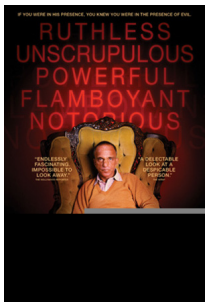

FROM THE STUDIO THAT BROUGHT YOU


"THE GREATEST ROLE OF SIENNA MILLER'S CAREER — SHE RISES TO THE OCCASION, AND NAILS IT."
"AN ELECTRIFYING PERFORMANCE."
MANCHESTER BY THE SEA
SIENNA MILLER
AMERICAN WOMAN
NEVER LOSE HOPE.

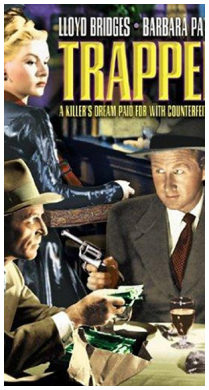

WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU


BEN KINGSLEY MONICA BELLUCCI
SPIDER IN THE WEB
ITAY TIRAN


WESTERN STARS
OCTOBER 25


RUTHLESS
UNSCRUPULOUS
POWERFUL
FLAMBOYANT


A HAIR RAISING COMEDY!
The Peanut Butter
SOLUTION


LLOYD BRIDGES
TRAPPE

Hello and welcome to another look at highlights arriving on Blu-ray and DVD. It's another jam-packed edition filled with releases in a wide 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!

Abominable - A teenager finds an escaped Yeti on the rooftop of her Shanghai apartment and decides to help get him home in this animated family film. She and her friends set off to the Himalayas to find his family, attracting the attention of several parties desperate to recapture this rare and mythic creature. Reviews were generally good for this movie. A percentage of critics did complain that the script played it too safe with the story and felt the end results were a little bland.

However, more thought it was gorgeously animated and believed that young kids would be impressed. The voice cast includes Chloe Bennett, Eddie Izzard, Sarah Paulson, Tsai Chin, Tenzing Norgay Trainor and Albert Tsai.

Acceleration - In this low-budget action thriller, a Los Angeles mob boss is double-crossed by his most trusted agent. He vows to get revenge on her and takes the woman's son hostage. The villain forces his ex-agent to complete a series of violent and dangerous tasks within a single night in order to make amends for her disobedience. Of course, the gangster doesn't take this mother's anger and desperation into account, leading to a climactic showdown between the two parties.

This effort is headed straight-to-DVD and so there aren't any write-ups available. Interested viewers would be wise to find a way to rent the feature before purchasing it. The cast includes Natalie Burn, Sean Patrick Flanery, Dolph Lundgren and Danny Trejo.

Ad Astra - An astronaut is tasked with a dangerous mission to the outer reaches of the solar system to find his father who disappeared in space some 30 years earlier. He learns from officials that his missing dad may have gone mad and that the doomed expedition now threatens the safety of the entire universe. Overall, the press was quite taken by this introspective sci-fi adventure. While a small group did critique the movie for being slow-moving and having an icy, un-emotive hero, the majority complimented the performances and attention to character, also remarking that the production design and visuals were incredible. It stars Brad Pitt, Tommy Lee Jones, Ruth Negga, Liv Tyler, Donald Sutherland and Loren Dean.

American Woman - Told over the course of 11 years, this independent drama follows a mother whose teenage daughter suddenly disappears and leaves her alone to raise a grandson. The plot shows the stress and strain as the protagonist continues on without her offspring, as well as what follows when the truth about what happened is finally revealed. Notices were positive for this effort. A tiny contingent appreciated the lead performance, but thought the screenplay needed work and found that it was overloading on angst.

Still, most were blown away by the work of the star and called the movie a compelling drama that keeps your attention throughout. It features Sienna Miller, Christina Hendricks, Aaron Paul, Will Sasso, Amy Madigan and Sky Ferreira.

Black Spruce - Also known as *Through Black Spruce*, this Canadian independent drama tells the tale of the disappearance of a Cree teenager from a Northern Ontario town. Her family is traumatized by the event, inspiring the sister of the vanished person to set out to find her lost sibling. The trail leads to a boyfriend living in south Toronto, and his criminal entourage. Reaction towards this effort was mixed.

Some called the film gritty and admired its focus on the characters over the crime itself. Just as many were frustrated by this approach and didn't feel that they got the answers they wanted to the story's central mystery. Tanaya Beatty, Brandon Oakes, Kiowa Gordon, Graham Greene and Tantoo Cardinal headline the feature.

Downton Abbey - The hugely popular period British television series gets the big screen treatment in this follow-up that details a new story involving the Crawley family and their staff. It starts with an announcement that the King and Queen will be arriving at the family estate and follows as arrangements are made to host royalty and see that everything goes smoothly. Of course, complications arise over duties and the safety of their guests. Response was upbeat towards this feature.

