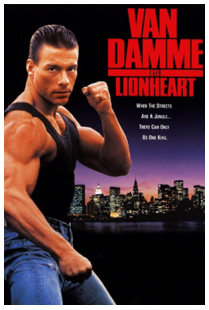
Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
Friday, 15 June 2018 06:55













Welcome back for another look at highlights arriving on Blu-ray and DVD. It's an interesting edition that includes a wide variety of projects in a variety of genres. 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!

The Humanity Bureau - After climate change has caused devastation across the US, a government agent is assigned to exile people who are no longer considered useful to society. While investigating a case involving a mother and her young son, he determines that they have been made the victims of some shady figures and decides to help them. Critics weren't all that impressed with this independent action picture. While a few thought the ideas were intriguing, most thought that it was all too silly and over-the-top to take seriously. It stars Nicholas Cage, Sarah Lind, Jacob Davies and Hugh Dillon.

I Can Only Imagine - This faith-based production is inspired by a popular song for which the movie has been named. Apparently, it is a take on the true story behind the creation of the music, following a band struggling to make their mark in the industry. Reviewers were more

positive about this feature than others of its ilk. There were a percentage who called it a little too earnest for its own good, but more suggested that it was well-acted, didn't sermonize and that the themes of forgiveness were well handled. The cast includes J. Michael Finley, Madeline Carroll, Dennis Quaid, Trace Adkins and Cloris Leachman.

Loveless - A couple bicker and fight with intensity as they come to the realization that they are no longer in love. However, their battles at home cause their young son to run away, forcing the pair to team up in order to find their child. This Russian effort from the director of art house hit *Leviathan*
was nominated for Best Foreign Language Film at the Academy Awards. It also earned excellent notices. The movie has been described as grim, difficult and uncompromising, showing just as much about the current difficulties with life in Russia as it does about a crumbling marriage. It features Maryana Spivak and Aleksey Rozin.

Love, Simon - The coming-of-age teen comedy/romance genre gets an update with this story about a high school senior struggling with coming out as gay to his friends and family. When another student threatens to break the news unless the lead sets him up with one of his female friends, confusion and comedy follows. The press were very taken with this effort. There was a naysayer or two who criticized it for following the typical teen tropes, but almost all were impressed, commenting that it was funny, sweet and ultimately charming. It stars Nick Robinson, Jennifer Garner, Josh Duhamel, Katherine Langford and Tony Hale.

The Mimic - This unusual, foreign-language fantasy/horror picture from South Korea involves the mother of a missing child who discovers a young girl in the woods. She decides to take the youngster in, only to witness strange behavior. The woman eventually suspects the girl of being a Jangsan Tiger, luring victims by mimicking humans. This movie was successful in its homeland and even was nominated for a few end-of-year awards, but few in this part of the world have seen it. There aren't any reviews as of yet, so interested parties will have to take a chance. Yum Jung-ah and Park Hyuk-kwon headline the movie.

Sherlock Gnomes - In this sequel to the 2011 animated family film hit *Gnomeo & Juliet*, the heroic garden decorations discover that gnomes all around London are being kidnapped. Their only hope of solving the mystery and rescuing others is to procure the services of a skilled private investigator. Overall, this follow-up garnered more negative press than positive notices. A few thought it was mildly amusing and would entertain kids, but the majority felt that the movie was fairly ordinary and lacked enough memorable moments to recommend. The voice cast includes James McAvoy, Emily Blunt, Johnny Depp, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Mary J. Blige, Michael Caine and Maggie Smith.

The Strangers: Prey at Night - This sequel to the 2008 horror hit continues to chronicle the terror brought about by three masked psychopaths. A family traveling to see relatives arrive at a secluded mobile home park and find it deserted. They soon come under assault from the aforementioned maniacs. Overall, the press did not like what they saw. About a third actually thought it surpassed expectation and worked as a throwback to old slasher movies, but most suggested that it was predictable and that both the heroes and villains weren't particularly interesting. It features Bailee Madison, Christina Hendricks and Martin Henderson.

Tomb Raider - This reboot of the video game/movie series serves as an origin story for gun-toting adventurer Lara Croft. Out of school and unsure of what to do with her life, the woman decides to tackle a great mystery. Specifically, what happened to her long lost father. The journey takes her to a remote island off the coast of Japan and, more than likely, to an ancient tomb or two. Reaction was split towards this action picture. Most enjoyed the star's performance as the heroine. However, while a significant portion liked the exaggerated action on display, just as many thought it was conventional and didn't offer anything original. It stars Alicia Vikander, Domenic West, Walter Goggins, Daniel Wu and Kristin Scott Thomas.

BLASTS FROM THE PAST!

Tons of remarkable releases are arriving courtesy of various distributors, starting with Arrow Academy. First up is a *Akio Jissoji: The Buddhist Trilogy* Blu-ray box set. It contains three Japanese films from the director, including
This Transient Life
(1970),
Mandara
(1971) and
Poem
(1972). Presented in this part of the world for the first time in high definition, the movies arrive new English subtitles, intros from a Japanese New Wave cinema expert. He also provides scene-select commentaries for all three films. The movies also come with trailers and a few other bonuses.

