



It's a very busy week for Blu-ray and DVD releases with just about every kind of genre represented. That means we had better get right to the highlights. So, if you can't make it out to the movies this week, be sure and give one of these titles a try.

Big New Releases!

Can't Stand Losing You: Surviving The Police - Based on the book by guitarist Andy Summers (member of the famous 80s band *The Police*), this documentary details the group's rise, breakup, and reformation a few years back. It features previously unseen footage and photographs from Summers. Reviewers weren't all that enthusiastic about the movie, calling it too limited in perspective and safe in approach. They believed that it would have benefited from the participation (and differing viewpoints) of band mates Sting and Stewart Copeland. It'll likely still please fans, though.

Ex Machina - A young employee of an internet-search firm is awarded a chance to meet with the mysterious president of the company. Once there, he's asked to help test the next step in Artificial Intelligence, a robot who looks and behaves like a human being. As the story progresses, relationships form and motivations become fuzzy. The press adored this sci-fi drama, with most giving it raves (myself included). They called it an intelligent, suspenseful, amusing and at times creepy film that effectively explores the deeper issues of its subject

matter. Domhnall Gleeson, Oscar Isaac and Alicia Vikander play the lead roles.

The Longest Ride - This Nicholas Sparks adaptation involves a bull-rider and a college student who cross paths and fall in love. But can the relationship survive their different goals and ideals in life? Additionally, their romance is intercut with an older, friendly acquaintance who remembers his own, decades-spanning love affair. While a few were charmed by the cast, the majority of press members were not taken with this melodrama, calling it corny, contrived and impossible to take seriously. It stars Scott Eastwood, Britt Robertson and Alan Alda.

Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2 - Arriving some 6 years after the original, this comedy sequel features no mall to speak of. Instead, it follows the lead character on vacation in Las Vegas. While there, he must foil a heist plot from a nasty villain out to steal art from one of the hotels. Slapstick shenanigans ensue. As one might imagine, reviews were particularly terrible for this feature, saying that lead Kevin James could do nothing to salvage the script's attempts at juvenile humor and the consistent barrage of product placements. Besides James, the cast includes Raini Rodriguez, Daniella Alonso and Neal McDonough.

The Unwanted - A young woman arrives in a small town hoping to find her mother. After forming a relationship with a local waitress, the two attempt to uncover the truth behind her parent's disappearance. This low-budget Gothic tale is said to involve vampirism. It hasn't gotten any reviews as of yet, so viewers will have to embrace the darkness solely on their own. It stars Christen Orr, Hannah Fierman and William Katt.

Blasts From the Past!

Once again, Olive Films is bringing a number of curious out-of-print features to Blu-ray. *Adventures of Captain Fabian*
(1951) is a lesser known Errol Flynn adventure flick that features the actor as a sea captain falling for a femme fatale. John Sayles directs Rosanna Arquette and Vincent Spano in the well-regarded coming-of-age romantic drama
Baby, It's You
(1983). The story follows a conservative high school senior in the 60s who and her tumultuous relationship with an academically challenged tough guy.

The Eternal Sea (1955) is a naval war drama with Sterling Hayden. Not only is *Hell's Five Hours* (1958) a great pulpy title for a thriller, but it has an interesting plot about a military rocket fuel plant worker who is fired from his job - he immediately straps dynamite to himself, takes hostages and plots to blow the place up.

Olive Films also have the interesting Blu-ray *King of the Gypsies* (1978) scheduled this week. It's about a young man torn between the modern world and his old world family. Events get even more complicated when he's chosen as the new leader of the community. The movie features an impressive cast, including Eric Roberts (in his first role), Sterling Hayden, Susan Sarandon, Shelley Winters, Judd Hirsch, Brooke Shields and Annette O'Toole. Finally, *Man of Conquest* (1939) is a biography and war film about the first president of the Republic of Texas, and follows the man's life right through the Battle of The Alamo.

There are also some noteworthy titles arriving courtesy of Shout! Factory. It may not be quite as impressive as the original, but the TV movie remake of *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1979) was a well regarded production that won a Golden Globe at its time of airing. This "Uncut Edition" features over 25 minutes of extra footage. It stars Richard Thomas, Ernest Borgnine, Donald Pleasance and Ian Holm.

There are plenty of genre pictures coming from Shout! on Blu-ray as well. *Howling II: Your Sister Is A Werewolf* (1985) is the extremely cheesy sequel to the 80s horror classic. The numerous extras in this edition include multiple audio commentaries, interviews with cast and crew members, as well as an alternate opening and ending. I'm fascinated to revisit *The Legend of the Lone Ranger* (1981), an expensive retelling of the famous western character that bombed during its original release nearly 25 years ago. Reportedly, the lead actor was chosen for his physical prowess and not his acting - his lines ended up being rerecorded by thespian James Keach in the finished product. It was directed by famed cinematographer William A. Fraker (*Rosemary's Baby* , *Bullitt*) and features Christopher Lloyd and Jason Robards in supporting roles. Morbidly curious Western fans will want to check this notorious flick out.

Finally, Shout! have a pair of Double Feature discs that include some goofy B-movies that have

been given high quality transfers. The first set features *Cellar Dweller* (1988) and *Catacombs* (1988). The second release pairs *The Outing* (1987) with *The Godsend* (1980) - please note that the disc contains only the US cut of *The Outing*. None of the four movies are masterpieces, but they will appeal to the old school horror completist.

Not to be outdone, Kino Lorber are delivering Blu-rays of some noteworthy 80s and 90s films. *Blown Away* (1994) is a fun little thriller from Stephen Hopkins (*24*) about a mad bomber - the cast includes Jeff Bridges and Tommy Lee Jones. *Life Stinks* (1991) is a comedy starring and directed by funnyman Mel Brooks. James Belushi and John Ritter play the leads in *Real Men* (1987), an action/comedy about a CIA agent and insurance salesman who get mixed up in an alien plot. Finally, *Rush* (1991) is a drama with Jason Patric and Jennifer Jason Leigh. It's about cops going undercover to hunt down a drug dealer who become addicts themselves.

But that's not all. Criterion also have two Blu-rays to consider. The first is *The Black Stallion* (1979), a beautifully photographed film about a young boy who befriends a wild horse and eventually becomes its jockey. The movie was produced by Francis Ford Coppola and was nominated for two Oscars. The Blu-ray includes a restored digital transfer, plenty of interviews about the making of the movie, and five short films from director Carol Ballard that were made in the 60s and 70s.

The French drama *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1959) is an acclaimed title that follows a romance between a European actress and a Japanese architect. This title is also getting lavish hi-def treatment - the Blu-ray possesses another restoration of the film, new interviews with participants and a film historian audio commentary about the production.

If you were a fan of the recent *X-Men: Days of Future Past* (2014), Fox is putting out a new cut

of the film on Blu-ray. “The Rogue Cut” is 10 minutes longer than the original version and includes all of the material involving the Rogue character that was edited out of the film. Reportedly, this includes an elaborate jailbreak sequence.

Universal are issuing a couple of older titles on Blu-ray as well. They include the popular sci-fi suspense film *The Andromeda Strain* (1971) and the all-star comedy crime thriller

Sneakers (1992) with Robert Redford, Sidney Poitier, Dan Aykroyd, Ben Kingley and many other familiar faces.

You Know, For Kids!

Are here are some selections for the little ones.

Adventure Time: Season 5 (Cartoon Network)

The Magic School Bus: Season 3

I Want My Hat Back... And More Happy Stories (Scholastic)

Pound Puppies: Pick of the Litter

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Return to NYC (Nickelodeon)