

Blu-ray/DVD Roundup for May 13, 2022

Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
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Welcome to another look at some of the highlights coming your way on Blu-ray and DVD. This is another edition with plenty of options that include big studio pictures as well as small, independent fare. So, if you can't make it out to the movies or shouldn't be going out this week, be sure to give one of these titles a try!

BIG NEW RELEASES!

A-HA: THE MOVIE: Anyone who existed in the 1980s is likely familiar with the Norwegian pop band A-ha, who had a major hit with the song "Take on Me" (they also charted with "The Sun Always Shines on TV," "Cry Wolf" and performed the James Bond movie theme, "The Living Daylights"). This team behind this documentary followed the group for the last four years. The movie provides unprecedented access and shows the inner workings of the band, as well as tiffs between members.

Critics generally enjoyed the film. A small number said it did little more than present their history

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and note career milestones. Everyone else said that while there wasn't a lot of drama, it would provide music fans and interested parties with a complete, detailed and interesting history of A-ha and their musical contributions.

A.K. TOLSTOY'S A TASTE OF BLOOD: Also released as *A Taste of Blood* and loosely based on a story by Leo Tolstoy, this Argentinian horror feature is set after a dangerous vampire is eliminated by a vampire hunter. Successful, the figure returns home to his welcoming family. However, tension and paranoia arise when they discover the patriarch may have been bitten during the fracas and possibly turned into a bloodsucker himself.

The movie hasn't received many write-ups in this part of the world and the ones that have popped up online have been mixed. Some have called it an atmospheric chiller that maintains plenty of tension and focuses on characters over shocks. But just as many have complained that parts of the dialogue may have been dubbed-in and that the sound mix is poor, dissipating its effect. The movie features Germán Palacios, Alfonsina Carrocio, Naiara Awada and Lautaro Bettoni.

THE BETA TEST: A Hollywood agent is surprised, yet intrigued by a letter written to him anonymously asks him to take part in a blindfolded sexual encounter at a nearby hotel. He unwisely decides to accept the invitation, despite being engaged and preparing for an upcoming wedding. Afterward, complications at work arise and contracts begin to suffer as he attempts to figure out who he had relations with.

The press was complimentary towards this independent feature. A small contingent didn't find the characters relatable and thought the story's message was muddled. Yet the vast majority referred to the movie as a clever satire with excellent performances that successfully takes down its wealthy and privileged executives. The cast includes Jim Cummings, PJ McCabe, Virginia Newcomb and Wilky Lau.

DOG: An Army Ranger on leave from his unit appears before his superior officers begging to be reinstated to the force. They relent and agree on the condition that he drive cross country to attend the funeral of another Army Ranger... and drive the man's dog to the ceremony. The difficult pooch makes the trip nearly impossible for the lead, causing laws to be broken and putting their lives in danger. But as time passes, the protagonist and the animal begin to form a bond.

Critics were generally upbeat about this feature. A quarter of them did have issues with the tone, complaining that it ineffectively tried to juggle comedy with subjects like war trauma. However, the consensus was that this was a sweet, heartfelt and likable picture with two charismatic stars that also attempted to address deeper themes like PTSD. It stars Channing Tatum, Jane Adams, Kevin Nash, O'orianka Kilcher, Ethan Suplee and Emmy Raver-Lampman.

UNCHARTED: The big release of the week is a movie adapted from the popular Playstation game "Uncharted." In it, the young brother of a missing thief is recruited by an untrustworthy treasure hunter to help him recover a lost fortune hidden by an explorer. Unfortunately, they aren't the only ones looking for the loot. The heroes must outwit and outmuscle opponents willing to kill for the prize and claim the riches.

The press gave the picture more negative reviews than positive ones. Those who enjoyed it said that while this was no "Indiana Jones" feature, the movie delivered enough hair-raising thrills, laughs and action set pieces to entertain. But slightly more countered that there wasn't much in the feature that set it apart from other flicks of its ilk, suggesting it would be forgotten quickly after the credits rolled. Now viewers can decide for themselves.

Tom Holland, Mark Wahlberg, Sophia Ali, Tati Gabrielle and Antonio Banderas headline the release.

BLASTS FROM THE PAST!

Plenty of older titles are also getting high-definition upgrades this week. Code Red are presenting the thriller “Sunnyside” (1979) on Blu-ray. This effort stars Joey Travolta (John Travolta’s brother) as a gang member forced to choose between the street and his family. The disc includes a 2K restoration of the film, an interview with co-star Chris Mulkey and a trailer.

Cohen Media Group has a Blu-ray of “Year of the Jellyfish” (1984). It’s a French drama about a teenager who tries to woo her mother’s boyfriend. After he refuses her advances, she sets out to make him jealous. The release comes with a trailer for the movie.

“Mr. Klein” (1976) is a French/Italian period feature starring Alain Delon about an art dealer in Nazi-occupied France. The man takes advantage of Jewish citizens desperate to escape the country, offering pennies for their priceless works of art. However, his opulent life comes to an end when another figure using his name appears and begins undermining his efforts.

Criterion are releasing this Blu-ray. It comes with a 4K image restoration, archived interviews with the director and star, a conversation with the editor, as well as one with a critic on the film’s importance. Additionally, there’s a documentary on the real-life inspiration for the story and a trailer.

Paramount is presenting a Steelbook edition of the horror sequel, “Friday the 13th Part III” (1982). This Blu-ray edition comes with all the extras from previous Paramount releases of the movie (including a featurette on shooting the movie in 3-D), but oddly enough, doesn’t contain the 3-D version of the movie.

“The Killer Elite” (1975) is an action picture about freelance spies featuring James Caan, Robert Duvall, Bo Hopkins and Mako. Ronin Flix are putting out a “Special Edition” Blu-ray of the title

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that contains a 2020 restoration of the picture, a movie expert commentary, interviews with Bo Hopkins and the production assistant, as well as all sorts of publicity materials.

VCI Entertainment are presenting a remastered DVD of the drama “The Brave One” (1956). It is the story of a friendship between a young boy and a bull. As events progress, the youngster tries to save the animal from being killed in the ring by bullfighters. The movie earned an Academy Award for Best Story (which was penned by legendary blacklisted screenwriter Dalton Trumbo under a pen name).

Finally, Warner Archive are making made-to-order Blu-rays available of “The Carey Treatment” (1972). In it, a doctor (played by James Coburn) becomes an amateur sleuth to help clear a colleague who’s accused of botching an illegal abortion that kills a 15-year-old girl. This title can be purchased exclusively on Amazon.

YOU KNOW, FOR KIDS!

Here are some titles that might appeal to children.

“The Brave One” (1956) (VCI Entertainment) DVD

“Elinor Wonders Why: A Wonderful Journey” (PBS Kids) DVD

“Nancy Drew” Season 3 (Paramount) Blu-ray

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“Super Wiggles” DVD

ON THE TUBE!

And you’ll find all of the week’s TV-themed releases listed below.

“Abraham Lincoln” (History Channel) DVD

“Behind the Monsters” Season 1 (Shudder) Blu-ray

“The Incredible Dr. Pol” Season 20 (National Geographic) DVD

“Kin” Season 1 (AMC Studios) Blu-ray

“Nancy Drew” Season 3 (Paramount) Blu-ray

“NOVA: Great Mammoth Mystery” (PBS) DVD

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“Robocop” The Complete Series (Liberation Hall) DVD

“Sanditon” Season 2 (PBS) Blu-ray

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