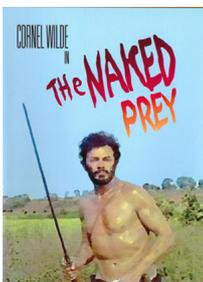


DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for Oct. 5, 2018

Written by Gallupsun Staff
Friday, 05 October 2018 13:43



Hello, it's time for another look at highlights coming your way on Blu-ray and DVD. It's a very busy week with plenty of releases in a variety of genres. So if you can't make it to the movies this week, be sure to give one of these titles a try!

Big New Releases!

The 12th Man - Based on a true story, this WWII drama made in Norway follows an English team of saboteurs who set out to fight Nazi forces in Scandinavia. When their boat is sunk, one man manages to get away. However, he is forced to journey to safety through the rugged mountainous wilderness with enemy soldiers on his tail. Reviews for this picture were quite strong. A few complained that it was a bit overdrawn and suffered from a weak opening act, but the vast majority called the movie a dynamic, thrilling and beautifully shot survival story.

Blood Fest - The next time you head out to a film festival, make sure you know exactly what you've signed up for. In this horror-comedy, a bunch of genre fans arrive for some screenings, only to discover that the host/programmer has a diabolical game in store for his movie-obsessed attendees. This independent feature earned decent notices. Some did criticize the picture for switching tones too much and overdoing it with movie references. However, more complimented it as a flawed but amusing, gory and spirited twist on the genre. The cast includes Robbie Kay, Jacob Batalon, Seychelle Gabriel, Tate Donovan and Zachary Levi.

Born Racer - This documentary goes inside the world of IndyCar racers. Apparently, the filmmakers have been given unprecedented access to the teams and drivers, focusing their cameras on four-time IndyCar world champion Scott Dixon and the Ganassi racing team. Viewers follow along behind the scenes as decisions and strategies are discussed, as well as interviews that attempt to show what compels the subject to compete in such a dangerous sport.

Breath - Set in the 1970s, this Australian coming-of-age drama follows two teenagers looking for adventure. They befriend an eccentric older man on the western coast who begins to teach them to surf. The movie follows the group as they take to the water and experience the adrenaline rush of riding a wave. Reaction to this picture was generally positive. A few complained that it was too long and low-key for their liking, yet far more appreciated the lack of sentiment, found the sea footage stunning and the performances strong. It features Samson Coulter, Ben Spence, Simon Baker (who also directed the picture), Elizabeth Debicki and Richard Roxburgh.

The Catcher Was a Spy - Here's another WWII drama with ties to a real occurrence. This time, the story follows a major league baseball player of Jewish descent who is also gay. He's recruited by the U.S. government to work as a spy. The new agent is sent behind enemy lines to stop a German scientist from creating the atomic bomb. Alas, this title didn't quite hit the target for reviewers. There were a few who believed that it worked reasonably well as a character study. However, the consensus was that the film lacked suspense and could have delved even deeper into the main character's psyche. It stars Paul Rudd, Mark Strong, Sienna

Miller, Jeff Daniels, Guy Pearce and Paul Giamatti.

Feral - The zombie genre gets another addition with this tale of a woman whose best friend has just been infected by a virus while camping. Knowing it will turn the person into a cannibal maniac, the lead and friends must struggle with what to do, wondering whether or not they should simply put the victim out of her misery. Reaction to the indie film was fairly middling, with slightly more negative write-ups than positive ones. Some thought that it was well-acted and told its story efficiently, but more criticized the plot as being strictly by-the-numbers, following every genre trope and showing viewers little that was new.

The First Purge - The fourth entry in the popular horror series *The Purge* is a prequel that details the origins of the night of terror and the extremist government members that instituted it. As a test, the first event is scheduled in one location and the plot details a group of participants paid to take part. Critics were split on the latest entry in this franchise. About half thought that the movie started well but faded quickly and didn't deal with its timely themes as well as it could have. The remainder found the action to be effective, believed it had more ideas than many genre films and said that it worked well enough as a gritty B movie.

Leave No Trace - A father and daughter spend years living completely off the grid in the wilderness outside Portland, Ore. After a series of unfortunate events, they are found by authorities and eventually put into social services. Naturally, the experience doesn't agree with them; the pair escapes and attempt to find freedom outside society. This independent drama has not received a single negative review as of this writing. The film stars Ben Foster, Thomasin McKenzie, Jeff Korber and Dale Dickey.

The Misandrists - An injured man on the run from the police stumbles onto the site of a school for wayward girls. There, he befriends two students who decide to hide him from the authorities and other members of their clique. It isn't long before the wounded gent discovers that not only is the locale cut-off from society, but is home to members of a quasi-terrorist Female Liberation Army. Response was all over the place for this quirky effort, although the consensus was positive. A few called it messily constructed and thought it failed to emulate the style of John Waters, but more found it campy and utterly unique, mixing multiple genres and a bit of social commentary in a fascinating way.

