

## Blu-ray/DVD Roundup for June 30, 2023

Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun  
Friday, 07 July 2023 03:59

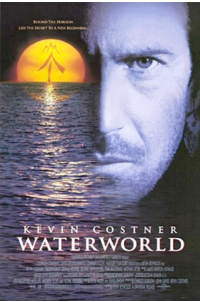
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Welcome to another look at highlights coming your way on Blu-ray and DVD. There are plenty of interesting features arriving this week, including a sequel for a major horror franchise. So, if you can't make it out to the movies this week or need to stay indoors, be sure to give one of these titles a try!

### ***BIG NEW RELEASES!***

***BIG GEORGE FOREMAN:*** Also known as *Big George Foreman: The Miraculous Story of the Once and Future Heavyweight Champion of the World*

, this biopic tells the story of, well, exactly what is detailed in the extended title. It tells viewers about his impoverished childhood, rise to the top of the boxing world not once but twice, as well as a near-death experience that resulted in a move to serving the church.

Critics were mixed about the final product and it earned a few more negative reviews than positive ones. Those who enjoyed the movie liked the cast and stated that the story being relayed was incredible and that they wouldn't have believed it all if it wasn't actually true. Unfortunately, more felt that it was overly sentimental, tried to cover too much material, and ultimately didn't delve deeply into all of the unusual twists and turns the figure's life has taken.

It stars Khristian Davis, Forest Whitaker, Jasmine Matthews, Sullivan Jones and Lawrence Gilliard Jr..

**CLAYDREAM:** This documentary focuses on innovator Will Vinton, who developed and pioneered a technique of claymation animation while attending college at Berkeley. After winning an Academy Award for his work and forming his own company, competitors in his field began appearing and a feeling of disenchantment began arising at his production house. Using interviews with many of those involved as well as animators whose work he inspired, the film shows this figure's rise and fall.

The press was taken by the feature. One or two complained that the movie lacked focus and didn't manage to make a specific argument about its subject. The rest appreciated the approach, saying it was an honest portrait of a figure, detailing the highs and lows of his career without succumbing to hero worship.

Other animators like Nick Park, Bill Plympton and Craig Bartlett are interviewed in the feature.

**EVIL DEAD RISE:** The latest chapter in the *Evil Dead* franchise isn't a sequel to the 2013 reboot of the original. Instead, it tells a story about a woman visiting her estranged sister and her family in their apartment in order to repair their relationship. When someone in the household finds a recording of the Necronomicon and plays it aloud, they are attacked by demons and some of them succumb to possession.

Notices were extremely good for this horror film. A small contingent suggested that while individual sequences were excellent, the movie didn't come together or make a big imprint on them. All others called it stylish and terrifyingly grotesque, noting that the energy level was off-the-charts and that there were several disturbing moments that they wouldn't soon forget.

It features Lily Sullivan, Alyssa Sutherland, Morgan Davies, Gabrielle Echols and Nell Fisher.

**A NEW OLD PLAY:** This foreign-language feature from China was scheduled for release at the end of May, but hit a delay and is only now arriving on disc. It tells the story of a clown in a theater troupe who suddenly dies. His spirit arrives in the underworld, where he relives some of the most important moments of his life. These memories are tied into some important events in the country's history and he attempts to process and make sense of what he has experienced and the lives he has touched.

This picture earned plenty of awards in its homeland and at various international film festivals. All notices were positive, calling the 3-hour epic surprisingly fast-paced, well-acted and moving. They complimented some of the satirical elements and how it examined the history of China in a unique manner.

Tao Gu, Nan Guan and Chen Jianing headline the film.

**THE TANK:** This independent horror film from New Zealand involves a man and his wife who inherit an abandoned coastal property that his mom never told him about. They arrive and find an eerie, untouched estate on the beach. Baffled, the lead tries to do repairs and search the house for the answer why no one ever talked about it. He learns the answer after releasing a monster while trying to fix the water tank beneath the property.

This effort didn't fare particularly well with critics. About one-third of them thought that the movie was well-produced, featured nifty-looking monsters and delivered the required chills. But sadly, the consensus was that it was a pastiche of older, better creature features that felt unoriginal and left the protagonists undeveloped.

It stars Luciane Buchanan, Matt Whelan, Zara Nausbaum and Regina Hegemann.

