

Blu-ray/DVD Roundup for Sept. 1, 2023

Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
Friday, 08 September 2023 02:40



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Welcome to another look at highlights arriving on Blu-ray and DVD. This week sees the release of a pair of major Hollywood features, as well as plenty of interesting independent fare. So, if you can't make it out to the movies this week or need to stay indoors for a while, be sure to give one of these titles a try!

BIG NEW RELEASES!

BRAVE FATHER ONLINE: OUR STORY OF FINAL FANTASY XIV: A young man has difficulties building a close bond with his extremely reserved father. After he learns that his dad has quit his job without explanation, the lead tries to bridge the gap by introducing him to an online game. Surprisingly enough, his pop agrees and starts playing. The protagonist secretly creates an avatar and the two spend more and more time playing together in the game mode. He is ultimately surprised by the secrets his dad shares with him.

There haven't been many reviews for this Japanese feature in North American publications, but the ones that have appeared have been positive. Most state that while the movie isn't deep and does feel like a commercial for the game, it is sweet-natured, the cast are solid and the story is engaging enough to entertain.

The movie stars Kentaro Sakaguchi and Kotaro Yoshida.

DON'T FALL IN LOVE WITH YOURSELF: Underground musician and Three.One.G Records founder Justin Pearson is the subject of this documentary. It covers the independent hardcore punk scene in San Diego, California and chronicles his experiences both starting a couple of bands and a record label working outside of major distributors. It features interviews with Pearson as well as many artists and individuals involved in the hardcore do-it-yourself music business.

The film has played at a few film festivals to positive response but hasn't received any official reviews yet. But if you're a fan of this genre of music, it'll probably be right up your alley.

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Vinegar Syndrome is the official distributor of this picture and the Blu-ray will be available exclusively on their website until Sept. 26 (when it goes into wider release at most retailers).

THE FLASH: The latest DC superhero feature involves popular character the Flash, who can move at incredible speed to save citizens from imminent death. The protagonist races so fast, in fact, he discovers that he can use his powers to travel back in time. He can't help but try to prevent a family tragedy, only to realize that he has created an alternate timeline. A previously vanquished supervillain soon returns and threatens the world and the lead must attempt to coax a very alternate version of Batman into helping him.

Critics were more positive than negative about the finished product. Just over one-third did complain that, after a strong opening, the multiverse storyline involved too much exposition and that the big finale fell flat. Still, the majority admired the performances, thought the action scenes were impressive and wrote that it delivered plenty of thrills and laughs.

The movie features Ezra Miller, Michael Keaton, Sasha Calle, Michael Shannon, Ron Livingston, Maribel Verdu, Jeremy Irons and Temuera Morrison.

INFINITY POOL: This chiller was released on Blu-ray back in April, but is appearing again on disc uncut as a 4K Ultra HD only exclusive in Steelbook packaging.

The latest chiller from Brandon Cronenberg (director of *Possessor* and son of filmmaker David Cronenberg) is set at an isolated, all-inclusive resort. A wealthy couple are befriended by a woman who convinces them to leave the property and venture off grounds. They discover a site that indulges in hedonism, violence and untold horror. After a nasty incident, the couple are arrested for a crime and given two options – either face execution or pay to experience something that is even more disturbing.

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This movie appears to have pushed buttons and gotten a largely positive response from reviewers. A few did comment that the movie was confusing, ponderous and didn't appear to resolve the issues it addressed. Still, most wrote that it was gripping and unsettling, also calling the film a sharp and cutting commentary on the influence of the rich and their ability to avoid repercussions.

It features Alexander Skarsgård, Mia Goth, Cleopatra Coleman and Thomas Kretschmann.

MADELEINE COLLINS: In this psychological thriller/drama from France, a woman travels between a pair of locales attempting to keep two lives completely separate. In one household in Switzerland, she lives with her husband and a little girl. But just across the border in a small French town, she has a partner and two older boys. A series of complications puts her fragile existence in jeopardy and threatens everything.

The press was very taken with this feature. A lone voice or two didn't like the main character and referred to the film as melodramatic. However, everyone else wrote that the performances were exceptional and that the picture delivered a low-key but unsettling picture of an average woman doing disturbing things to family members.

For the time being, this is a DVD-only release. The cast includes Virginie Efira, Bruno Salomone, Quim Gutierrez and Jacqueline Bisset.

NO HARD FEELINGS: In this comedy, a cash-strapped woman finds an unusual job listing. The wealthy parents of an extremely introverted 19-year-old are seeking a lady to date their son before he leaves for college. Thinking that the assignment is easy money, she agrees, but finds turning the youngster into a man far more difficult than anticipated.

Overall, reviewers enjoyed this effort. Nearly one-quarter of them did comment that for a

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supposedly raunchy comedy, it was overly genial and sentimental. In fact, they called the final product bland. Still, the consensus was that the onscreen chemistry between the two central characters was excellent and kept them watching. They noted that it ended up delivering a surprising combination of humor and warmth that they appreciated.

It stars Jennifer Lawrence, Andrew Barth Feldman, Laura Benanti, Matthew Broderick, Natalie Morales, Kyle Mooney and Hasan Minhaj.

YOU KNOW, FOR KIDS!

There's only one child-friendly release this week, but it looks like a relatively popular one.

PAW Patrol: All Paws on Deck (Paramount/Nickelodeon) DVD

ON THE TUBE!

And below is a listing of the week's TV-themed releases.

Blue Bloods Season 13 (Paramount) DVD

Human Footprint (PBS) DVD

Monk Season 1 (Kino) Blu-ray

Smiling Friends Season 1 (Warner Bros.) Blu-ray

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