

DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for June 21, 2019

Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
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Hello once again, and welcome to another look at highlights arriving on Blu-ray and DVD. It's another busy week with some big movies and interesting independent fare to check out. 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 Beach Bum - This stoner comedy follows a strange man living a nomadic and hedonistic lifestyle in the Florida Keys. After a car accident leaves him a widower, the family estate falls into the hands of his estranged daughter, who forces her dad to try and complete his novel, before allowing the funds to be released back to him. This project split critics. More than half commented that while they didn't necessarily want to follow in the character's footsteps, they found the film funny and thought it did a good job of taking aim at the American way of life. It stars Matthew McConaughey, Snoop Dogg, Isla Fisher, Martin Lawrence, Zac Efron and Jonah Hill.

The Crest - Two cousins decide to head to their ancestral home in this documentary, only to discover that the past holds surprising ties to their current lives. The two men share a love of surfing and sea, and when they arrive at an island off the west coast of Ireland, they learn more about their family history. Most notably, the subjects discover that they are direct descendants of an Irish king known for surfing the waves around his Irish home. The information both surprises and forms a connection between their lives and those of their ancestors. This feature has played at film festivals to decent response, but seems to be making its debut on disc, so there aren't any detailed reviews available for it yet.

Crypto - An ex-Wall Street banker moves back to his hometown, takes a job in law enforcement, and is recruited to help investigate a cryptocurrency ring. Unfortunately, the case ends up causing both professional and very personal complications as drama unfolds in his household and acquaintances become suspects. Alas, very few members of the press liked what they saw. One well-known critic remarked that he enjoyed it *because* of its enormous and baffling plot holes. The movie features Luke Hemsworth, Beau Knapp, Alexis Bledel, Vincent Kartheiser and Kurt Russell.

Disappearance - A writer looking for a new concept for a thriller sails with his wife on their yacht and agrees when his spouse suggests that they allow an attractive young waitress to stay with them. He begins flirting with the guest and the wife becomes frustrated. When the author disappears, a police investigator arrives to interview the two women and the crew, in the hopes

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of discovering exactly what happened. This picture is debuting on disc and through streaming platforms and has not been shown to anyone yet. The cast includes Brian Thompson, Reggie Lee, Cortney Palm, Matthew Marsden and Jemma Dallender.

Hale County This Morning, This Evening - This documentary follows the lives of two young African-American men in rural Alabama over the course of five years. Over this period of time, viewers see the two different paths these men take. One heads off to college in hopes of starting a career, while the other becomes a father and attempts to raise his boy in a supportive and encouraging environment. Viewers see the many highs and lows experienced by both figures. Reviews for the film were excellent. Many critics called it moving and lyrical, showing a great deal of beauty in the normally mundane facets of life.

Hotel Mumbai - In 2008, a group of heavily-armed terrorists descended on the famous Taj Hotel in Mumbai, India. This drama recreates the harrowing event. The story follows specific members of the staff who decide to stay during the ordeal and protect their guests and those who have taken refuge at the location, all at the risk of losing their own lives. Write-ups for this film were generally strong. A small group found the events depicted too disturbing and a few even described the feature as exploitative.

However, the majority suggested that the movie expertly created a palpable sense of unease and tension that was equal parts distressing and heartbreaking. They also wrote that the feature was difficult to forget. It features Dev Patel, Armie Hammer, Nazanin Boniadi, Jason Isaacs and Angus McLaren.

The Nightmare Gallery - An anthropology professor is shocked to discover that her best student has disappeared as this horror flick opens. Some three years later and with the mystery still unsolved, a package from the vanished person arrives in the mail. The lead finds paranormal artifacts within the parcel, which lead her to try to learn what happened. Apparently, her journey takes her through dimensional portals to a strange and nightmarish new environment. There are no reviews yet for this title. Amber Benson, Kevin Chamberlin, and Mat Devine headline the film.

Public Figure - This little documentary takes a close look at social media and the influence (both good and bad) that the technology may be having on our daily lives. Not only does it follow cases of persons who are addicted to various programs and platforms, but also speaks with social media influencers and details their impact on various social causes currently in the

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spotlight. The film also claims to explore the ways in which those in the public eye deal with their fame and various attacks from those who dislike their postings. Once again, this picture is making its premiere on disc, so those curious will just have to take a chance on it without knowing any specifics.

Run the Race - Two athletic brothers in high school have to deal with a series of unfortunate events over the course of their school year. First, their mother passes away and then their father abandons them. They both focus on sports in hopes of finding success. When one of them suffers a devastating injury, the other sibling tries to succeed in order to earn them both a better future. This faith-based film got a mixed reception from the press. The cast includes Mykelti Williamson, Frances Fisher, Kristoffer Polaha, Tanner Struebing and Mario Van Peebles.