While a tiny faction suggested that it played like an extended episode of the TV show, far more were happy to see these characters return and wrote that the grand scale and new story made an impression. The cast includes Hugh Bonneville, Maggie Smith, Michelle Dockery, Laura Carmichael, Jim Carter, and well, almost all of the show's other cast members.

Ever After - This German horror picture is set a couple of years after the spread of a zombie epidemic. When two survivors in one city become fearful after an outbreak occurs near them, they decide to travel to another community thought to be safer. Of course, it's a harrowing journey that takes them into the Black Forest, where they must rely on nature to survive and come to grips with their own pasts. Known as *Endzeit* in its homeland, most of the press found this to be a decent entry in the genre.

One or two didn't think it delivered the expected chills, but far more complimented the performances and thought it provided enough interesting arthouse twists on the zombie formula to make it worthwhile. Gro Swantje Kohlhof, Maja Lehrer and Trine Dyrholm play the lead roles.

Feast of the Seven Fishes - An Italian family comes together and preps a celebratory Christmas feast in this indie drama/comedy/romance. All of the clan members have issues to overcome. In particular, the lead, who wonders if he'll ever find love. He perks up with the arrival of his cousin's friend, but realizes he'll have to compete with other shindig attendees if he wants to win her heart. This small picture has played various film festivals and received solid write-ups… most are complimentary, in fact.

One or two reviewers wrote that the movie was sincere, but predictable. Still, almost all others have suggested that the cast is incredibly likable and the movie is an enjoyable little holiday flick. It stars Skyler Gisondo, Madison Iseman, Josh Helman and Joe Pantoliano.

In God I Trust - Here's another little independent production arriving on Blu-ray and DVD. Little is known about it and the box synopsis is short and simple; redemption, violence and faith define a young black man, a reckless white nationalist, and a pair of traveling vacationers during a random encounter in northern Idaho. The movie has played at several film festivals across North America and Europe, receiving a few awards and honors along the way. Alas, it appears to be making its wide release debut on disc, so there aren't many reviews floating around just yet. Curious parties will just have to take a chance on it. The cast includes Marc Senior, John Cassini, Steven Roberts, Bilal and Melissa Roxburgh.

Overcomer - When a manufacturing plant closes down in a small town, many residents decide to pack up and leave the area. This story follows the coach of the successful high school basketball team. With the local talent pool drained and his job in jeopardy, the protagonist decides to coach cross-country, meeting an aspiring athlete with natural talent and ultimately training her. This faith-based drama split the press.

About half of the reviews noted that it was sweet and thought it would appeal to its target demographic. Just as many stated that the picture lacked subtlety and came across as a corny and at times sermonizing endeavor. If features Alex Kendrick, Priscilla C. Shirer, Shari Rigby and Ben Davies.

Rambo: Last Blood - The fifth entry in the *Rambo* series finds the character attempting to live a quiet life on a farm with an adopted family. When his teenage niece decides to visit her father in Mexico and discovers that he is part of a drug cartel operation, she is taken and sold by human traffickers. Naturally, Rambo decides to head down, free her and wipe out those responsible. The latest entry in this franchise wasn't as well-received as earlier installments.

A few admired the 73-year-old star for continuing to flex his muscles onscreen and called the film a fun B-movie. However, most thought the heavy tone dragged down proceedings and mentioned the picture resorts to some ill-advised and ugly stereotypes. It also features Paz Vega, Sergio Peris-Mencheta, Adriana Barraza and Yvette Monreal.

The Road to Edmond - Here's another faith-based picture that has been described as a road-movie. A new pastor who decides to support a gay member of his youth group is sent away for a week by his disapproving superiors. He encounters and decides to ride along with a

driver heading home to bury his recently deceased dad (who happens to be in the vehicle). Together, the pair discuss various aspects of theology and religion.

This is an independently made, low-budget effort that is debuting on disc, so there currently aren't many write-ups. The few that have appeared online say that while the movie is heavy on dialogue and has some awkward sections, it also presents some progressive ideas to churchgoers. Nathanael Welch and Tripp Fuller headline the feature.

Spider in the Web - An aging spy takes on one last mission and investigates the activities of a company believed to be selling chemical weapons. A mysterious woman enters his life and the lead begins to question the reports that have been sent his way. When a young agent is sent to tail him, the spy is forced into determining who is actually telling the truth. This suspense picture earned reasonable reviews from the press.