They also have *Vigil* (1984), the first film from New Zealand director Vincent Ward (*The Navigator: A Medieval Odyssey*
,
Map of the Human Heart

,
What Dreams May Come
). It's a well-regarded effort about a visitor to a small farm whom the youngest family member accuses of being the devil. The Special Edition Blu-ray includes a brand new critic appreciation of the film, a television on-set report, a trailer and a good chuck of a 1987 documentary about the New Zealand film industry that deals specifically with Ward.

MVD have some fun B-movies arriving on Blu-ray. *Abominable* (2006) is about a killer Sasquatch that targets a paraplegic living in a remote cabin. The wheelchair-bound hero is more trouble than the monster expects. This 2-disc Special Edition includes two versions of the movie; the original and a new cut of the film with upgraded CGI. Both have been given a 2K transfer from the original camera negative, an audio commentary with the director and stars Matt McCoy and Jeffrey Combs, an introduction, featurettes, deleted scenes, outtakes, a couple of short films from the director, and even more. Looks like fun.

They also have a 2-disc Special Edition of the early Jean-Claude Van Damme action vehicle, *Li onheart*
(1990). In this effort, he plays a fighter who decides to turn the tables on the wealthy people who force him to compete in an underground circuit. Not only does the Blu-ray includes an extended cut of the film, but also new, lengthy making-of documentaries featuring interviews with cast, crew and star Van Damme, archived interviews and docs, a director commentary and tons of publicity material.

Still looking for more? Shout! Factory have a Blu-ray of the Madonna/Willem Dafoe erotic thriller, *Body of Evidence* (1993). The releasing includes the R-rated and Unrated versions. You can also pick up the *Darkman Trilogy* (1990-1996) Blu-ray set, which includes the original releases packaged together in one set. While they've put it out before, they're also releasing a Collector's Edition so-bad-it's-good cult flick,
Ninja III: The Domination
(1984). The movie has been given a new 4K transfer, new interviews with the performers and crew and the previously available audio commentary from director Sam Firstenberg (
Breakin' 2: Electric Boogaloo
,
Revenge of the Ninja
,
American Ninja
.,
American Ninja 2: The Confrontation
). Hmmm, there seems to be a theme running through a lot of his pictures.

Kino are releasing some Special Edition Blu-rays too. They include *Gross Anatomy* (1989) and *Jack the Giant Killer*
(1962). The first includes a director commentary and the second two cuts of the film with a film historian audio track. Additionally, they are delivering
The Late Great Planet Earth
(1979) narrated by Orson Welles. Finally, the company are putting out a new 4K restoration of the early Paul Verhoeven foreign-language feature,
Spetters
(1980). The Blu-ray also includes a director commentary and a few other interesting bonuses.

And there's more. Criterion have *Manila in the Claws of Light* (1975). It's about a young fisherman searching for his girlfriend who has disappeared after seeking work in a nearby village. The new Blu-ray includes a 4K digital restoration of the movie from the Philippine Film Council, an introduction from Martin Scorcese, documentaries about the film's director and the making of the movie itself and other extras.

Scream Team Releasing are putting out a Special Collectors Edition Blu-ray/DVD combo of the slasher homage, *The Sleeper* (2012). It includes a couple of versions of the movie and presumably other bonuses.

Universal have decide to premiere a few of their catalog titles on Blu-ray. The includes the comedy *Casual Sex?* (1988), featuring Lea Thompson, Victoria Jackson and Andrew 'Dice' Clay. Additionally, you can now pick up the Arnold Schwarzenegger/Danny Devito comedy, *Junior*
(1994) in high definition. Finally and perhaps most interestingly, Universal are releasing
More American Graffiti
(1979) on Blu-ray. Set in the late 60s, this somewhat forgotten sequel to the George Lucas classic featured another director behind the camera and doesn't quite work (only a couple of the four interlaced stories work), but it does have a few interesting sequences and show viewers what happened to the various characters chronicled in the original after they go their separate ways.

Warner Archives are putting out a Blu-ray of the Gregory Peck and Lauren Bacall comedy/romance, *Designing Woman* (1957). And finally, on a completely different note, Full Moon Entertainment are giving their horror picture, *Curse of the Puppet Master*

(1998), a high definition upgrade.

YOU KNOW, FOR KIDS!

Here are some releases that hope to entertain small humans.

Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood Double Feature: Daniel Goes Camping and Tiger Family Trip

Dinosaur Train: Meeting New Friends (PBS Kids)

Nickelodeon Favorites: Great Summer Campout!

Sherlock Gnomes

Splash and Bubbles: One Big Ocean (PBS Kids)

Voltron: Legendary Defenders: Seasons 1 & 2

ON THE TUBE!

And these are the week's TV-themed releases.

Ancient Aliens: 10th Anniversary Collection (History)

Channel Zero: Butcher's Block: Season 3

Columbo: The Complete Series

Dr. Quinn: Medicine Woman: The Complete Series

Frontline: Bitter Rivals: Iran and Saudi Arabia (PBS)

Menace & Murder: A Lydia La Plante Collection

Nature: Natural Born Rebels (PBS)

NightMan: Compete Collection (90s superhero series)

The Office: The Complete Series (US Show)

One Day at a Time: Season 3

Orange is the New Black: Season 5

Portlandia: Season 8

Power: Season 4

Step by Step: Season 1 (Warner Archive)

Suits: Season 7

Will & Grace: The Revival: Season 1

By Glenn Kay

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