Swing Kids - Set in the early 1950s against the backdrop of the Korean War, this foreign-language musical drama is a biopic that follows a North Korean soldier and professional tap dancer held captive in a prison camp. To survive the ordeal, the captive decides to join a dance group and try to bridge the conflicts between various countries. Critics appear to like what they saw overall. While a percentage did complain that the tonal shifts between dance numbers and horrors of war didn't gel, more complimented the attempts to merge anachronistic elements as appropriate given the subject matter, and thought that viewers were effectively pulled between happiness and tears as the film progressed. Kyung-soo Do, Park Hye-su and Jared Grimes take on the lead roles.

Under the Silver Lake - A Los Angeles man obsessed with conspiracy theories encounters a young woman swimming in the pool of his apartment complex. When she vanishes and news reports suggest that a killer is on the loose, the lead takes it upon himself to try to save her. He soon begins to suspect that he may be uncovering a grand conspiracy that will shock the world. Reaction towards this indie neo-noir feature was all over the place. It stars Andrew Garfield, Riley Keough, Topher Grace and Patrick Fischler.

Us - The latest from writer/director Jordan Peele (*Get Out*) tells the story of a family who heads out to their vacation home in Santa Cruz. They endure a series of terrifying events after psychotic doppelgängers appear and attempt to take their places. While the clan fights them off and protects themselves, the mother recalls events in her past that may have some connection to the attacks. The press was very positive about this horror picture. A small number of reviews suggested that while chilling, not all of the story made sense, and suggested that it wasn't quite as effective as the filmmaker's previous work.

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However, most called it unsettling and thought that there were plenty of jolts and much allegorical meaning to process. The movie feature Lupita Nyong'o, Winston Duke, Elisabeth Moss, Tim Heidecker, Shahadi Wright Joseph and Evan Alax.

Wonder Park - This animated family film follows a young girl who loves amusement parks. When she's forced to deal with her mother's sudden illness, the child runs away into the forest and discovers her imaginary world of rides and attractions. Unfortunately, it has fallen into disrepair, so the protagonist decides to help the many mascots restore the theme park to its former glory. Reviewers didn't take well to this effort. The voice-cast includes Jennifer Garner, Matthew Broderick, John Oliver, Mila Kunis, Kenan Thompson, Ken Jeong and Brianna Denski.

Blasts from the Past!

It's a very, very busy week for classic titles getting Blu-ray upgrades. The first Blu-ray of note is from Arrow Academy, and it's for the Carol Reed (*The Third Man*) thriller, *The Running Man* (1963). Not to be confused with the Arnold Schwarzenegger flick of the same name, this effort is about a wife who helps her husband fake his own death to collect insurance money. But when they vacation to Spain, the leads encounter the very insurance agent that they duped.

It's an interesting little flick, and the Blu-ray arrives with a 2K restoration of the picture and several bonuses, including a film historian commentary, a series of interviews with crew members about the production, a 45-minute audio interview with co-star Lee Remick about her career, an image gallery and plenty of written material detailing various aspects of the feature.

Shout! Factory has some equally intriguing Blu-rays. They include the fun sci-fi horror picture, *The Monolith Monsters* (1957). This one boasts an unusually memorable concept of a rock-like substance that falls from space. When water hits it, it grows tall spires and falls over, spreading across the landscape.

The townspeople are then forced to deal with this mysterious threat. It's a good and unique movie, and besides the cleaned up picture, the Blu-ray also includes several extras. There's a new film historian audio commentary, a second track with Professor of Film Studies Mark Jancovich, as well as publicity materials.

They also have the box set *Universal Horror Collection: Volume 1 - The Black Cat* (1934), *The Raven* (1935), *The Invisible Ray* (1936) and *Black Friday* (1940). As you might have imagined, the release contains four classic flicks from Universal's horror vaults starring the likes of Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi. The bonuses on the set are too lengthy to divulge here, but most of the titles have been given new 2K scans, all of the films come with at least one audio commentary, documentaries on the productions, audio interviews, still galleries and trailers.

Kino has a giant selection of titles hitting Blu-ray as well. They include the Jack Nicholson drama, *The Border* (1982), which includes a film critic commentary and trailer. You can also pick up the William Friedkin heist caper, *The Brink's Job* (1978). This well regarded effort stars Peter Falk, Peter Boyle, Paul Sorvino and Gena Rowlands and includes the very same extras as described in the previous title.

