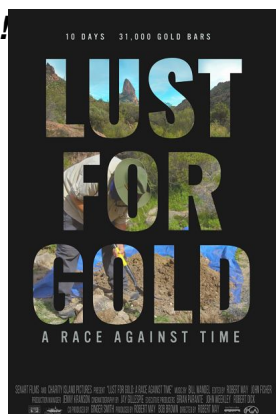


By Glenn Kay

For the Sun

Welcome to another look at all the latest Blu-rays and DVDs coming your way. There are a couple of big movies, as well as a number of interesting smaller features hitting store shelves this week. So, if you can't, or shouldn't be heading out to the movies just yet, be sure to give one of these titles a try!

### **BIG NEW RELEASES!**



***ANYTHING FOR JACKSON:*** After their grandchild dies in car accident, an elderly couple takes up Satanism and decides to try to bring their loved one back. They kidnap a pregnant woman and use a reverse exorcism technique to put the deceased child's soul into the unborn fetus. Unfortunately, the pair soon realizes that they have actually brought a sinister spirit into their home with an ominous plan. Genre critics gave this Canadian horror flick high marks.

In fact, it only has one negative review so far, which complained that the ending didn't work and that all of the plot elements weren't properly resolved. Everyone else called the movie creepy and disturbing, complimenting both the writing and performances. It stars Sheila McCarthy, Julian Richings, Konstantina Mantelos, Josh Cruddas and Yannick Bisson.

**FRENCH EXIT:** This quirky comedy follows a New York socialite and widow who discovers that she and her directionless son have completely run through her late husband's fortune with their lavish spending habits. She decides to leave her home with the intention of living out her remaining years in a small Paris apartment. After arriving, the pair attempts to regroup and figure out their next move, encountering old acquaintances and some new faces as they make a new start. The press was slightly more positive about this dark comedy than they were negative.

Those who disliked the feature didn't find it funny and suggested that the eccentric characters were too unlikable and unrelatable. Still, more praised the lead performance as fantastic and stated that the movie was enjoyably peculiar. The cast includes Michelle Pfeiffer, Lucas Hedges, Tracy Letts, and Valerie Mahaffey.

**GODZILLA VS. KONG:** It has only been a couple of months since its release at cinemas, but this monster spectacular is now making its debut on disc. When Godzilla reappears and begins attacking various cities, scientists decide to enlist the help of giant ape King Kong to stop the threat. As the two behemoths clash, humans on the ground begin to uncover the reason that the giant green lizard is on the warpath. Response toward this follow-up was generally good.

There was a contingent who felt that while the big climactic fight delivered, the story was a mess and poor writing for the human characters ruined the flick. However, a slightly larger number stated that the CGI monsters and action was enjoyable, providing escapist fun for genre movie fans. The film features Alexander Skarsgård, Millie Bobby Brown, Rebecca Hall, Brian Tyree Henry, Julian Dennison, Kyle Chandler and Demián Bichir.

**THE GREAT WAR OF ARCHIMEDES:** This foreign-language feature is a period film set in the early 1930s, when the Japanese Imperial Navy set out to construct the world's biggest battleship at any cost. A young naval officer disagrees with the decision and the direction taken by his war-mongering superiors. After being forced to work on the project, he uses his accounting and design skills to uncover a deeper conspiracy that may alter the future of the country. In this part of the world, there haven't been a great many notices written for this title yet, but the ones that have appeared, are complimentary.

They state that this is a small-scale but interesting look at the ill-advised choices made by leaders that would end up pulling the country into World War II. Masaki Suda, Jun Kunimura, Minami Hamabe and Min Tanaka headline the film.

**KINDRED:** A pregnant woman is devastated by news that her boyfriend has passed away in a car wreck. The family of the deceased man asks to take his significant other to stay with them at their lavish country manor. She accepts the offer, but finds the transition difficult. Things intensify after the lead discovers that her hosts may have disturbing plans for her baby.