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

If you're wondering what older features will be appearing in high definition, there is a huge number arriving. So many, in fact, that we're going to have to rush through a few.

It's important to first note that Arrow Video is releasing *Enter the Video Store: Empire of Screams Collector's Set* Blu-ray. It contains some titles from the prime days of Empire Pictures, a production company founded by Albert Band (who would later form Full Moon Pictures). This box contains *The Dungeonmaster* (1984), *Dolls* (1987), *Cellar Dweller* (1987), *Arena* (1989) and *Robot Jox* (1989). Two of the films were directed by genre fave Stuart Gordon (*Re-Animator*, *From Beyond*), while make-ups effects titan John Carl Buechler (*Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>* *Part VII: The New Blood*) either directed or co-directed a pair of titles.

You'll get sharper picture quality on all the titles, as well as a ton of extras that include archived and new commentary tracks featuring film historians and/or those behind the lens. It also comes with interviews with various cast and crew members, publicity materials and more, housed in a fantastic-looking box.

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Arrow Video enthusiasts can also pick up a 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray edition of the amusing comedy *Mallrats* (1995), which was the first studio picture from writer/director Kevin Smith (*Clerks*,

*Chasing Amy*,  
*Dogma*

) and featured a group of characters hanging out at a local shopping mall. Besides the picture upgrade, it includes most if not all of the extras from previous editions.

The same is true for *Waterworld* (1995), the expensive Kevin Costner action picture. It was a critical and box office bomb back in the day, but has found a following after the release of an extended TV version. This set contains 4K Ultra HD and Blu-rays of the theatrical version, as well as 2K editions of TV cut and the preferred Ulysses Cut (which combines all the footage together into the most coherent edition).

Blue Underground is giving some of their older catalog titles 4K Ultra HD upgrades. You can now pick up new editions of *Daughters of Darkness* (1971) and the excellent chiller *Dead & Buried* (1981). Please note that Blu-rays are not included in this edition, so it is only for those who want to own 4K versions of each film without all the bonuses from earlier releases.

Shout! is upgrading a modern genre classic with a 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray Collector's Edition of *Creepshow* (1982). This fantastic anthology from director George A. Romero (*Night of the Living Dead*, *Dawn of the Dead*,

*Day of the Dead*)

with an original screenplay by Stephen King is a wonderfully stylish and effective homage to old horror comics. The picture will look even more impressive with the new transfer and all bonus material from Shout!'s previous edition will be included here, from multiple audio commentaries, cast and crew interviews to deleted scenes and more.

The same is being done to the horror/comedy *Motel Hell* (1980). This title involves a psychotic pair of motel owners who kidnap customers (and strangely enough, sell smoked meat to passersby). This 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray set includes a director commentary, interviews with the cast and crew, a look back at the female protagonist and a trailer. This creeper movie is fun (it features a great chainsaw duel at the close) and it's nice to see it getting a picture upgrade.

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Shout! is also releasing some Blu-ray exclusives that will be produced in limited quantities and will only be available to order on their website. The first title is *Abraxas: Guardian of the Universe* (1990) starring Jesse Ventura as an intergalactic cop. It has a 2K master of the feature from the best surviving elements and a trailer.

*Creepshow III*

(2006) is an absolute abomination of a sequel that has no connection to the previous two chapters. Still, if you want to own it, the disc includes a behind-the-scenes look with cast and crew interviews.

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

Here are a couple of titles that may interest small children.

*Mickey & Friends: 10 Classic Shorts – Volume 2* (Wal-Mart Exclusive with Collectible Pin)  
(Disney) Blu-ray

*PBS Kids - We Love Camping!* (PBS) DVD

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



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And you'll find a list of the week's TV-related releases below.

*21 Beacon Street* The Complete Series (ClassicFlix) DVD

*The Complete Comic Strip Presents... Channel 4 Films* Seasons 1 – 3 (Severin Films) Blu-ray

*Marriage* (mini-series) (PBS) DVD

*NATURE: Niagara Falls* (PBS) DVD

*Our House* (mini-series) (PBS) DVD

*Tales of the Walking Dead* Season 1 (RLJ Entertainment) Blu-ray

**VISIT: [WWW.CINEMASTANCE.COM](http://WWW.CINEMASTANCE.COM)**

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