





Once again, it’s time for another look at highlights coming your way on Blu-ray and DVD. There are plenty of interesting releases arriving, including a huge box-office hit. 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!

Filmworker - Stanley Kubrick is considered one of cinema's greatest creators. This documentary goes behind the scenes to give credit to the filmmaker's right-hand man, Leon Vitali. After playing the role of Lord Bullingdon in *Barry Lyndon*, Vitali gave up his acting career to assist the director, working together for decades until Kubrick's passing. The movie chronicles their relationship. It received a lot of acclaim, with most calling it a fascinating look behind the scenes at its subject, capturing Vitali's devotion and skill in working with an obsessive and reclusive artist.

Hare Krishna! The Mantra, the Movement and the Swami Who Started It All - Srila Prabhupada is the focus of this documentary. It follows his arrival in the United States in the 1960s and how he built support and developed the Hare Krishna movement. The press wasn't particularly fond of this examination of his life. While a couple of reviewers thought it would appeal to followers, the majority said the movie comes across as little more than a feature-length commerical.

Hearts Beat Loud - In this comedy/drama, a widower decides to spend more quality time with his teenage daughter by starting a band with her. It goes well at first, but causes conflicts when the father starts taking the pursuit seriously and focusing on his own dreams, instead of facilitating those of his offspring. Notices were really strong for this independent feature — most thought it was a sweet and charming little picture buoyed by a likable cast. It stars Nick Offerman, Kiersey Clemons, Ted Danson, Sasha Lane, Blythe Danner and Toni Collette.

Hope Springs Eternal - This independent production involves a teenage girl who has been diagnosed with terminal cancer. She has completely accepted her fate, enjoying herself while preparing for the inevitable. However, the lead gets the shock of her life when the cancer goes into complete remission, leaving the protagonist confused about what to do and how her friends will react to her continued presence at school. Most of those who saw it liked it. There were a few who thought it had difficulty shifting tones, but most enjoyed the lead actress and thought it was an appealing coming-of-age tale. The cast includes Mia Rose Frampton, Stony Blyden and Juliette Angelo.

Ocean's Eight - This hit spin-off of the *Ocean's 11* series follows the sister of Danny Ocean. She recruits an all-female team to steal valuable jewels during the Met Gala in Manhattan. The movie generally received more positive than negative notices. A portion of viewers critiqued the film for being workmanlike and omitting any danger or surprises from the heist itself. However, more called it light and fun entertainment with a cast that appeared to be having a good time together. It stars Sandra Bullock, Cate Blanchett, Anne Hathaway, Helena Bonham Carter, Mindy Kaling, Rhianna, Sarah Paulson, Awkwafina, Richard Armitage and James Corden.

SuperFly - The 1972 Blaxploitation classic gets a redo in this modern take on the character. In this version, the drug-dealing protagonist yearns to get out of the business, but to do it, he must set up one last score. His plan requires him to double-cross his mentors, deal with cartels and not get caught by the fuzz. Reaction was split for this action redo. Roughly half commented that it a glossy redo that doesn't add anything to the character or match the original, while the others appreciated the style and energy on display, as well as the work of the lead actor. It features Trevor Jackson, Jason Mitchell, Michael Kenneth Williams, Lex Scott Davis and Jennifer Morrison.

Blasts from the Past!

For the past year, MVD's been putting out some interesting Blu-rays featuring cult genre films in the action and horror genres. Their new line MVD Marquee appears to be delivering bigger studio pictures. This week, the distributor has three titles of note. The first is a "Special Edition" of *Barbershop* (2002). The well-received comedy stars Ice Cube, Anthony Anderson, Cedric the Entertainer and many others. It follows the lives of workers and customers at a Chicago barbershop. The disc comes with numerous bonuses, including an audio commentary with the director, producers and writer.

They also have a "Special Edition" Blu-ray of *Barbershop 2: Back in Business* (2004). This follow-up details more comedic hi-jinx with Ice Cube and Cedric the Entertainer at the titular locale as they fight with a beauty shop next door operated by a rival (played by Queen Latifah). The release includes a director/producer commentary, a cast commentary led by Cedric the Entertainer, deleted scenes, outtakes, music videos, a behind-the-scenes photo gallery and multiple trailers.

Finally, you can also pick up the series spin-off, *Beauty Shop* (2005), starring Queen Latifah, Alicia Silverstone, Andie MacDowell, Alfre Woodard and Mena Suvari as the employees at the competing business. This Blu-ray includes director commentary on selected scenes, featurettes on the production, a gag reel and multiple trailers.

Shout! Factory has a couple of notable horror flicks. The first one, not to be confused with the Peter Jackson film of the same name, is *Brain Dead* (1990). This Roger Corman production is about a neurosurgeon asked to retrieve information from the brain of an asylum inmate. Along

the way, the doctor's own sanity is called into question. It's a well-regarded little B-picture and the distributor's given it a new 2K scan and a commentary with the movie's co-writer/director, along with deleted scenes and a trailer.

Shout! Also has *The Seventh Sign* (1988), which has been out-of-print for a long, long time. It's a supernatural thriller about a housewife (played by Demi Moore) who begins having apocalyptic visions. Soon, she's joined by a Vatican priest and the pair try to decipher her visions in order to save the world. Aside from finally being in high definition, this release includes new interviews with the director, writers and supporting cast members.

Criterion's delivering a Blu-ray of the French coming-of-age drama *Cold Water* (1994). The film has been given a 4K digital restoration with new subtitles supervised by the filmmaker, new interviews with the director and cinematographer, and a 1994 French television program about the movie.

Finally, Mill Creek's been putting out plenty of Benji movies on Blu-ray over the past year, each with various extra features. The latest title to get the treatment is *Benji: Off the Leash!* (2004), in which the mutt teams up with some outcasts (of both animal and human variety) to try and stick up for one another in the city. This disc arrives with a director/crew commentary, a behind-the-scenes short and a collection of memorable clips from five Benji flicks.

You Know, For Kids!

Here are some titles that may be of interest to kids.

Barbie: Dolphin Magic

The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That: Season 2, Volume 2

Scooby-Doo! and the Gourmet Ghost

SpongeBob SquarePants: The Legend of Boo-kini Bottom

On the Tube!

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

American Masters: Wyeth (PBS)

The Big Bang Theory: Season 11

The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That: Season 2, Volume 2

Chicago P.D.: Season 5

Family Pictures (1993 miniseries)

The Great British Baking Show: Season 5 (UK Season 3)

Law and Order: True Crime: The Menendez Murders

Modern Family: Season 9

NOVA: Animal Mummies (PBS)

Rescue Me: The Complete Series

Rolling Stones: Stories from the Edge (HBO documentary series)

Scorpion: The Final Season

Television's Lost Classics: Volume 1

Television's Lost Classics: Volume 2

This Is Us: Season 2

By Glenn Kay

For the Sun