

DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for Oct. 6, 2017

Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
Friday, 06 October 2017 09:32



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Welcome back to another look at highlights arriving on Blu-ray and DVD. Once again, there's a good mix of big studio fare and smaller, independent features. 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!

6 Days - This UK drama recreates a real-life crisis from 1980. It involves a group of armed gunmen breaking into the Iranian Embassy in London and taking more than twenty hostages. On the outside, Police and a SAS team hatch a plan to gain entry and release those captured. Reaction was decent for the picture. A few commented that it was a bit stiff and too low-key for a thriller, but more complimented the efforts at not sensationalizing the scenario and offering a more realistic view of events. It stars Jamie Bell, Mark Strong and Abbie Cornish.

13 Minutes - The second time-themed title of the week is the story of a failed assassination plot against Adolf Hitler. It occurred in 1939 and the movie depicts the event itself, as well as the

resistance fighter's arrest and interrogation, revealing the specific thoughts and reasoning behind his actions. This German, foreign-language film earned solid notices. A few did argue that the movie didn't offer much in the way of intrigue. However, most felt that it was well put together character study that gave viewers a frightening glimpse into the Nazi party and the horrors of nationalism. The cast includes Christian Friedel and Katharina Schüttler.

Atomica - Set in the future, an officer is sent to a nuclear facility, where all communications have gone silent. Soon after arriving, the agent encounters two oddball employees. As strange events occur, she begins to suspect them of nefarious activities. Reviews were weak for this little independent feature. A small selection thought it delivered enough cheesy thrills to earn a pass, but the majority called the film awfully slow moving and unable to sustain tension. It features Dominic Monaghan, Tom Sizemore, Sarah Habel and Phil Austin.

The Book of Henry - A single mother of a two children, one of whom is a genius, works to make ends meet in a small town. When the family discover a young girl living next door is being abused, the mother and her offspring plot an elaborate plan to save her. The critics didn't enjoy this particular tale. There were a couple of journalists who enjoyed the work of the cast enough to recommend it, but all opined that the movie has difficulty maintaining a consistent tone and fell into disarray and sentiment as it progressed. Now viewers can make up their own minds. It stars Naomi Watts, Jaedem Lieberher, Jacob Tremblay, Sarah Silverman, Lee Pace, Maddie Ziegler and Dean Norris.

The B-Side: Elsa Dorfman's Portrait Photography - This documentary gives an overview of the life and art of photographer Elsa Dorfman, who primarily works using an oversized Polaroid camera. The movie comes from noted non-fiction filmmaker Errol Morris (*Gates of Heaven*

,
The Thin Blue Line

,
The Fog of War

and many others); believe it or not, Elsa, the subject of the movie, is the director's neighbor. The press had almost nothing but praise for the latest project from Morris. They stated that the photographer was sweet and endearing and that the movie shines new and interesting perspectives on her work.

Churchill - British Prime Minister Winston Churchill is the central character in this UK biopic set during WWII and specifically dealing with the events leading up to the Normandy invasion. The film attempts to recreate the real life figure's exhaustion after several years at war, as well as

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his depression and desire not to make the same kinds of errors he made during WWI. Critics were mixed about this effort. About half thought it was well-acted and nicely shot, while the remainder also described it as being an exaggerated, silly and surface-level portrait. The cast includes Brian Cox, Miranda Richardson and John Slattery.

Cult of Chucky - The creepy killer doll returns in this sixth sequel to *Child's Play*. This latest take is also from writer/director Don Mancini, who has been involved in one way or another with all of the features. Made as a direct-to-disc release, the plot involves the human survivor of the previous installment. Now locked up in an asylum, a psychiatrist brings Chucky into the facility as a therapy tool. Things do not go well, and a new string of murders begin. This has only played festivals so far, but those who have seen it suggest it's a fun B-movie that will please fans. Brad Dourif returns to voice Chucky, along with Jennifer Tilly, Fiona Dourif and Alex Vincent.

A Ghost Story - Here's a drama with an unusual concept. A man dies and comes back to his suburban home as a ghost, literally taking on the appearance of a person covered in a bed-sheet with two eyes cut out. He attempts to reconnect with his still-grieving wife, but finds that he can't, instead watching their lives play out. Reaction to this odd feature was very positive. It has been called a low-key but unique, meditative and strangely moving feature that isn't easy to forget. It stars Academy Award winner Casey Affleck (although he spends most of the flick under a sheet), Rooney Mara, Kenneisha Thompson, Grover Coulson and Liz Franke.

Goon: Last of the Enforcers - This sequel to the 2011 cult comedy finds its hockey playing protagonist in trouble; the years of fighting have resulted in lingering injuries. When a new tough guy enters the league, the hero finds himself in the role of grizzled veteran. The movie earned split reviews, with a few more negative reactions than positive ones. A portion gave it a pass thanks to some raunchy laughs here and there, but more felt like this effort regurgitated too much material from its superior predecessor. Now hockey fans can decide for themselves if it measures up. It features Seann William Scott, Alison Pill, Marc-Andre Grondin, Liev Schreiber, Wyatt Russell, Kim Coates, Elisha Cuthbert and Jay Baruchel.

