

DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for Jan. 12, 2018

Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
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Hello. Wow, it's another incredibly busy edition with a number of new discs arriving. And when there's a large amount of releases, there's always a ton of variety. 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!

Bad Day for the Cut - This independent action/thriller is about a docile, middle-aged farmer who lives with his mother in Northern Ireland. When she is murdered by some thugs, the man

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decides to head out for revenge, searching for the responsible parties in the criminal underworld of Belfast. Reaction to the feature was very positive. Comments stated that while the movie wasn't perfect, it was filled with tension and featured plenty of dark and unexpected twists and turns to keep the attention of viewers. The cast includes Nigel O'Neill, Susan Lynch, Jozef Pawlowski and Stuart Graham.

Bitch - A housewife undergoes a strange transformation in this indie comedy. Finally snapping due to mistreatment by her philandering spouse and bratty kids, the woman takes on the persona of a vicious dog. It forces the members of the family to come together in an attempt to deal with the crisis. The movie received more positive reviews than negative. Some liked the idea but didn't think the screenplay made its points effectively enough. However, more found it unique and thought the satire worked well enough to recommend. It stars Marianna Palka, Jason Ritter and Jaime King.

Bullet Head - Three criminals have a really bad day after their heist fails miserably. Hiding out in an abandoned warehouse and awaiting a getaway vehicle, they soon discover that a vicious dog also resides in the building. Trapped, they try to survive the attacks as they desperately wait for assistance to arrive. The press was split on this low-budget thriller. About half found the set-up difficult to believe and never felt that it kicked into high gear. The remainder enjoyed the work of the cast and thought it delivered a few B-movie kicks. It features Adrien Brody, John Malkovich, Rory Culkin and Antonio Banderas.

Dina - This documentary follows a very eccentric middle-aged woman finally getting ready to tie the knot. Viewers follow the woman as she attempts to organize all of the wedding events and assist her groom, a quirky Walmart greeter who has never left his parent's home. Despite her many troubles, the subject maintains a positive spirit and shows great determination in her quest. Critics were very positive about the feature. They wrote that the film was ultimately sweet and inspiring and suggested that it even managed to make its viewers empathize and appreciate its distinctive characters.

The Foreigner - A man loses his daughter after a bomb is detonated in London. Devastated by the crime and determined to find those responsible, he takes it upon himself to find those responsible. The search takes him to Northern Ireland, where he begins to apply pressure on a government official who has ties to the criminals. This thriller marked a more serious turn for star Jackie Chan and it generally received good reviews. Some found it too dark and thought it focused too much on the villainous organization, but more suggested that it was an interesting change of pace and that the action bits were exciting. Pierce Brosnan, Katie Leung and Rufus Jones also appear.

Friend Request - This horror flick involves a popular teenager who has something of an obsession with social media. Unfortunately, after she accepts a Facebook friend request from a complete stranger, bizarre events begin taking place. Her friends begin to die violently and the lead's life is soon threatened as well. The press didn't think much of this attempt to scare using technology. A couple write-ups stated the movie was so ridiculous that it was entertaining, but the vast majority found it ineffective at building anxiety or adding much subtext to the subject matter. Alycia Debnam-Carey, William Mosely, Connor Paolo and Brit Morgan headline the feature.

Hollow in the Land - After her father is arrested for a series of crimes and her mother leaves, a teenage girl is forced to become the matriarch of her family and care for her brother. Strange things begin occurring on the anniversary of her dad's incarceration when a murder is committed and her brother disappears. The desperate youngster is forced to head out, find her sibling and sort out exactly what happened. Notices were very good for this independent mystery/thriller. One or two found it formulaic, but almost all others complimented the excellent performances and suggested it was nail-biting and engrossing throughout. It stars Dianna Agron, Rachelle Lefevre and Shawn Ashmore.

It - The Stephen King bestseller gets a new adaptation with this feature, the first in a two-part series. This chapter deals with a group of outcast children who are terrorized by a malevolent clown out to kill them. As they band together and fight back, relationships are formed and they learn more about the monster's supernatural origins. The movie was a massive hit and earned solid reviews as well. Some did complain that it wasn't as scary as it could have been and felt a little long and repetitive, but the general consensus was that this was an effective horror flick with strong performances from its young cast. It features Bill Skarsgard, Jaeden Lieberher, Sophia Lillis, Finn Wolfhard, Chosen Jacobs, Jack Dylan Grazer and Wyatt Oleff.

Mark Felt: The Man Who Brought Down the White House - This biopic focuses on the special agent and whistleblower who offered valuable information about the Watergate break-in. He was known to journalists as "Deep Throat" and his actions helped dethrone President Nixon. The movie details the scandal as well as his personal life, attempting to help viewers learn more about the individual. Unfortunately, the movie earned mixed-negative response. Reports suggest the acting was strong but the events depicted didn't come together in an exciting or dynamic manner. Instead, it reportedly comes across as heavy-handed. The cast includes Liam Neeson, Diane Lane, Marton Csokas, Josh Lucas, Tony Goldwyn and Michael C. Hall.