Sicario: Day of the Soldado - This sequel to the Oscar-nominated *Sicario* follows one of the most notable characters from the original film as he ventures further into the criminal underworld

of drug-dealers and human traffickers. When U.S. federal agents assign him to escalate a war between different criminal factions, he complies but begins to question the job when he and a young girl are deemed expendable. The film earned good, but not great write-ups from critics. All said it paled in. It stars Benicio Del Toro, Josh Brolin, Isabela Moner and Jeffrey Donovan.

Strangers on the Earth - This documentary follows a cellist who decides to take part in one of Europe's most popular religious pilgrimages, a hike to Camino de Santiago, where it is believed the remains of St. James are buried. Walking with his instrument, he encounters others on the same path. He plays for them and they discuss the reasons being their meditative trip of spiritual enlightenment. Notices were good for the feature. Some thought that it was uneven and didn't do a great job of connecting the participants, but more described it as an interesting trek featuring some lovely music.

Tales from the Hood 2 - *Tales from the Hood* was a cult urban horror anthology made back in 1995. Twenty-three years later, a sequel from the same writer/director has been concocted, featuring more terrifying stories with a socio-political slant. The segments feature demonic dolls, possessed psychics, ghosts and more monsters. This feature is debuting on disc, so there aren't many reviews yet as to how this effort compares to the original. However, the ones that have popped up have been complimentary, calling it a fun horror B-movie. It stars Keith David, Kedrick Brown, Alicia Davis Johnson and Creighton Thomas.

Three Identical Strangers - Chronicling a real story from the 1980s, this wildly successful documentary tells the true story of three adopted identical triplets who accidentally discover one another as college students. Initially, the siblings share joy and excitement about being reunited. However, as their parents attempt to make sense out of what the situation, they discover strange and dark secrets about how and why the kids were separated. Critics praised the doc. Admittedly, some felt that it could have delved further under the surface and didn't clearly explain the motivations of certain parties, but almost all found it well-made with plenty of shocking and surprising twists and turns.

Blasts from the Past!

It isn't as busy this week for older films receiving a Blu-ray upgrade, but the ones that are arriving are pretty great. Criterion is re-releasing *Ace in the Hole* (1951). This drama from Billy Wilder (*Sunset Boulevard*, *Some Like it Hot*) ranks as one of the best features ever made, chronicling the efforts of a reporter (Kirk Douglas) trying to cover the story of a man trapped in a cave.

The distributor's also delivering *The Naked Prey* (1965) on Blu-ray. The film is about a group of ivory hunters who are caught by locals and forced to become the targets of the local's hunting party. It has been given a high-definition digital transfer, a film scholar commentary, a recording of a 1913 report (read by Paul Giamatti) that served as the inspiration for the film, original soundtrack cues and the trailer.

Kino has a trio of fascinating releases as well, the first two being huge cult hits that originally aired on television. *The Night Stalker* (1972) stars Darren McGavin as Kolchak, a Las Vegas reporter investigating a series of murders. He soon discovers vampires are responsible, leading the journalist into crime investigations involving various supernatural beasts. They also have the follow-up, *The Night Strangler* (1973), which involves a sinister alchemist.

You Know, For Kids!

There's plenty available for kids too. Here are the highlights.

Courage the Cowardly Dog: The Compete Series (Cartoon Network)

DC SuperHero Girls: Super-Villain High/Brian Drain

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DC SuperHero Girls: Legends of Atlantis

DC SuperHero Girls: Triple Feature

Gumby (The 1980s Series): Vol. 1

Monster Family

Nature Cat: Winter Dance Party (PBS)

Octonauts: Season 2

Pinkalicious & Peterrific: Best Pink Present (PBS)

Scooby-Doo! and the Haunted House (3 Episode Collection)

Scooby-Doo! and the Skeletons (3 Episode Collection)

Super Why?: The Adventures of Little Bo Peep and Her Sheep

On the Tube!

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

Barry: Season 1

The Beverly Hillbillies: Season 5

Bramble House Christmas (Hallmark TV-movie)

Christmas at Holly Lodge (Hallmark TV-movie)

Christmas Next Door (Hallmark TV-movie)

Debbie Macomber's Dashing Through the Snow (Hallmark TV-movie)

Engaging Father Christmas (Hallmark TV-movie)

Good Witch: Season 4

Karen Kingsbury's Maggie's Christmas Miracle (Hallmark TV-movie)

The Love Boat: Season 4, Vol. 1

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The Love Boat: Season 4, Vol. 2

Mister Rogers: It's You I Like (PBS)

The Originals: Season 5

The Resident: Season 1

Saved by the Bell: The Complete Series

Shetland: Season 4

Soul Food: The Complete Series

Vikings: Season 5, Vol. 1

Wonders of Mexico (PBS)

By Glenn Kay
For the Sun