

Welcome back to another look at highlights arriving on Blu-ray and DVD. There's a lot of eccentric material coming your way, along with one big budget blockbuster. 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 Con is On - A co-artist couple who owe money to a British gangster try to rectify the situation by flying to Las Angeles and plotting an elaborate jewel heist. However, the job turns out to be more complicated than anticipated. This US/UK co-production did not wow the press, failing to earn a positive review. They suggested that the great cast was wasted and complained that the screenplay made the characters so eccentric that they failed to be convincing and suggested that the movie tried far too hard to be outrageous. It stars Uma Thurman, Tim Roth, Maggie Q, Sophia Vergara, Alice Eve, Parker Posey and Stephen Fry,

Dream Big: Engineering Our World - Older children may be interested in this 42 minute IMAX film that is now premiering on home video. It details some ingenious engineering feats through the course of history from all over the world. This includes the Great Wall of China and several of the world's tallest buildings, along with advances in robotics, automobiles and other incredible advances. Write-ups were very positive about the short film. Everyone stated that it served as an excellent opportunity to inspire youngsters with its incredible imagery and positive message about changing the world for the better. The film is narrated by Jeff Bridges.

Happy End - The latest foreign-language art house effort from director Michael Haneke (*Amour*,

Funny Games

) is yet another dark drama. Set in Calais, France, this tale follows an upper class family living in a palatial estate. The story follows their devious history and petty squabbles unaware of the troubles of a camp settlement of migrants are facing only miles away. Notices were good, although not exceptional. A minority called it beautifully photographed but a bit listless and unfocused. More appreciated the excellent cast and attempts made to critique the lifestyle of the wealthy, even if this effort didn't match up to the filmmaker's best works. It features Isabelle Huppert, Jean-Louis Trintignant, Mathieu Kassovitz and Toby Jones.

I Am A Hero - A depressed Tokyo comic book artist witnesses a fatal car accident on his way

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home from work. When the deceased person at the scene gets up and walks away, he investigates and finds that a zombie epidemic has begun. This Japanese action/horror picture was made a few years ago to decent notices, but it only making its debut here now. Most critics wrote that while it has its slow sections and can be repetitive, there was attention to detail on the part of the characters, plenty of fun undead action on display and an attempt to be a little more than your run-of-the-mill zombie picture. The cast includes Yô Ôizumi and Masami Nagasawa.

Incident in a Ghostland - Also known simply as *Ghostland*, this horror picture involves a mother who inherits a house from her aunt. After she arrives to take possession, she and her infants come under attack from intruders. The story jumps 16 years as the family return to the locale and encounter more strange phenomena. Reaction towards the film was split with a few more negative notices than positive ones. Those who liked it said it was rough to watch but appreciated the attempts to spin genre tropes in a different direction. Pans stated it was nasty and sadistic and didn't see much depth. Crystal Reed, Mylene Farmer and Anastasia Phillips headline the feature.

Little Pink House - This independent drama is based on a true story. It involves a paramedic who divorces and moves to a small town, buying a cottage and painting it pink. Trouble finds her when pharmaceutical company Pfizer want the land and seem willing to press locals in order to obtain it. The woman leads the neighborhood as they takes on the corporation. Reviews were generally quite good for this effort. There were criticisms that while well intentioned it really felt like a TV-movie-of-the-week, but the majority complimented the performances and thought it told its story well. It stars Catherine Keener, Jeanne Tripplehorn, Colin Cunningham and Callum Keith Rennie.

Love After Love - When a family patriarch passes away, the remaining family members struggle with the loss and how to deal with the death. The mother attempts to date but finds her sons being critical of her choices while their personal lives suffer as they behave in an increasingly erratic manner. On the whole, critics really liked this drama. There were a few who stated that it left them a little cold, but the vast majority found it interesting, unsentimental and authentic in its messiness. It features Andie MacDowell, Chris O'Dowd, James Adomian and Juliet Rylance.

Operation Red Sea - This foreign-language action picture from China loosely recounts a military operation featuring the Naval Jialong Assault Team, a special 8-person unit tasked with undertaking risky missions. After terrorist attacks break out in the Arabian Peninsula, the group must rescue Chinese diplomats and citizens trapped in the line of fire. The movie was a massive hit in its homeland (worldwide, it is currently the 7th highest grossing film of 2018) and

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earned good reviews from the press here as well. They suggested it was a bit jingoistic, but that the action scenes were tense, harrowing and extraordinarily well shot. The cast includes Yi Zhang, Johnny Huang and Hai-Quing.

Ready Player One - Steven Spielberg directs this big-budget homage to all things 80s. In a dystopian future, the world is addicted to OASIS, an online virtual reality universe. After the creator of the domain dies, he sets up an elaborate quest; whomever completes it first takes control of the OASIS. A young teen and his friends attempt to solve the various riddles, coming face to face with corporate interests who want this universe for themselves. Write-up were positive overall. About a quarter of reviews thought it didn't deal with the concepts introduced in a meaningful way and had trouble engaging with the online world, but others thought it was a fun popcorn flick and enjoyed the 80s references. It stars Tye Sheridan, Olivia Cooke, Ben Mendelsohn, Mark Rylance and Simon Pegg.

Streets of Vengeance - This 80s-inspired low-budget action picture follows an ex-adult film star trying to get her life back on track. When she's attacked by members of a misogynistic cult known as The Sword, the lead decides to get payback. She and a group of friends team up to form a vigilante squad and get revenge on the gang. This independent title is making its debut on Blu-ray and DVD, so as of yet there aren't any reviews available. Apparently, the intent is to emulate B-movies of the 80s. Delawna McKinney, Anthony Lava To'ormata, Paige Le Ney, Daniel James Moody and Ginger Lynn headline the feature.

