For the Sun

Hello and welcome to the latest edition of highlights making their debuts on DVD and Blu-ray. Let's get right to it as there is plenty of variety this time out. 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!

The Assassin - A female assassin is hired to eliminate a nobleman in this Chinese period drama. The only problem for the hit lady is that her target used to be her fiance. This foreign-language effort garnered strong reviews during its limited release a few months back. While some felt the visuals overwhelmed the minimalist story, most felt the painterly photography was so gorgeous that it made the film captivating regardless. It stars Qi Shu, Chen Chang and Satoshi Tsumabuki.

Burnt - An arrogant chef with a drug problem is the subject of this drama. After losing his Michelin status, he attempts to rebuild his career and reputation in a London restaurant. While they appreciated the work of the lead actor, critics weren't impressed with this effort and complained about the story and screenwriting. Overall, they felt that the end result was stale and lacked an individual flavor. The impressive cast includes Bradley Cooper, Sienna Miller, Daniel Bruhl, Omar Sy, Emma Thompson, Uma Thurman and Alicia Vikander.

Chi-raq - The latest from director Spike Lee (*Do the Right Thing*, *Inside Man*, *Oldboy*) is a modern adaptation of the Greek play
Lysistrata
. After the gang-related shooting of a young boy, the wives and girlfriends of the parties involved institute a sex strike until the violence stops. Reaction was largely positive - while some found it a little disordered, most were impressed with the high energy level, solid performances and unique subject matter. Nick Cannon, Teyonah Parris, Wesley Snipes, Angela Bassett, Samuel L. Jackson, John Cusack, Jennifer Hudson, David Patrick Kelly, D.B. Sweeney and Dave Chappelle headline.

Goosebumps - This family thriller uses the hugely successful kids books as its inspiration. When a teen from the city moves to a small town, he immediately becomes suspicious of his oddball neighbor. The youngster soon learns that the secretive individual is author R.L. Stine and the scary creatures from his famous books are very real. The press generally enjoyed the movie, calling it a fun family horror flick that features plenty of laughs and sly nods to the book series. It stars Jack Black, Dylan Minnette, Odeya Rush, Amy Ryan and Ken Marino.

Meet the Patels - American-Indian comic Ravi Patel is the subject of this documentary. The camera crew follows the actor for a year as he attempts to deal with his impatient parents, who desperately want him to find a wife. With some reservations he agrees to let them help find a bride that meets with their expectations. Reviews were good, calling it a sweet and gentle comedy that examines the pressures associated with following cultural traditions.

The New Girlfriend - While it came out in France back in 2014, this foreign-language effort is only now hitting DVD in North America. After her best friend passes away, a woman arrives to help out the husband with their child. The woman is surprised to discover that the man is a transvestite, leading to an examination of gender roles in relationships. Notices were strong, suggesting it develops the subject matter in unique and interesting ways. The cast includes Romain Duris and Anais Demoustier.

Theory of Obscurity: A Film About The Residents - This documentary charts the 40 year career of *The Residents*. For those who don't know, this band are an "art-collective" known for their avant-garde music (they have released over 60 albums) and videos. The doc even reveals identities of some of its secretive members. It has played at festivals, and word on the street suggests it's a good overview of the band, but one that will appeal more to fans than to newcomers.

The Wannabe - Set in 1992, a mob enthusiast follows the trial of John Gotti and attempts to fix it in order to free the defendant and find employment within the organization. Things do not go according to plan and his actions set off a chain of bizarre events. Notices were mixed for this dark comedy/drama. Some found the lead character too buffoonish to get behind, although some found it to be an interesting if uneven examination of the problems with hero-worship. It features Michael Imperioli, Patricia Arquette, David Zayas, Vincent Piazza and Doug E. Doug.

Blasts From the Past!

Shout! Factory have an interesting title coming to Blu-ray in the form of *Jack's Back* (1988). It's a small indie thriller starring James Spader as a doctor investigating a series of Jack the Ripper-style murders near his clinic. If memory serves, it's decent little thriller with a good twist. The disc includes a new transfer of the movie from the original negative as well as a brand new audio commentary with director Rowdy Herrington (
Road House
). There's also a lengthy, original making-of special with interviews from cast and crew members.

They've also got the unusual cult item, *Sonny Boy* (1989). This one follows a crime boss who steals a car with a baby in it. He gives it to his transvestite partner. Together they cut out its tongue (to keep it from talking) and raise it in their family to be a killer. As an adult, the adult attempts to breaks away to the outside world and comes into conflict with his brood. The cast includes David Carradine, Paul L. Smith and Brad Dourif. Given the subject matter, it had a hard time getting released in the 80s. Personally, I'm curious to see what it's all about. The Blu-ray comes with two audio commentaries - one with the screenwriter and another with the director as well as a copy of the first draft of the script.

Warner Archive have some noteworthy DVDs and a Blu-ray arriving. The first two listed are TV-movies. *Climb an Angry Mountain* (1972) is a drama about two detectives from different cities chasing a fugitive through the wilderness. *The Hostage Heart*
(1977) is about a terrorist who raids a hospital and take a millionaire hostage while the man is in the middle of life-saving surgery. I wouldn't count on either being great movies, but they may provide a cheesy chuckle or two.

The more impressive release from Warner Archive is a Blu-ray of the Alfred Hitchcock film, *The Wrong Man*
(1956). While Universal handled a lot of the director's films, Warner Bros. did release several of his titles. This one is based on a true story and stars Henry Fonda as a jazz musician mistakenly thought to be a fugitive bank robber. The Jackson Heights, New York City resident tries to help the police, but finds himself being implicated in even more crimes. It's a well regarded film notable for taking a more dramatic and realistic approach than the filmmaker is known for. The disc comes with a making-of documentary and trailer.

Nikkatsu Diamond Guys: Volume 1 is an elaborate Blu-ray set from Arrow featuring a Japanese crime/mystery picture from three notable filmmakers. They include
Voice Without a Shadow
(1958),
Red Pier
(1958) and
The Rambling Guitarist
(1959). The set features new film transfers from the original materials, as well as loads of promotional materials and discussions with a Japanese film expert on the historical significance of all three titles.

Hector the Mighty (1972) is an Italian comedy starring Giancarlo Giannini. Set in the criminal underworld, its reportedly a modern take on the Helen of Troy story. Imd Films is releasing the movie (with also lists horror director Lucio Fulci as a co-writer) on DVD.

And finally, MVS Visual are delivering a Blu-ray/DVD combo of the silly Italian 3-D western, *Co min' At Ya!*
(1981). The movie was made at during the 3-D craze of the early 80s (which included
Amityville 3-D
,
Friday the 13th Part 3 in 3-D
,
Jaws 3-D
and many, many more). You'll have to double check as to the type of 3-D presentation here. It has been released in the past, but in the less effective red and cyan Anaglyph 3-D. You don't want to see it this way. Anyway, it's a very silly movie and may be of some interest to B-movie fans if presented properly.

You Know, For Kids!

It's a slow week for kids, but here is what is coming your way.

Kiwi: Meet Twiki & Twini

Nickelodeon Favorites: Whiskers & Paws

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