rock- icer El Duce, who claims Love offered him $50,000 to "whack" Cobain. "I might not be a reliable witness, but I was far too involved with her," Broomfield says, "and then tells Broomfield that if he wants any more information he'll have to buy him a beer.

When Love arrives for the event and before being rushed off the stage for the outburst, he manages to ask Love why she hates the press so much.

"It's not against the law to threat- en journalists, especially if they lie," she answers, "but I don't want to talk about being in the music business." Through interviews with a for- mer musician boyfriend and an assortment of unreliable subjects, the film paints Love as an ambivalent lunatic who in her teens made a career "to do list" that included becoming friends with R.E.M. front man Michael Stipe.

A former nanny talks about Love's obsession with Cobain and that their relationship will just weeks before his death.

Continuing this preposterous con- spiracy theory is Love's father, Hank Harrison, who by his own admission has barely spent any time with his daughter. But it didn't stop him from writing a book about this silly conspiracy theory implicating his daughter.

Another so-called witness to the conspiracy theory is private detec- tive Tom Grant. Hired by Love to find Cobain after he abruptly left a Los Angeles rehab center, Grant theorizes that Cobain was too high on heroin to be able to operate the shotgun he used to kill himself. A doctor endorses Grant's conclusion, and at this point Broomfield admits that he doesn't buy the conspiracy theory.

There isn't much you can buy in "Kurt And Courtney," but like an episode of "The Jerry Springer Show," it's hard not to watch.

EILEEN FITZPATRICK