This creeper from the UK garnered decent reviews overall. Several did end up describing the film as a poor man's *Rosemary's Baby* and complained that it didn't live up to the movies that inspired it. Still, the general consensus was that this was an effective and eerie effort with some interesting subtext. They also noted that it built momentum as it progressed. It features Tamara Lawrance, Fiona Shaw, Jack Lowden and Edward Holcroft.

**LUST FOR GOLD: A RACE AGAINST TIME:** This documentary follows a retired missile scientist who believes he knows the location of large gold deposit. His research suggests it is hidden away on federal land within Superstition Mountain in Arizona. Concerned that the treasure trove might be hoarded prior to his arrival, he recruits a team to sneak onto the site and take the fortune before anyone else stakes a claim. The group risks personal injury and prosecution for trespassing as they head out to find the loot.

It looks like this non-fiction received a limited release a few weeks back and is now making its debut on disc. There aren't any reviews available for the project, except for one currently posted on a Blu-ray review website. They found it to be an interesting little flick about obsessive treasure hunters with some great photography.

**RESURRECTION:** The latest faith-based production feature tells the story of the crucifixion of Jesus. It looks like the plot focuses on the followers of the religious icon, who find themselves lost, hunted and leaderless after Jesus is arrested and tried by Roman officials. They struggle to deal with despair as he is hung, only to witness the figure return from the dead and restore their faith. This picture was released by Warner Bros. around Easter, but didn't get a lot of press.

There have only been a few reviews. Some said that the movie was a standard retelling of the Bible story and didn't offer anything that hadn't been seen before. Still, a couple of the write-ups were upbeat, noting that the movie was graphic and disturbing, but had good performances and was well-produced. The cast includes Joanne Whalley, Greta Scacchi, Juan Pablo Di Pace, Vincent Regan, Indra Ové and Richard Coyle.

**ROCK DOG 3: ROCK AROUND THE PARK:** This follow-up to the 2016 animated film features an entirely new voice cast. The story follows the same Tibetan mastiff dog who dreams of being a rock star. After finding success in the first film, he and his band decide to leave their Snow Mountain home and head out on a world tour. While on the road, they befriend a pop sensation with whom they are performing.

As all of them become famous, the musicians face new challenges as they struggle to deal with their success. This week, the sequel was released on disc and as a digital download. It appears to have been created exclusively for the direct-to-video market, meaning that no members of the press have seen it. As such, viewers should not expect too much from this title. Andrew Francis, Ashleigh Ball, Brian Dobson, Brian Drummond, Cathy Weseluck and Donny Lucas lend their voices to the film.

**SAS: RED NOTICE:** A special forces agent plans on proposing to his significant other while taking a trip from London to Paris. They board a train, but as they enter a tunnel in order to cross the English Channel, a criminal and team of war criminals decide to seize the locomotive and hold those onboard for ransom. Cut off from help and surrounded by explosives, it's up to the agent to save the travelers and take down the baddies. Reaction toward this European co-production was decidedly split.

Half stated that the end product was a weak effort that relied on nothing but all-too-familiar action movie clichés. However, just as many asserted that while the story was predictable, it was still enjoyable, over-the-top fun that would raise a smile or two out of anyone looking for a thrill. It stars Sam Heughan, Ruby Rose, Andy Serkis, Hannah John-Kamen, Tom Hopper, Noel Clarke and Tom Wilkinson.

**US KIDS:** Horrified by the gun violence plaguing their schools, this documentary chronicles the work of the March for Our Lives movement. The group was formed by students striving for more stringent gun laws in America. Several activists and survivors of shootings pull together to create the largest youth protest in the country's history, and detail their hopes and aspirations for the future. Reviews were generally positive for this effort.

There were a few write-ups that stated that the movie itself felt like a promo piece instead of delivering a truly inspiring message to viewers. However, the majority did believe the film did its

job effectively and thought it helped paint a very personal portrait of those who have been affected by shootings. For the time being, this documentary will be available on DVD only.