The same company is also releasing the highbrow arthouse effort, *Détective* (1985) from filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard. It has been described as a deconstruction of film noir and arrives with a selected scene commentary from a programmer for the Toronto International Film Festival. Also from the director is *First Name: Carmen* (1983), a reinvention of the famous opera. This release includes another short film from Godard called *Changer d'image* (1982), as well as movie historian commentaries for both programs, trailers and a booklet essay on the production. And there's another French film, *Hélas pour moi* (1993) aka *Oh, Woe Is Me*, which star Gerard Depardieu and includes similar additional features.

The civil rights drama *Mississippi Burning* (1988) is also getting some attention from Kino. They're presenting a Special Edition Blu-ray of the Best Cinematography Oscar-winner which includes a new 4K scan from the original camera negative. Bonuses include an audio commentary with director Alan Parker (*Bugsy Malone*,

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Midnight Express

,
Pink Floyd: The Wall

,
Angel Heart

,
The Commitments

) and the theatrical trailer.

If mysteries are more to your liking, then you may enjoy the Blu-ray of Agatha Christie's *Ordeal by Innocence* (1984). It follows a man who sets out to visit his friend in England and return a notebook left behind. When he discovers that his pal has been framed for murder and killed, he sets out to uncover the truth. It stars Donald Sutherland, Christopher Plummer, Ian McShane and Faye Dunaway.

The next Blu-ray may be my most anticipated release of the week. The Canadian thriller *The Silent Partner* (1978) stars Christopher Plummer as a psychotic criminal who attempts to rob a bank in downtown Toronto over the Christmas holidays. Elliott Gould plays a teller who impulsively takes advantage of the hold-up situation, switching the bags and taking the money for himself. It all results in a battle of wits between the two men. The movie was written by Curtis Hanson (*L.A. Confidential*) and cleverly delves into how, under the right circumstances, anyone has the capacity to be a criminal. For its Blu-ray debut, this release contains an interview with co-star Elliott Gould (who is a big fan of the movie), a film historian audio commentary, and a radio spot. Can't wait to pick it up!

And Kino is also releasing a Blu-ray of the crime/thriller, *Slayground* (1983). This disc comes with an interview with star Peter Coyote and a trailer.

But that's not all. Also coming your way is a Blu-ray from the Warner Archive collection. This one is for the coming-of-age drama, *Corvette Summer* (1978), which has developed something of a cult following over the years. It stars Mark Hamill (fresh off of his stint in the original *Star Wars*) as a high school student whose car is stolen. He hitches a ride and teams up with a prostitute, played by Annie Potts; together, they head for Las Vegas and try to recover the stolen goods.

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On a slightly classier note, Criterion has a pair of French films hitting Blu-ray. The first is *La vie de Jesus* (1997), a look at an aimless young man with epilepsy trying to make ends meet. This film has been given a 4K digital restoration approved by director Bruno Dumont, which includes an interview with the filmmaker, a conversation with him about the movie recorded in 2014 and excerpts from two 1997 episodes of a French TV-program dealing with the movie. They're also putting out a Blu-ray of *L'Humanité* (1999), another feature from Dumont. This movie has also been given a 4K digital remaster and comes with a new director interview, a conversation between the figure and a film critic, a segment about the movie from a 2000 French program, a news interview dating back to 1999 and a trailer.

Cohen Media has picked up the rights to the Boston newspaper drama, *Between the Lines* (1977) and is releasing it on Blu-ray. This one stars John Heard, Lindsay Crouse and Jeff Goldblum, and the disc itself includes a new interview with director Joan Micklin Silver (*Hester Street*

, *Crossing Delancey*), the original trailer and a 2018 re-release trailer.

You Know, For Kids!

Here are some titles that may appeal to younger audiences.

Father's Day (Direct-to-disc animated film)

Popeye the Sailor: The 1940s, Volume 2 (Warner Archive)

On the Tube!

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

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Eat, Pray, Love (Hallmark TV-movie)

Killing Eve: Season 2

Last of the Summer Wine: Vintage 2010

Legendary Catch (National Geographic)

Loud Krazy Love (TV-documentary about band KoRn)

Mystery Science Theater 3000: Vol. XI (*Ring of Terror*, *Indestructible Man*, *Tormented*, *Horrors of Spider Island*)

NATURE: The Egg: Life's Perfect Invention (PBS)

Ozone Hole: How We Saved the Planet (PBS)

Patrick Melrose (Showtime Mini-series)

Suits: Season 8

Swingtown: Season 1

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Will & Grace - The Revival: Season 2

L'humanite, Warner Archive, Corvette Summer, Cohen Media, Between the Lines,

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