The Layover - A pair of ladies going through tough times decide to take a road trip and drive to Florida for some fun. Unfortunately, a hurricane completely alters their course. Along the way, they do pick up an interesting passenger and ultimately find themselves competing for his affections. Sadly, this comedy has been described as a misfire by all who have seen it. Among the list of criticisms, almost all wrote that the characters weren't relatable and that the jokes were poorly written, obvious and ineffective. The cast includes Kate Upton, Alexandra Daddario, Matt Barr, Matt Jones, Kal Penn, Rob Corddry and Molly Shannon.

Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales - This fifth entry in the popular series based on a Disney theme-park ride finds Captain Jack Sparrow down-on-his-luck and being pursued by ghost sailors. To save himself from certain death, he must team with a pair of younger adventure-seekers to find Poseidon's trident. Reviewers appeared to have had enough with this franchise, even though it has been reputed to be the final chapter. A small percentage thought that it did its job and in bringing events to a close, but many more described it as the worst in the series. It stars Johnny Depp, Javier Bardem, Geoffrey Rush, Brenton Thwaites and Kaya Scodelario.

Realive - A young man learns he has a terminal illness in this independent sci-fi flick. He opts for cryogenic freezing and the hopes that he can be cured at some point in the future. Some 60 years later, the lead ends up as the first person ever to be awakened from his chamber. But just because the world has changed and progressed doesn't mean that his checkered past hasn't followed him. Notices were good for this little English-language co-production from Belgium, Spain and France. The majority complimented it for being a thoughtful and original fantasy flick with plenty of thematic elements to ponder afterwards. It features Tom Hughes, Charlotte Le Bon and Oona Chaplin.

The Survivalist - In this independent production, a man decides to live off of the land and retreats to a remote farm in the wilderness. After many years out on his own, he encounters a lost and starving mother and daughter. They make a strange arrangement to stay with him and it becomes clear that the years alone have resulted in mental distress. Reviews were very good for this dark and disturbing effort. They admittedly it was a grim tale, but praised its unique approach and called it compelling and unpredictable throughout. The cast includes Mia Goth, Martin McCann and Olwen Fouere.

BLASTS FROM THE PAST!

Once again, Arrow Video have a couple of notable cult items. First, they have a Special Edition Blu-ray of *Children of the Corn* (1984). Based on a Stephen King short story, the plot involves a couple who drive into a small town only to find it run by kids who murder anyone over the age of 18. That's bad news for the visitors. The movie comes newly remastered in 2K and includes an incredible list of extras. There are multiple audio commentaries (one with the filmmakers and another with horror historians), a lengthy making-of, a bucket-load of interviews with the cast (including co-star Linda Hamilton) and crew, as well as publicity materials a 1983 short film adaptation of the same written material. This is about as detailed and remarkable a package as

one could hope for.

Their other big release is the brilliant Oscar-winner, *A Fish Called Wanda* (1988). It's a personal favorite and one of the best comedies of the era. It stars John Cleese, Jamie Lee Curtis, Eric Idle and Kevin Kline (who won an Academy Award for his performance). The story involves a heist gone wrong and the various attempts by the many participants to find the stolen loot and take it for themselves. A stuffy barrister accidentally gets himself involved in the fracas, leading to lots of hilarious bits. The film has been given a 4K restoration from the original film negative, comes with a commentary from writer/star Cleese, as well as new interviews with the crew and an appreciation from the British Film Institute. Not only that, but there is a documentary on the making of the movie and a retrospective doc on the film as well. The disc also includes 24 deleted scenes, a personal message from Cleese and all kinds of publicity materials. Sounds like a must-own for fans.

EVIL.jpg

Sony have an amusing genre picture as well that is being released on Blu-ray. *976-EVIL* (1988) is a scare flick about a phone number that gives the caller supernatural powers. Of course, the service often tends to backfire for the user. It was directed by Robert Englund (Freddy Krueger himself!) and promises to be cheesy fun for B-movie fans.

Finally, Criterion have the early horror picture, *Vampyr* (1932). It's loaded with impressive imagery and a genuinely creepy ambience, not unlike

Nosferatu

from the previous decade. The new Blu-ray of the production includes a high definition transfer of the German-language version (subtitled in English), an alternate cut with English text, a film scholar audio commentary, and several documentaries and pieces on the film's director, Carl Theodore Dreyer, who also helmed

The Passion of Joan of Arc

a few years prior. Looks like another remarkable release.

YOU KNOW, FOR KIDS!

Here are some titles that may entertain children.

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Curious George: 3 Movies & Playset

The Flintstones: Season 3

The Flintstones: Season 4

The Flintstones: Season 5

The Flintstones: Season 6

SCOOBY.jpeg

Scooby-Doo/Richie Rich Hour: Volume 1

Tom & Jerry Spotlight Collection: Volume 2

Tom & Jerry Spotlight Collection: Volume 3

ON THE TUBE!

And you'll find all of the week's TV-themed releases listed below.

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2 Broke Girls: The Complete Series

2 Broke Girls: Season 6

American Horror Story: Season 6

Broadcasting Christmas (Hallmark TV-movie)

The Christmas Note (Hallmark TV-movie)

A December Bride (Hallmark TV-movie)

Finding Father Christmas (Hallmark TV-movie)

GENE.jpg

Gene Roddenberry's Andromeda: Season 1

House of Cards: Season 5

iZombie: Season 3

Loch Ness: Series 1

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Mr. Miracle (Hallmark TV-movie)

Operation Christmas (Hallmark TV-movie)

The Son: Season 1

When Calls the Heart: Year 4 (6 Movie Collection)

The Wizard of Lies

The Vikings: Season 4, Volume 2

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