**VOYAGERS:** With the population dwindling and humanity at stake, a dangerous mission to a far-off world is undertaken in the hopes of colonizing a new planet and repopulating our species. Due to the extended length of the journey, the majority of the passengers are children. When the adult leader of the expedition is put out of commission and the now teenage population is left on its own, raging hormones lead to power struggles and violent behavior. In general, this young-adult sci-fi picture didn't wow the critics.

There was a contingent that thought that the cast and visual effects were good and that the movie was an interesting study of human sociology. However, more didn't like the characters and some found it frustrating that the problems encountered were all due to the behavior of the main characters. It stars Colin Farrell, Tye Sheridan, Lily-Rose Depp, Fionn Whitehead and Chanté Adams.

### ***BLASTS FROM THE PAST!***

There is a lot of material arriving on Blu-ray this week. Shout! Factory is taking genre fans to Egypt with their latest titles. *The Awakening* (1980) follows an archeologist who discovers a tomb as his wife is giving birth. Years later, he becomes convinced that his child has been possessed by a soul of a sinister Egyptian queen. This movie stars Charlton Heston and Stephanie Zimbalist.

This disc includes a new 2K scan of the film's inter-positive and includes publicity materials like the trailer and TV ads.

More archeologists get into trouble in the thriller, *Sphinx* (1981). This one follows a group in Cairo searching for a tomb near the Valley of the Kings that is filled with ancient artifacts and gold. Of course, black marketers are equally interested in the valuable items and decide to eliminate the protagonists. The cast includes Lesley-Anne Down, Frank Langella, John Gielgud, John Rhys-Davies and Victoria Tennant.

Specs on the Blu-ray are exactly the same as on the previous release from the distributor.

Kino has a wide variety of Blu-rays coming your way. The first is *Body Slam* (1986), a comedy set around the world of professional wrestling the features Dirk Benedict, Tanya Roberts, Roddy Piper, Lou Albano and Barry Gordon. For its Blu-ray debut, the film has been given a 2K master. It also includes an interview with co-star Gordon and two theatrical trailers.

TheRailwayChildren.jpg

On a completely different note, they also have a Blu-ray of the period family picture, *The Railway Children* (1970). It's about a family whose patriarch is sent away, forcing them to travel across the land and try to make a fresh start. This title was recently named one of the top 100 British films of the 20th century. It has been restored by StudioCanal and arrives with a film historian commentary track and trailer.

*Take This Job and Shove It* (1981) is a comedy with Robert Hays and Barbara Hershey about an efficiency expert at a brewery who ends up helping the employees after the business is sold to a shady and incompetent Texas oil baron. The Blu-ray bonuses on this title include a stills gallery and trailer.

And Kino is presenting some world cinema in the form of *Tous les Matins du Monde* (1991) aka *All the Mornings of the World*. Gérard Depardieu appears in this César Award-winner (the French equivalent of the Oscars). This Blu-ray title features a film expert commentary, making-of and trailer.

Looking for something with more of a B-movie vibe in high definition? You'll be happy to learn that Code Red is putting out *The Being* (1983). It's a monster movie about a slimy creature devouring victims in a small town. This Blu-ray disc has a 2K restoration of the feature, one feature-length audio commentary with the director and a second with the star and a trailer.

*One Potato, Two Potato* (1964) is a drama detailing an interracial marriage and the horrific

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problems faced by the Midwestern couple. Considered well ahead of its time, the movie was also nominated for an Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay. This film has been given a 4K restoration and arrives on Blu-ray with a new interview with director Larry Peerce (

*The Incident*

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*A Separate Peace*

,

*Two-Minute Warning*

), as well as a film historian commentary, and a trailer.

