

## Blu-ray/DVD Roundup for October 6, 2023

Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun  
Friday, 13 October 2023 06:29

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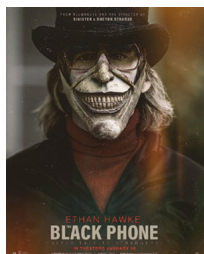


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ANIMAL CRACKERS



Welcome to another look at highlights arriving on Blu-ray and DVD. This week is a bit quieter than usual, but it does contain a major genre title or two that will impress those looking for a chill.

***BIG NEW RELEASES!***

**THE MEAN ONE:** If you're looking for some early Christmas-themed entertainment, this independent horror/comedy begins in a sleepy mountain town where a vicious, Grinch-like figure attacks a family. The youngest daughter is the only survivor of the ordeal. 20 years later, she returns home on Christmas Eve, seeking to catch and kill the mysterious figure.

Critical reception was not particularly strong for this effort. A small number were amused and called it a slight but fun holiday slasher with some wild moments that would entertain genre fans. Unfortunately, everyone else claimed it wasted its great potential. They wrote that the film was overly somber and didn't either scare or provide the necessary number of laughs to recommend.

It stars David Howard Thornton, Krystle Martin, Chase Mullins, John Bigham and Erik Baker.

**MOB LAND:** Set in the heart of Dixie, a town finds itself ravaged by drug addiction. When a financially-strapped family man robs a pill mill with his brother-in-law, their assault results in an unexpected death. The New Orleans mob boss who runs the factory sends an enforcer out to enact revenge. After the wife and daughter of one thief is threatened, a local sheriff tries to protect them from the skilled assassin.

This action picture split critics. Nearly half commented that it was a grim and tense effort that benefitted from some decent action and a strong cast. But the same number (plus one or two) complained that the story was routine and that the pacing dragged as a result, minimizing the potential for genuine thrills.

The cast includes John Travolta, Stephen Dorff, Shiloh Fernandez, Ashley Benson, Kevin Dillon and Timothy V. Murphy.

**PREY:** The fifth movie in the *Predator* franchise is a prequel that takes place in the Comanche nation 300 years ago. A young woman wants to become a great hunter like her brother, but is ignored by other members of her community. After sighting the title monster while following a hunting party into the woods, she decides to hunt it down herself in the hopes she will prove herself as a true warrior.

Critics were very upbeat about this feature, which premiered on Hulu and is now arriving on 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray. A small number didn't think it measured up to the original, delivering an overly familiar narrative that didn't deliver thrills or make the most of its intriguing concept. Still, the majority thought its stripped-down story worked and that it delivered on its promise, providing chills and a progressive, satisfying battle between the lead and the creature.

It features Amber Midthunder, Dakota Beavers, Dane DiLegro and Michelle Thrush.

**TALK TO ME:** In this independent chiller from Australia, a group of teenagers discover a mysterious embalmed hand with magical powers. They discover that they can use it to communicate with spirits from beyond, and even allow themselves to be briefly possessed. At first the teens use the gift to their personal advantage, but they become addicted to it, resulting in disturbing, horrific consequences.

The press raved about this horror picture. There was a minor contingent who felt that the characters were difficult to relate to, the screenplay contained plot holes and that the end result felt gimmicky. All others raved that the movie was remarkably atmospheric and effective, using genre conventions in an interesting way and generating chills throughout. Many referred to it as the best horror movie of the year.

It stars Sophie Wilde, Miranda Otto, Otis Dhanji, Alexandra Jensen, Joe Bird and Marcus Johnson. There are numerous editions of this title, including two 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray combo editions and a Blu-ray and DVD set.

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

It's a busy edition for older titles receiving 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray upgrades.

Allied V is releasing the animated family film *Animal Crackers* (2017) on Blu-ray. A family uses a magical box of animal cracker characters to help save their business from ruin. The voice cast includes Emily Blunt, John Krasinski, Ian McKellen, Danny DeVito, Sylvester Stallone, Raven-Symone and Patrick Warburton. This title had a troubled post-production history before its debut on Netflix. Now it's getting a Blu-ray release.

Paramount is delivering *Scream: The Original Trilogy* on 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray. It contains *Scream* (1996), *Scream 2* (1997) and *Scream 3* (2000) with improved picture quality. The studio is also making *Scream 3* (2000) available on its own in 4K Ultra HD only, as well as a 4K Ultra HD only Steelbook of the picture.

Universal is rereleasing *Back to the Future: The Ultimate Trilogy* on Blu-ray, containing the original *Back to the Future* (1985) and its sequels

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*Back to the Future Part II*

(1989) and

*Back to the Future Part III*

(1990). It includes hours upon hours of bonus features that will please anyone who enjoys these science-fiction features.

Finally, the studio is upgrading the horror film *The Black Phone* (2021) with a 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray combo set from Universal. Besides the picture upgrade, it comes with all previously released bonuses.

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

Kids will likely appreciate the titles listed below.

*Aladdin* (1992) 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray – Best Buy Exclusive Steelbook - Disney

*The Lion King* (1994) 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray – Best Buy Exclusive Steelbook - Disney

*The Little Mermaid* (1989) 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray – Best Buy Exclusive Steelbook - Disney

*Moana* (2016) 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray – Best Buy Exclusive Steelbook - Disney

### ***ON THE TUBE!***

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And all of the week's TV-themed releases can be found here.

*Hallmark 9-Movie Collection 2: The Holiday Sitter, Christmas at the Golden Dragon, Christmas Class Reunion, 'Twas the Night Before Christmas, My Southern Family Christmas, In Merry Measure, When I Think of Christmas, The Most Colorful Time of the Year, Noel Next Door* (Hallmark) DVD

*Hallmark 6-Movie Collection 2: A Holiday Spectacular, We Wish You a Married Christmas, Jolly Good Christmas, #XMAS, Christmas Bedtime Stories, Ghosts of Christmas Always* (Hallmark) DVD

*Endeavor (Masterpiece Mystery)* The Complete Collection (Pilot and Seasons 1 - 9) (PBS) DVD

*Metalocalypse* The Complete Series (Studio Distribution Services/Adult Swim) DVD

*NCIS* Seasons 9 – 12 (Paramount) DVD

*NCIS Hawai'i: Season 2* (Paramount) DVD

*Sandition (Masterpiece): The Complete Collection* (PBS) DVD

*Sister Boniface Mysteries Season 2* (BBC) DVD

*Van Der Valk Season 3* (PBS) DVD

*The Wedding Veil Trilogy 2: The Wedding Veil: Expectations, The Wedding Veil: Inspiration,*

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*The Wedding Veil: Journey* (Hallmark) DVD

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