Some commented that the movie was dialogue-heavy and lacked the necessary thrills, but most commented that while it was no masterpiece, this was a well-acted feature that attempted to emulate the style of a John Le Carré tale. It stars Ben Kingsley, Monica Bellucci, Itay Tiran and Hilde Van Mieghem.

Trick - This horror picture begins with a masked killer massacring his classmates at a Halloween costume party. Assumed dead, the mysterious figure reappears over the following years, leaving more victims behind. As the holiday approaches once again, the cop who thought he had shot the original assailant becomes obsessed with stopping the rampage and readies himself for another night of terror. Word from reviewers on this effort has been mixed-negative.

While a few concluded that it was a fast-paced and fun genre picture, more mentioned that it didn't make the most of its concept and suggested the script would have benefited from more cutting humor. The cast includes Omar Epps, Vanessa Aspillaga, Jamie Kennedy and Tom Atkins.

Western Stars - Bruce Springsteen is the subject of this music documentary. Specifically, his recent album *Western Stars*, which is the 19th studio record in his catalog and one of his most personal. The feature includes the artist performing the songs live, and is accompanied by archival footage of Springsteen, as well as his own narration about the meanings contained. One might think of it as a cinematic version of the album.

Reaction was very positive toward this endeavor. A small group suggested that while they were fans of the Boss, they weren't sure if this approach really worked. However, the overall consensus was that the music was great and the movie felt especially intimate, bringing fans closer than ever before to the artist.

Where's My Roy Cohn? - This documentary details the life of nasty master manipulator, Roy Cohn. Cohn was a lawyer who made a name for himself acting as counsel and creating demagogues of figures like Joseph McCarthy and later, Rupert Murdoch and Donald Trump. The film gives viewers a look at how he has helped influence the public, leading to the current and unsettling state of affairs in the United States. Reviewers were impressed by the non-fiction feature.

A small group complained that other than providing an overview of the man's life and disturbing actions, it didn't end up offering any solutions. Still, most thought it was a frightening and unsettling portrait of a malicious personality.

Blasts from the Past!

Holy cow, there are a lot of older features getting a high definition upgrade. Arrow Video is releasing *The Complete Sartana* (1968 -1970) Blu-ray box set, containing 5 movies featuring the character. The titles included are *If You Meet Sartana...Pray for Your Death*

,
I Am Sartana, Your Angel of Death

,
Sartana's Here...Trade Your Pistol for a Coffin

,
Have a Good Funeral My Friend...Sartana Will Pay

and
Light the Fuse...Sartana is Coming
. These were Italian westerns made on the heels of the Man with No Name series, featuring a similar character. They've been given 2K restorations and come with multiple commentaries from film historians and western experts.

Hopefully they'll go over who thought up the great titles for these pictures. You'll also get interviews with some members of the cast and crew, as well as promotional image from the films.

They also have *Female Prisoner Scorpion: The Complete Collection* (1972 - 1973). The Blu-ray set features 4 Japanese movies about a woman who seeks revenge after being unjustly locked away by authorities. You'll see her taking bad guys down in
Female Prisoner #701: Scorpion
,
Female Prisoner Scorpion: Jailhouse 41
,
Female Prisoner Scorpion: Beast Stable
and
Female Prisoner Scorpion: #701's Grudge Song
. The collection also includes critic appreciations of the films, talks with crew members and trailers for the films.

MVD Visual is releasing a couple of crime dramas on Blu-ray. The first is *A Guide to Recognizing Your Saints*
(2006) through their Marquee Line. This drama features a great cast that includes Robert Downey Jr., Shia LaBeouf, Chazz Palminteri, Dianne Weist, Channing Tatum and Rosario Dawson. They also have another all-star feature in
Shade
(2003), which features Stuart Townsend, Thandie Newton, Gabriel Byrne, Jamie Foxx, Melanie Griffith and Sylvester Stallone in supporting roles.

Shout! is really delivering the horror movie goods this week. The first Blu-ray is for the Bela Lugosi chiller, *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1932). It's based upon the Edgar Allan Poe story and arrives with two separate film historian commentaries, as well as a trailer and still gallery.

The second is a Collector's Edition Blu-ray of the Stephen King werewolf pic, *Silver Bullet* (1985). It's about a little kid and his sister who suspect that a monster is responsible for a series of monthly murders in their community. The siblings are ultimately targeted by a werewolf and do their best to survive its wrath. The movie arrives with a new producer commentary, some recent interviews with the editor and a cast member.

It also includes an interview with actor Everett McGill, a featurette on the make-up effects, an archived audio commentary with the director and plenty of publicity materials.

If Hammer Films is more to your liking, you can now pick up a Blu-ray of their final production, *To the Devil a Daughter* (1976). Influenced by *The Omen*, this picture is about an excommunicated priest and Satanist who are attempting to use a young girl as the representative of Satan. This release includes a new film historian audio commentary, as well as a couple of featurettes on the production, the end of Hammer Films and a theatrical trailer.