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Marshall - Here's another biopic, this time chronicling the life of African-American Supreme Court Justice, Thurgood Marshall. It follows his time as an attorney defending a chauffeur accused of attempted murder. Forced to work in a segregationist court room, he and another young Jewish lawyer team up to help clear the man's name. The film also shows how his actions eventually helped create the NAACP legal defense fund. The movie earned solid notices. A few complained that this was a by-the-numbers effort that didn't get into enough detail about Marshall, but far more appreciated the performances and the attempts to define the man through his courtroom interactions. It stars Chadwick Boseman, Josh Gad, Kate Hudson, Dan Stevens and Sterling K. Brown.

November Criminals - This crime/mystery feature involves a Washington, D.C. high school student struggle with bad habits that include insulting teachers and his fellow students, as well as dealing drugs. However, after one of his classmates is murdered, the kid decides to use his troublemaking talents for good and find the guilty party. Sadly, critics were not wowed with the end results. They complained that while the cast was good, the movie never found the appropriate tone and ended up as a routine and run-of-the-mill affair. It features Chloe Grace Moretz, Ansel Elgort, Cathleen Keener and David Strathairn.

So B. It - A 12-year old girl who lives with her mentally disabled mother decides to set out on an adventure after her parent makes an unexpected comment. Knowing little about her family's past, the child begins deciphering the meaning of the statement and unearths secrets about her mother and the history of her clan. Reaction to this independent drama was slightly more negative than positive. A few thought that the performances made up for its deficiencies, but most described it as melodramatic as well as obvious and ineffective in its emotional manipulations. The cast includes Talitha Bateman, Jacinda Barrett, Alfre Woodard, Cloris Leachman and John Heard.

The Tiger Hunter - This little comedy/drama is set in the 1970s and involves an Indian immigrant who moves to Chicago after landing a job as an engineer. The position falls through after his arrival and he's forced to look for another source of income. He then makes new friends who decide to help him win the affections of his childhood sweetheart. The feature only got a limited release, but received plenty of good reviews. A few thought it was too frothy to make an impression, but the majority found it sweet, inspiring and very funny. It stars Danny Pudi, Rizwan Manji, Jon Heder, Karin David and Kevin Pollak.

Blasts from the Past!

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Some very interesting older flicks are hitting Blu-ray this week. The first is *The Witches* (1967) arriving courtesy of Arrow Academy. This was an Italian/French anthology co-production consisting of five segments dealing loosely about the role of women in society. Five big directors took on the segments, including names Pier Paolo Pasolini and Vittorio De Sica. This edition includes a 2K restoration from the original film elements, the original Italian soundtrack with English subtitles, a film critic commentary, an interview with a cast member, and an English-language version of the De Sica segment (which stars Clint Eastwood).

Shout! Factory is putting out a gem with *Matinee* (1993). This period piece from director Joe Dante (*Gremlins*, *Explorers*, *Innerspace*, *The Burbs*

, *Small Soldiers*

) is about a kid in Florida during the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis. He befriends a visiting horror film producer and decides to help him out with the premiere of his new monster movie as the country braces for war. It's a really charming and effective comedy that didn't get much of a push during its initial release. Thankfully, it has developed a following. The Collector's Edition Blu-ray includes some great bonuses like new interviews with the cast and crew, deleted scenes and a complete version of the movie-within-the-movie,

Mant!

Publicity materials and other extras are also included. If you're a movie buff and haven't seen it, this film is well worth your time.

Criterion has a new Blu-ray of the classic film, *Young Mr. Lincoln* (1939). This one stars Henry Fonda as Abraham Lincoln in a fictionalized courtroom drama that involves the future president struggling with a murder case. The movie has been given a 4K restoration and features a film critic commentary track, interviews with Fonda and director John Ford and other bonuses.

Finally, Australian distributor Umbrella is putting out a high definition version of the Stephen King flick, *Silver Bullet* (1985). It's a goofy little horror flick, but it has a few fun moments. It also features Everett McGill, Corey Haim and a wild performance from co-star Gary Busey. Apparently, the distributor claim this is a region-free disc, meaning it can be played on any machine in the world. Hopefully that's the case, as the fact that it's an import will mean that it'll cost North Americans a little more to purchase than they would for a domestic Blu-ray.

You Know, For Kids!

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Here are some titles kids may enjoy.

Curious George: Be My Valentine

My Little Pony: The Movie

Octonauts: The Great Swamp Search

Scooby-Doo & Batman: The Brave and the Bold

Teen Titans Go!: Be My Valentine

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