Sunset Society - This small horror movie boasts the late Lemmy Kilmister (of Motorhead fame) as its star. He plays a vampire living among a society of undead bloodsuckers. The queen of the group decides to help her boyfriend out by procuring him a new body. Many years later, she must prevent a video from being released that reveals their hidden society as well as protect her kind from a vigilante. There aren't many reviews up for this title, but the have appeared are critical. They suggest disparate footage from different time periods has been hastily cut together to try and create a story; it all comes across as a muddled hodgepodge. It features Phoebe Dollar, Aaron Groben, Dizzy Reed, Tracii Guns and Ron Jeremy.

BLASTS FROM THE PAST!

MVD has the curious oddity *Windrider* (1986) on Blu-ray. This Australian drama involves a professional windsurfer (Tom Burlinson) who falls for a rock star (a young Nicole Kidman). With the championships approaching, can he overcome adversity and the pair's rocky romance. This

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disc includes a new HD transfer, an audio commentary with the film's writer as well as director, all sorts of music promos featuring Kidman and other quirky bonuses. There's a change I'll be reviewing this disc shortly, so it comes to pass you'll be able to read all about it here.

Arrow Video are putting out a Blu-ray of *The Navigator: A Medieval Odyssey* (1988). Set during the Black Plague, this is a New Zealand/Australia drama about a group of monks who travel through time. The well-regarded film has been given a hi-def upgrade and arrives with a brand-new appreciation by film critic Nick Roddick (recorded exclusively for this release), a 1989 documentary profile of director Vincent Ward made for New Zealand television and a theatrical trailer. Sounds nifty.

Shout! have a couple of films from director John Carpenter being given the special Blu-ray treatment. The first Blu-ray is a Collector's Edition of *In the Mouth of Madness* (1994), an underrated creeper about a popular horror novelist whose books are beginning to drive people insane. This release includes a new 4K transfer of the film, a new audio commentary with John Carpenter and producer Sandy King, interviews and behind-the-scenes footage with the make-up effects team, an interview with actress Julie Carmen, an older commentary with Carpenter and the director of photography, featurettes as well as publicity materials.

They also a Blu-ray of *Memoirs of An Invisible Man* (1992). This comedy saw the horror director team up with Chevy Chase in the tale of a businessman turned invisible after falling asleep in a building that houses a scientific lab. The film has been given a new 2K transfer and arrives with vintage interviews with Carpenter, star Chase and co-lead Daryl Hannah. Behind-the-scenes footage, outtakes, a theatrical trailer and TV spots are also included.

LionsGate are also delivering a pair of genre films through their impressive Vestron line. The latest additions are *Beyond Re-Animator* (2003), the second sequel to the 1985 horror classic. It is not a classic, but fans can at least complete the trilogy in high-definition. The Blu-ray arrives with an audio commentary from director Brian Yuzna, new interviews with the filmmaker, star Jeffrey Combs, the film's composer (along with an isolated score track), a still gallery, vintage EPK, trailer and most importantly, the jaw-droppingly cheeseball dance video "Dr. Reanimator - Move Your Dead Bones". Reanimate your feet!

Based on the work of H.P. Lovecraft, *Dagon* (2001) is arriving on Blu-ray through the line as well. This horror release from Stuart Gordon (*Re-Animator*)

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) boasts a “restored and remastered” picture, It includes multiple audio commentaries, archival interviews with the cast and crew, trailers, stills, new discussions with Gordon as well as the producer and other extras. It has been a long time since I’ve seen this one and I’m looking forward to catching up with it in the future.

And there’s more. Criterion have a Blu-ray of *A Matter of Life and Death* (1946) from directors Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger. It’s about an RAF pilot who survives a miraculous jump from his plane, only to have otherworldly spirits arrive and tell him that they made an error and that he should have died. He has to argue for his right to stay alive. The movie has received a 4K transfer, a film scholar audio commentary, discussions with Martin Scorsese and editor Thelma Schoonmaker about the picture, a documentary on the film’s special effects, a restoration demonstration and an TV show episode from 1986 going over the career of Powell.

Kino Classics have a few older titles as well. They include the Burt Lancaster film-noir, *I Walk Alone* (1947), another film-noir called *A Strange Adventure* (1956) and the Christopher George thriller, *Tiger by the Tail* (1970).

And finally, Warner Archive are delivering the critically maligned superhero flick, *Supergirl* (1984) on Blu-ray. It follows Clark Kent’s cousin, who is also transported to earth find a Kryptonian power source and must do battle with a sinister occult priestess (played by Faye Dunaway). It’s extremely cheesy, but may provide some amusement for those who remember it back in the day. This release includes a new high definition version of the lengthier international cut of the film, as well as a second DVD with an even longer director’s cut. Long ago, a DVD of the feature had a director commentary, we’ll have to wait and see if it’s included with this release.

They company are also making made-to-order DVDs available for titles *The Flame and the Arrow* (1950) and *The Wreck of the Mary Deare* (1959).

YOU KNOW, FOR KIDS!

Unfortunately, it's a slow week for kids. Don't worry too much, there should be more coming next week.

ON THE TUBE!

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

American Masters: Ted Williams (PBS)

Gravity Falls: The Complete Series

Knott's Landing: Season 1 (Warner Archive check)

No Good Heroes (Science-fiction TV movie)

One Strange Rock (National Geographic)

Spiral: Season 6

When Calls the Heart: My Heart is Yours (Hallmark)

Wicked Tuna: Season 7 (National Geographic)

DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for July 27, 2018

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For the Sun