

DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for September 18, 2015

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Welcome back for a detailed look at what's coming your way on DVD and Blu-ray. It's another busy edition with plenty of good stuff. 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!

Cinderella - This live-action Disney retelling of the famous fairy tale follows a poor young woman who, with the help of magic, manages to attend a grand ball and have a prince fall for her (much to the chagrin of her wicked stepmother and stepsisters). Reviews were very strong for Kenneth Branagh's traditional, irony-free adaptation of the story. The movie stars Lily James, Cate Blanchett, Richard Madden, Helena Bonham Carter and Stellan Skarsgard.

Furious 7 - The year's second biggest box office hit is the sixth sequel in the *Fast & Furious* series. When the brother of the previous film's villain vows to kill the protagonists for putting his sibling in a coma, the heroes reunite to take him on. Surprisingly, the movie received largely positive notices. While there were a few who found it overlong and over-the-top, many enjoyed the ridiculousness of the events and called it entertainingly silly. Vin Diesel, Paul Walker, Jason Statham, Michelle Rodriguez, Jordana Brewster, Tyrese Gibson, Ludacris, Dwayne Johnson and Kurt Russell take on the lead roles.

Love & Mercy - Beach Boy Brian Wilson is the subject of this biopic that uses two different actors (Paul Dano and John Cusack) to portray the man at different points in his life. The story follows the musician from the recording of "Pet Sounds" through his mental collapse and attempts to break free from his therapist's controlling grasp. Reviews were very strong for the movie, in particular lauding the work of Dano as the younger version of Wilson. It has been described as having an authentic feel, with the story shaped in an interesting manner by the use of parallel editing. It also stars Elizabeth Banks and Paul Giamatti.

Monkey Kingdom - DisneyNature presents another in their line of wildlife feature documentaries. This time, the focus is on a pair of monkeys (specifically, a mother and her newborn) as they attempt to fit in among a group living at the ruins of a temple in Southeast Asia. Overall, critics were positive about this effort. While they felt it hammered its very simple message over the head with no subtlety or nuance, all admitted that it was beautifully shot and that the animals were entertaining to watch. The title is narrated by Tina Fey.

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Salad Days: A Decade of Punk in Washington, DC - The title of this documentary essentially explains exactly what you'll be getting; an expose of the punk scene in Washington through the 80s that profiles bands like Bad Brains, Minor Threat and Fugazi. Generally speaking, reaction to the film was positive. While many felt it was almost too specific in its focus, most found it interesting and enlightening. It also features interviews with the likes of Fred Armisen, Dave Grohl and Henry Rollins.

Blasts From the Past!

There are a lot of reissues and older titles coming to Blu-ray, so let's jump right into it. Haven't picked up that James Bond box set from a couple of years back? Now you can order the latest version, an Amazon Exclusive titled *The Ultimate James Bond Collection*. It contains all of the movies in hi-def with loads of extras and a slot for the upcoming *Spectre* when it gets released on disc.

Shout! Factory have the horror flick *The Legacy* (1978) arriving on Blu-ray. The plot involves a pair of interior decorators who are sent to England to work on a creepy old mansion. When the estate family members begin dying mysteriously, the leads do all they can to escape with their lives. Starring Katherine Ross and Sam Elliott, it also features The Who's Roger Daltrey in a supporting role. The disc contains a new transfer of the film from the original negative and features a couple of interviews with the editor and special effects artist.

Kino have several noteworthy Blu-rays, including the Gregory Peck western *Billy Two Hats* (1974) and the Francis McDormand thriller

Hidden Agenda

(1990), about corruption in the UK government. There's also

House of Long Shadows

(1983) aka

House of the Long Shadows

, a homage to classic Hammer films featuring Vincent Price, Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee. Kino also have another Gregory Peck effort in the well regarded John Huston production of the literary classic,

Moby Dick

(1956). Finally, there's the Ray Liotta suspense/thriller

Unforgettable

(1996) about a man wrongly accused of murder who takes an experimental drug to experience the memories of other people in order to help him solve the crime.

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Not to be outdone, budget-friendly distributor Mill Creek are delivering affordably priced Blu-rays of the Kevin Bacon Hollywood satire *The Big Picture* (1989) and the slapstick comedy *Spaced Invaders*

(1990). They're putting out DVDs of the classic

Crime and Punishment

(1935) as well as the comedy/drama

Postcards From the Edge

(1990), starring Meryl Streep and Shirley MacLaine. Finally, B-movie fans can enjoy some campy delights in the atomic zombie flick

Creature With the Atom Brain

(1955). It's enjoyably goofy and offers a unique take on the undead genre.

Murder, My Sweet (1944), a beloved film-noir based on the Raymond Chandler novel, is coming to Blu-ray via the Warner Archive Collection. Criterion have a Blu-ray of the more recent title *Blind Chance*

(1987). This foreign-language Polish drama from Krzysztof Kieslowski (the

Three Colors

series) was shot in 1981 but didn't manage to obtain a release (due to government censorship) until 1987. It follows a man chasing a train. The film shows three different versions of what would happen to his life depending on what happens and shows how a simple decision can take one on a completely different path. The Blu-ray contains a sparkling new digital transfer, an interview with the filmmaker and cut scenes as well as a feature describing its importance in cinema.

If you were eyeing the recent Shout! Factory box set of *Halloween* films, you can now pick up one of the set's big selling features on its own.

Halloween: The Curse of Michael Myers

- *Unrated Producer's Cut*

(1995) is coming out on Blu-ray via LionsGate. It's a decidedly different version of the film.

Apparently, when it was turned in to Miramax, the feature was extensively reedited and reworked. You can now see what all the fuss was about without forking cash over to re-buy the titles you already own. And here's some interesting trivia about the movie - it features a very early performance from actor Paul Rudd.

Also coming from LionsGate is the Miramax studio cut of Richard Stanley's *Dust Devil* (1992).

Honestly, if you're curious about the title you should probably seek out the Final Cut disc featuring the director's cut and workprint version, as this trippy horror movie was also heavily tampered with by the studio before its release.

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You Know, For Kids!

Here are some titles that the young ones may be interested in.

Care Bears: Mystery in Care-A-Lot

Franklin and Friends: Franklin and the Creepy Clock

LEGO Star Wars: The New Yoda Chronicles

Monkey Kingdom (Disney documentary feature)

Power Rangers: Trickster Treat

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Meet Casey Jones!

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: The Shredder Strikes!