Criterion is releasing a double-feature Blu-ray of the documentary *Streetwise* (1984) and its sequel, *TINY: The*

*Life of Erin Blackwell*

(2016). The first movie captures the lives of teenagers in Seattle, while the follow-up catches up with one of the youths and continues her story. Both pictures have been restored and given high-definition digital transfers. There is also a director commentary on the first movie, interviews with the filmmaker and the editor, four short films from the director, a trailer and an essay about the importance of these films.

The Paramount Presents line has been giving deluxe treatment to many films in the studio vaults. Their latest Blu-ray release is the Western, *Last Train from Gun Hill* (1959). Directed by John Sturges (

*Bad Day at Black Rock*

,

*Gunfight at the O.K. Corral*

,

*The Magnificent Seven*

,

*The Great Escape*

), the movie follows a U.S. Marshal hunting down his wife's killer, who is the son of his best friend. The studio is presenting the movie from a new 6K restoration of the film from the original negative.

Film critic Leonard Maltin gives his perspective on the feature and original trailers are also included. Like with others in the line, it has fold-out packaging of the original poster.

Lionsgate is giving Best Buy an Exclusive with their Steelbook of the fantastic, Oscar-nominated crime film, *Sicario* (2015). The disc is likely the same as in previous editions, but the new casing

and cover may appeal to collectors.

Sony is presenting a 4K edition of the stunning science-fiction film, *Gattaca* (1997). This phenomenal and highly recommended tale of a genetically inferior man trying to become an astronaut, will definitely benefit from the picture and sound upgrade. It stars Ethan Hawke, Uma Thurman and Jude Law.

The studio is also delivering a 4K version of the very enjoyable Clint Eastwood action pic, *In the Line of Fire* (1993). He plays a secret service agent facing off against a formidable former CIA assassin, who is played by John Malkovich. And about a month ago, Sony revealed that it is putting out a 4K disc of the Arnold Schwarzenegger box office flop, *Last Action Hero* (1993). It ended up being pulled at the last minute, but has now reappeared on the schedule and the Blu-ray is due out this week.

Warner Bros. is releasing a 3-Film Collection Blu-ray of *Godzilla vs. Kong* (2021), *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* (2019) and *Kong: Skull Island* (2017), for fans who have enjoyed the titles, but haven't picked them up yet. One assumes that the release contains the previous editions of the disc collected together in one package.

And finally, the made-to-order Warner Archive line has Blu-rays of the Anthony Quinn/Charles Bronson Western, *Guns for San Sebastian* (1968), as well as the all-star musical, *Ziegfeld Follies* (1945). Like other titles in the line, you can either order the discs through their website or directly from Amazon.

### **YOU KNOW, FOR KIDS!**

There are plenty of titles arriving that may appeal to youngsters. You'll find them all listed below.



## Blu-ray/DVD Roundup for June 18, 2021

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*Garfield and Friends: The Grumpy Cat Collection* (Seasons 1 -3 of *Garfield and Friends* animated series)

*Llama Llama: Llama Family Vacation*

*Octonauts: Season 4*

*The Railway Children* (1970)

*Rock Dog 2: Rock Around the Park*

*Ultraman Galaxy Mega Monster Battle* (2008 - 2009): Season 1 and Film

*Ultraman Zero Collection* (2010 - 2012) 4 Films – Mill Creek

### **ON THE TUBE!**

And here are all the latest TV-themed releases.

*Charmed: Season 4*

*Garfield and Friends: The Grumpy Cat Collection* (Seasons 1 - 3 of *Garfield and Friends* animated series)

## **Blu-ray/DVD Roundup for June 18, 2021**

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*Octonauts: Season 4*

*The Office: All individual seasons one through nine are being rereleased*

*Parks and Recreation: The Complete Series Blu-ray*

*Ultraman Galaxy Mega Monster Battle (2008 - 2009): Season One and Film*

*The Walking Dead: World Beyond: Season One*

*Your Honor (Showtime)*

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