

Welcome back to another look at highlights arriving on Blu-ray and DVD. This edition is one of the busiest in quite some time, with all sorts of intriguing fare. 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!

24 Hours to Live - This independent, multi-national production involves a hired assassin who is killed on the job. However, technology allows for the hitman to be resurrected for one full day. Brought back to life he sets out to right some wrongs and make up for his mistakes in the limited time he has left. Reaction towards this action flick wasn't exemplary. A few called it ridiculous B-movie fun that works as long as you don't think hard about it, but most complained that the writing and events were too juvenile and silly to recommend to paying audiences. It stars Ethan Hawke, Xu Qing, Liam Cunningham and Rutger Hauer.

A Bad Moms Christmas - This sequel to the 2016 hit *Bad Moms* finds its parental figures dealing with the holidays. The three leads not only have to contend with satisfying their children's expectations, but also manage to entertain their own visiting mothers. Critics weren't as impressed with this follow-up, giving it mostly negative notices. A minority believed the talented cast eked out enough laughs to earn it a pass, but many more complained that movie simply repeated familiar, stale jokes and came across as a hastily thrown together sequel. It stars Mila Kunis, Kristin Bell, Kathryn Hahn, Jay Hernandez, Cheryl Hines, Christine Baranski and Susan Sarandon.

Batman: Gotham by Gaslight - Batman returns in this animated, R-rated, direct-to-disc feature. Set in an "Victorian Age Gotham City", the Dark Knight investigates the famous Jack the Ripper murders. Along the way, he encounters familiar characters from the comic book world taking on slightly altered roles in this alternate universe. Again, this feature is premiering on disc and so there are no official reviews of it currently in the press. Online there have been a few write-ups that say it looks good, but grumbled that the mystery itself isn't all that well handled. It should at least be interesting for fans of the character, one assumes. The voice cast includes Bruce Greenwood and Jennifer Carpenter.

Day of the Dead: Bloodline - George A. Romero's 1985 zombie classic *Day of the Dead* gets a remake in this direct-to-disc horror flick. It involves the last remaining survivors (including

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members of the military and scientists) of an undead apocalypse, now holed up under the ground and fighting over how to handle the situation. A few reviews have popped up over the past couple of weeks and reaction has been absolutely terrible. It was called an forgettable, unremarkable cash-in of a remake. They claimed that unlike the original, this one doesn't even appear to be certain of what it's trying to say. The cast includes Sophie Skelton, Johnathon Schaech and Jeff Gum.

LBJ - This biopic follows US President Lyndon B Johnson through his term as frustrated, sidelined Vice President to JFK and depicts his unexpected ascendancy after Kennedy's assassination. Now leading the country, he sets out to honor and complete his friend's legacy by passing the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The drama earned split notices from the press. Half felt that the material was told in a by-the-numbers and generic fashion, but a few more found the lead performance so compelling, they still felt that the movie was worth seeking out. It stars Woody Harrelson, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Rich Sommer, Bill Pullman, C. Thomas Howell, Jeffrey Donovan and Richard Jenkins.

Only the Brave - Here's another true story adapted for the big screen. This time out, the subject is the Granite Mountain Hotshots, a group of elite firefighters who were sent out to help contain the notorious 2013 Yarnell Hill Fire. Viewers witness how the group came to earn their ranking, the stress placed on their families, and the events culminating in the devastating blaze. The press praised the film. A few had issues with the personal squabbles and some of the details of what really occurred, but the majority complimented the movie as an effective tribute to the real life figures. It features Josh Brolin, Miles Teller, Jennifer Connelly, Jeff Bridges and Taylor Kitsch.

The Stray - This faith-based family feature involves a lost dog who ends up finding a family. Seemingly putting Lassie to shame, the pooch saves an infant, restores a marriage and brings estranged members of the clan together. It soon becomes apparent that the dog might be a guardian angel. Reviews were pretty tepid for this drama. There were a couple who described the Colorado locations as pretty and felt it might work for its target audience, but far more groused that the movie tries an everything-but-the-kitchen-sink approach to eliciting an emotional reaction. Some even suggested that it may end up upsetting dog lovers. The cast includes Sarah Lancaster, Michael Cassidy and Scott Christopher.

Suburbicon - Set in the late 50s, this tale follows a home invasion and its effects on a family. As more is revealed, it suddenly seems like the attack may have been an inside job, leaving that head of the family scrambling to tie up all kinds of loose ends. The movie was directed by George Clooney based on an unproduced script from the 80s by the Coen Brothers, but it didn't

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end up going over well with reviewers. They commented that significant changes made from the original screenplay, like the addition of a second plotline, created a tonal jumble that negatively impacted the final product. However, a small concentration enjoyed sections of the film enough to give it a pass. It stars Matt Damon, Julianne Moore, Oscar Isaac and Glenn Fleshler.

Walking Out - A teenager from the city decides to head out with his dad to Montana and try to reconnect while big game hunting. As we all know in these types of features, traveling to remote areas with estranged family members is always a bad idea! An accident leaves the pair wounded and trapped in the snowy wilderness, struggling to get to safety and survive the ordeal. This independent film didn't get much press during its limited release, but reviews were quite strong. Several called it a good-looking film featuring excellent performances that may even draw a tear or two from viewers. Matt Bomer, Josh Wiggins, Bill Pullman and Lily Gladstone headline the movie.

YOU KNOW, FOR KIDS!

Lots of material for youngsters coming this week. The highlights are listed below.

Benji (1974) (Mill Creek)

The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That!: Season 2, Vol. 1

Duckman: The Complete Series

Miraculous: Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir: Season One

Rugrats: Season 3

DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for Feb. 9, 2018

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Scooby-Doo and the Movie Monsters

Shimmer and Shine: Beyond the Rainbow Falls (Nickelodeon)

Woody Woodpecker (Direct-to-DVD live-action/animated feature film)

ON THE TUBE!

And here are all of the TV-themed releases coming your way (including a couple of very interesting ones for those who remember the 80s).

Family.jpg

All in the Family: Season 1 - 5

Bosom Buddies: The Complete Series

The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That!: Season 2, Vol. 1

Duckman: The Complete Series

Growing Pains: Seasons 1 - 2

The Guardian: The Complete Series

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Homeland: Season 6

Miraculous: Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir: Season One

Shimmer and Shine: Beyond the Rainbow Falls (Nickelodeon)

Taboo: Season 1

War of the Worlds: The Complete Series

By Glenn Kay

For the Sun