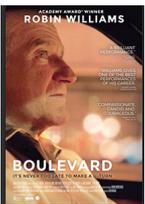


DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for Sept. 4, 2015

Written by Gallupsun Staff

Friday, 04 September 2015 10:06



Holy cow, this week is absolutely packed with new releases to enjoy on Labor Day weekend (or whenever you feel like checking something out)! As mentioned, there are a lot of offerings coming in numerous 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!

7 Minutes - What appears to be a quick, 7 minute heist goes horribly awry in this independent thriller. Not that the perpetrators are criminal masterminds; they're three teen buddies forced into the job by a psychopathic drug lord. Reviews were weak for this effort. While some appreciated the visual style and editing tricks on display, most found the story cliched and the characters too dim-witted to get behind. Now viewers can make up their own minds. Levin Ramin, Jason Ritter, Luke Mitchell, Zane Holtz and Kris Kristofferson take on the lead roles.

Army of Frankensteins - This low-budget horror comedy features a young man who encounters a mad scientist. After a series of experiments, portals to parallel universes are opened, releasing several monsters that go on a rampage during the Civil War. Why not, I suppose? There aren't any reviews online for the title, but it has played at a few underground film festivals. Notices from screenings haven't been very strong, but viewer enjoyment may depend on how cheesy you like your B-movie horror.

Backcountry - Here's another little scare flick if the last title didn't appeal to you. In this "nature gone wild" tale, a couple camping in a remote area of a wilderness park get lost. Soon after, they are threatened by not only a strange loner, but also a determined and hungry black bear. The press was actually quite complimentary to this terror film. They called it well acted and atmospheric; a gritty and simple little effort that is remarkably tense and depicts how quickly things can go south when we're alone in the elements. It stars Missy Peregrym, Eric Balfour, Jeff Roop and Nicholas Campbell.

Boulevard - In this drama, the late Robin Williams plays an unhappily married family man whose life takes a dramatic turn after an encounter with a male prostitute. Most reviewers were very impressed with the actor's subtle and emotional work in the film. However, half were significantly less taken with the filmmaking skills on display. They felt that the pacing was much too slow and that the story ultimately became predictable. Bob Odenkirk, Kathy Baker and Roberto Aguirre are also featured.

Broken Horses - Gosh, it seems nearly impossible to not get oneself on the bad side of a nasty drug kingpin these days. This thriller with Western overtones follows one such man who attempts to pull his troubled cartel henchman brother away from his violent, law-breaking employers. The hero's plan (which sounds a bit complicated) involves infiltrating the organization. The press panned this effort. They called its intentions noble, but the execution rudimentary and at times unbelievable. Anton Yelchin, Chris Marquette, Vincent D'Onofrio, Maria Valverde, Thomas Jane and Sean Patrick Flanery headline the film.

Good Kill - Despite a title suggesting something akin to a Steven Seagal action picture, this drama from director Andrew Niccol (*Gattaca*) involves an Air Force drone pilot fighting missions from within a control booth on the other side of the world. The film deals with the psychological toll of his work and the strain it etches on family relationships. The movie garnered a majority of positive write-ups, with many calling it an engaging and at times chilling character piece. It stars Ethan Hawke, January Jones, Zoe Kravitz and Bruce Greenwood.

The Harvest - This terror feature has a very strong cast that includes Samantha Morton, Michael Shannon and Peter Fonda. Directed by John McNaughton (*Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer*), the plot follows an orphaned girl who moves in with her grandmother and befriends a small boy at a nearby house. She soon learns a very dark secret about the boy's parents that threatens her life. While some found the storytelling a bit more low-key than anticipated, critics generally found it all to be a creepy psychological thriller with a standout performance from Morton.

Mad Max: Fury Road - One of the best reviewed movies of the year was this post-apocalyptic sequel that continues the adventures of the title character, as well as introducing a dynamic new co-star. As the film begins, the protagonist finds himself the captive of a wasteland emperor. However, when one of his soldiers chooses to escape with the villain's harem in tow, Max ends up assisting the group (and regains some semblance of his humanity in the process). Critics called the movie a phenomenally tense and thrilling two-hour chase with groundbreaking stunt-work. Tom Hardy, Charlize Theron and Nicholas Hoult star.

Paranormal Island - In this low-budget indie horror effort, three college students get a job bartending on an island resort, but run into trouble when they realize that it may be haunted... Yep, it's a haunted bar movie. There aren't any reviews available for this one, but you may want a stiff drink beforehand. It features Lance Henriksen and Briana Evigan.

Blasts From the Past!

Like classic monster movies? Well, Universal is releasing an *Abbott and Costello Meet the Monsters Collection* on DVD. It's a price-friendly set featuring four creature features with the comics dating from 1948 to 1955. They include

Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein

,
Abbott and Costello Meet the Invisible Man

,
Abbott and Costello Meet Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

, and finally,

Abbott and Costello Meet the Mummy

). Set features a behind the scenes documentary as well as commentaries (presumably from a noted film historian) on two of the films.

Warner Bros. have some curious releases coming on DVD from their Warner Archive line. First, there's the documentary *Directed by John Ford* (1971), in which Peter Bogdanovich chronicles the famous western filmmaker, including archival interviews with numerous Hollywood stars.

Lady, Let's Dance! (1944) is a big ice-skating musical that has fallen by the wayside since its release, but it is very well regarded. In fact, the lead roles were played by several professional and Olympic ice-dancers. And the film itself was nominated for two Oscars.

On a different tact, you can now own the gritty Dustin Hoffman/Theresa Russell drama *Straight Time*

(1978), about ex-con tormented by a nasty parole officer. Additionally, there's

Wide Sargasso Sea

(1993) an Australian production that serves as a prequel to the Charlotte Bronte classic

Jane Eyre

. It's about a nobleman who moves to Jamaica and falls for a Creole woman, only to learn that she is slowly losing her mind.

Finally, Warner Archive also put out a couple of noteworthy Blu-rays. *The Hunger* (1983) is a

DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for Sept. 4, 2015

Written by Gallupsun Staff
Friday, 04 September 2015 10:06

stylish vampire tale from director Tony Scott (
Top Gun

,
True Romance

), starring David Bowie, Susan Sarandon and Catherine Deneuve. Finally,

The World According to Garp

(1982) is a quirky comedy/drama starring Robin Williams as the title character. The film follows the title writer from his birth and through the trials and tribulations of his entire lifespan (many of which involve his mother). It was nominated for two Academy Awards.

You Know, For Kids!

Here's what kids will be able to enjoy!

Alpha and Omega: The Legend of the Saw Tooth Cave

Curious George: Season 8

LEGO Legends of Chima: Legend of the Fire Chi: Season 2, Vol. 2

Paw Patrol: Meet Everest!

Scooby-Doo Double Feature: Scooby-Doo and the Goblin King & Scooby-Doo: Abracadabra-Doo

Star Wars Rebels: The Complete Season 1