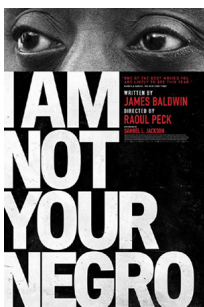


DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for May 5, 2017

Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
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It's another busy edition with a large number of new releases arriving on Blu-ray and DVD. The highlights are all covered below. So if you can't make it out to the movies this week, be sure to give one of these titles a try!

BIG NEW RELEASES!

Beyond the Gates - Anyone out there remember the "video board game" *Nightmare*? Inspired by these types of 80s VHS games, this horror/sci-fi feature is about two brothers reeling after the disappearance of their father. They find an old game like the one described above and start to play, only to learn that the host on the tape is a sinister, supernatural force. Genre critics were positive about this low-budget, independent effort, calling it a slow-moving but fun little slice of 80s-inspired cheese with fun references and impressive, neon-tinged effects. It features Graham Skipper, Chase Williamson, Brea Grant and Barbara Crampton.

The Comedian - An aging, once famous comic struggles to reinvent himself in this comedy.

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Unfortunately, those who remember the jokester only want him to repeat the same old gags. While working a wedding, the angry comedian meets a woman who may rekindle his creative spark. A scant few were amused by the movie's strangeness and odd tone; otherwise, the press disliked this one intensely. They called it a long, tedious, hackneyed effort that veers into melodrama and wastes a great cast with subpar material. It stars Robert De Niro, Leslie Mann, Danny DeVito, Harvey Keitel, Edie Falco, Charles Grodin, Cloris Leachman and Billy Crystal.

A Dog's Purpose - This drama follows a dog through several lifetimes and owners as it attempts to discern the meaning of life. Guess this suggests you might want to bring a few hankies, as you're going to see this dog meet its end over... and over... and over. Overall, reviews weren't favorable for this effort. While stating that it was nicely shot, most didn't respond well to the attempts at emotional manipulation. In fact, several commented that the film felt like a corny, Hallmark TV-movie. Josh Gad voices the dog and Dennis Quaid, Peggy Lipton, Juliet Rylance and Britt Robertson play the humans it encounters.

Gold - Based on the Bre-X scandal in the 90s, this tale involves a gold-hunting prospector who teams with an associate to find the mineral in the uncharted jungles of Indonesia. After locating an enormous deposit, the protagonist's life quickly changes. However, he comes under suspicion after new facts are revealed. Notices for the drama were mixed, with reaction slightly more negative than positive. Many praised the lead performance, but had issues with the presentation, calling the story a bit of a jumble that is oddly flat and less-than-exciting. Matthew McConaughey, Edgar Ramirez, Bryce Dallas Howard, Corey Stoll and Craig T. Nelson appear.

I Am Not Your Negro - Using sections of late author James Baldwin's unfinished novel, this documentary explores the current state of race relations in America. It also includes observations from the writer on his friendships with assassinated civil rights leaders Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr.. Reviews for the feature were exceptional and it was nominated for Best Documentary at the Academy Awards. It has been described as a fascinating, engaging and enlightening work featuring strong and effectively outlined points about race issues. The movie is narrated by Samuel L. Jackson.

The Red Turtle - Nominated for Best Animated Film at the Academy Awards, this unique France/Belgium/Japan Studio Ghibli co-production has no dialogue. It follows a castaway who finds himself stranded on a tropical island. When all of his efforts to escape are foiled by an enormous red turtle, the pair begin to form an unusual bond. It earned mostly raves from critics. They all called it a unique, thoughtful and beautifully animated tale that depicts our relationship with nature and many of the stages we all experience in life. While no one speaks, Emmanuel Garijo, Tom Hudson and Barbara Baretta provide some vocal accompaniment.

The Resurrection of Gavin Stone - This Christian, faith-based comedy comes from some unusual producers; horror studio Blumhouse Tilt and the WWE. The story features a Hollywood actor who returns home after seeing his career fall into decline. He decides to fake being a Christian in order to land the part of Jesus in an Easter play and help bolster his resume. Reviewers had a middling response. They suggested that the story is routine and won't convert any followers, but complimented the charismatic cast (featuring a few pro-wrestlers) and said it would appeal to its target demographic. Brett Dalton, Anjelah Johnson-Reyes, Shawn Michaels and D.B. Sweeney headline.

Right Now, Wrong Then - Here's another interesting production from South Korea. It is a drama that follows a director who arrives in a town to show his next movie at a film festival. He meets a female painter and the two spend the day talking. A relationship blooms, but as events progress the movie shifts perspectives and retells the story from a different point of view. Overall, critics gave it strong notices. Reportedly, it's a talky one (and bears some similarities to movies like *Before Sunrise*), but most complimented the feature for its unique take on human interactions and hidden agendas. It features Jae-yeong Jeong, Min-hee Kim and Yeo-jeong Yoon.