Shout! is releasing a Blu-ray box set called the *Universal Horror Collection: Volume 3*. It contains some lesser-known, but entertaining horror features like *Tower of London* (1939), *Man-Made Monster* (1941), *Horror Island* (1941) and *The Black Cat* (1941). All of the titles include film historian commentaries and few other extras.

The Peanut Butter Solution (1985) is a really odd little children's film from Canada that has inspired as many nightmares as it has sparked imaginations. After many years, the movie has maintained a small but ever-growing fan base. It's about a kid who receives such a fright from a pair of ghosts that he loses all of his hair. He attempts to concoct a magic formula involving peanut butter to grow it back, but discovers that it works too well.

Severin is now releasing a Blu-ray featuring two cuts of the film alongside plenty of extras. You'll get a new commentary with the producer and star of the film, as well as interviews with cast and crew and a talk about this unusual French-Canadian production company and their other fascinating features (one hopes that *The Dog Who Stopped the War* and *Tommy Tricker and the Stamp Traveller* will also get high definition upgrades in the future). Can't wait to catch up with this oddball effort.

Kino has plenty of Blu-rays coming your way. They include the German war drama and 1981 Best Foreign Language Film Academy Award-nominee, *The Boat is Full* (1981). It arrives with a director audio commentary track. Kino also has the comedy *Heartbreak Hotel* (1988) about a teenager who kidnaps Elvis Presley, but ends up befriending the singer.

This disc includes a commentary with an entertainment journalist. I failed to mention this last week, but Kino has also released the drama *Iceman* (1984) on Blu-ray. It's about a team of scientists who discover a living Neanderthal. Director Fred Schepisi provides a commentary as well as a film critic.

Mad Love (1995) was a romance flick starring Drew Barrymore and Chris O'Donnell. It arrives with an entertainment journalist commentary. The distributor is also making the Don Johnson/Melanie Griffith drama *Paradise* (1991) available on Blu-ray. This disc contains a film historian audio track with the feature.

A Sunday in the Country (1984) is a French drama arriving on Blu-ray with a director commentary. And *White Squall* (1996) is also arriving. It tells the story of a teacher and some prep school student who get caught in a storm while out sailing. It comes with a production featurette and a trailer.

A few companies are re-releasing some of their classic horror titles on DVD. This week, Blue Underground is making the 4K restoration of the serial killer flick *Maniac* (1980) available, as well as the 40th Anniversary Special Edition 4K restoration of *Zombie* (1979). If you want to own the films, but aren't ready to purchase the Blu-ray version, I suppose this is a more cost-effective alternative.

Full Moon Pictures is putting out a re-mastered 30th Anniversary DVD of the amusing slasher pic, *Intruder* (1999). It's about a killer at a grocery store who begins wiping out the staff one night while they're closing down and is equal parts humor and graphic horror. Sam Raimi, Ted Raimi and Bruce Campbell all make brief appearances. Again, while you might be better off with the Blu-ray. This lower-cost DVD might appeal to those just wanting to give the flick a chance.

VCI is releasing a couple of Mexican classics on Blu-ray. The titles include the drama *La Barraca* (1945), as well as the melodrama, *Una Familia de Tantas* (1949). Both have been given 4K restorations for their high definition debuts.

Sony is reaching into its vaults and pulling out some interesting flicks. They have a Blu-ray of the underrated Jim Carrey dark comedy, *The Cable Guy* (1996). The studio is also making the David Mamet crime film, *Heist* (2001), available. On a completely different note, you can also pick up a 30th Anniversary Edition of the comedy, *Look Who's Talking* (1989), which features a baby narrating and commenting to the audience on events occurring around him.

And if period dramas are more to your liking, *The Remains of the Day* (1993) is now available on disc. No word on what extras, if any, will be included. But in some cases just having these out-of-print and hard-to-find titles on Blu-ray will be enough for fans.

Finally, Flicker Alley has a Deluxe Edition of the Lloyd Bridges film noir, *Trapped* (1949). The movie has been given a new restoration and comes with a mini-documentary on the film's creation, as well as a film historian audio commentary. This company's discs always look impressive and should please anyone waiting for this title to hit Blu-ray.

You Know, For Kids!

Here are some titles that may appeal to kids.

The Pink Panther Cartoon Collection: Volume 6

On the Tube!

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

Frontline: On the President's Orders (PBS)

Fuller House: Season 4

Killjoys: Season 5

Nature: The Serengeti Rules (PBS)

The Ornament of the World (PBS)

The Pink Panther Cartoon Collection: Volume 6