Rings - The cursed videotape causing death to anyone who views it returns in this second sequel to the 2002 American remake of the Japanese property (everyone still following me?). This time out, a college professor buys an old VCR and presumably discovers the tape. Students are soon watching it and it is revealed that there may be a film hidden within the film that causes the students to meet an ugly end. Notices were awful for this one, calling it almost incoherent in its mythology and largely unoriginal in the scare department. It stars Matilda Anna Ingrid Lutz, Alex Roe, Johnny Galecki, Vincent D'Onofrio and Aimee Teegarden.

The Salesman - A young couple in Tehran are put through horrible circumstances when the wife is physically assaulted by an intruder after moving into a new home. Fallout from the event is examined as she deals with trauma from the attack and her husband considers taking revenge on the responsible party. This Iranian feature from Asghar Farhadi (*A Separation*) was praised by the press for its low-key approach, engaging performances. They also suggested that there was a whole lot more going on beneath the surface of the story. It ended up winning an Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film. The cast includes Taraneh Alidoosti, Shahab Hosseini and Babak Karimi.

BLASTS FROM THE PAST!

Plenty of oddball, eccentric, older films are arriving this week on Blu-ray. Shout! Factory have a couple of new releases. *The Naked Cage* (1986) is an exploitation flick about a woman being forced to endure various hardships in prison after being convicted of a crime she didn't commit. Enthusiasts will be pleased to see that this is a new and sharp high definition transfer from the Inter-positive and that the Blu-ray includes the theatrical trailer.

They also have the horror/sci-fi flick, *Virus* (1999). This was a big and expensive comic book adaptation about an artificial life form that takes over a Russian barge. When a crew finds it, they come under attack from various bio-mechanic organisms. The cast includes Jamie Lee Curtis and Donald Sutherland. Honestly, at the time of release it didn't quite come together for me, but the movie is impressively mounted and apparently has a fan base. They'll enjoy the numerous extras, including two commentary tracks from the director, new interviews with cast and crew members, vintage featurettes, deleted scenes and promotion material. If you like the flick, this package is as good as it'll get.

Jerry Maguire (1996)

Sony have a couple of titles arriving on Blu-ray as well, one of which is a personal favorite. The first is a 20th Anniversary edition of *Jerry Maguire* (1996). That's all well and good, but more importantly the studio are also putting out a Blu-ray of

Real Genius

(1985). This is one of those comedies enjoyed as a youth that has always stayed with me. It's about a group of student geniuses who are being abused by their PI (Principal Investigator and boss at the University). When they discover that the project they're working on is being sold to the military for villainous purposes, they put their brains together to stop the deal. Their biggest prank involves lots and lots of popcorn. It features an early starring role for Val Kilmer and includes some hilarious verbal jabs. This one is a whole lot of fun for 80s comedy fans and the "Choice Collection" disc includes an all new commentary from director Martha Coolidge (*Valley Girl*

Rambling Rose

). Looking forward to revisiting this one.

Paramount are also putting a classic title out on Blu-ray. In conjunction with its 40th

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Anniversary, they've got an extras packed new version of *Saturday Night Fever* (1977). Besides a new 4K transfer that includes both the Director's Cut and original Theatrical Version, there's a director's commentary, a 70s disco-pedia and other bonuses.

Universal are putting out a pair of catalog titles on Blu-ray. They include the Richard Pryor/John Candy comedy, *Brewster Millions* (1985) and, on a completely different track,

The Hindenburg (1975). The latter is a disaster flick about the airship crash that adds a conspiracy narrative to the proceedings. It's directed by Robert Wise (*The Day the Earth Stood Still*

,
West Side Story

,
The Sound of Music

) and features George C. Scott and Anne Bancroft.

Finally, Mill Creek are putting out *Spacehunter: Adventures in the Forbidden Zone* (1983) on Blu-ray. This is not a quality piece of cinema, but it is an amusingly cheesy B-movie with plenty of rubbery monsters and ridiculous action. It stars Peter Strauss, Ernie Hudson, Michael Ironside and a very young Molly Ringwald. The film was originally photographed in 3D, but sadly, this is the 2-dimensional version, so you'll just have to imagine that the various objects being hurled at you are flying off of the screen and landing on your lap. For the low price point, it still might be worth picking up until someone does put out a proper 3D version.

YOU KNOW, FOR KIDS!

Here are some picks for the kids.

Rugrats: Season 2 (Nickelodeon)

Scaredy Squirrel Trilogy (Scholastic)

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ON THE TUBE!

You'll find all of the big TV-related releases listed below.

4400: The Complete Series

Nature: Yosemite (PBS)

Secrets of the Dead: Leonardo, The Man Who Saved Science (PBS)

Vegas: The Complete Series

Wonder Woman: The Complete Collection

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