

DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for July 22, 2016

Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
Friday, 22 July 2016 03:30



Welcome back to another look at highlights arriving on DVD and Blu-ray. There are some hugely popular releases, as well as noteworthy small films featuring recognizable casts. 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!

Batman V Superman: Dawn of Justice - Two DC superheroes come to blows for two-and-a-half hours in this gloomy follow-up to the previous glum reboot of the Superman character. Despite the promise of glowering, fighting, and little in the way of resolution, many still lined up and forked over their money for the experience. Critics reacted just as despondently, suggesting that it wore the majority of them down and came across as an ineffective work of drama and entertainment. The cast included Henry Cavill, Ben Affleck, Amy Adams, Diane Lane, Laurence Fishburne, Gal Gadot, and Jesse Eisenberg.

Demolition - This character-based drama involves a successful businessman in a lowly

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personal state following the death of his wife. After a vending machine eats his money, the man is inspired to attempt unique methods to deal with his problems. Reaction was split — about half felt it was ponderous and pretentious, but just as many were impressed by the excellent performances and intriguing subject matter. Looks like your reaction to it will depend on your particular taste. The movie stars Jake Gyllenhaal, Naomi Watts, Chris Cooper, Judah Lewis, and Heather Lind.

Elvis & Nixon - The bizarre, real-life story of a meeting between the famed musician and US President is recreated in this light comedy. Concerned about the future of America, Elvis goes to extreme lengths to meet Richard Nixon, getting himself a badge and being officially appointed as a federal officer. The press praised the work of the two leads. The majority stated that even though the movie was disposable and didn't provide much depth, it was fun to watch the performers take on these historical figures. It features Michael Shannon, Kevin Spacey, Alex Pettyfer, Johnny Knoxville, and Colin Hanks.

Kill Zone 2 - Marital arts expert Tony Jaa (Ong Bak) stars in this action sequel, known as *Saat Po Long 2*

in China. He plays a prison guard whose job is to keep an eye on a mob boss who's fronting an underground organ transplant business. Believe it or not, our hero's daughter has leukemia and the mobster is a suitable donor — unfortunately, the violent warden wants the crook dead. Reviewers admitted the story was rather silly and took too long to get going, but they all liked it overall, stating that the fight scenes and stunt work were simply awe-inspiring to watch. Louis Koo and Zhang Jim also appear.

Miles Ahead - Jazz musician Miles Davis is the subject of this biopic that stars and was directed by Don Cheadle. When a reporter locates and befriends the reclusive artist, the journalist gets numerous details about the trumpet player's elaborate back story and is tempted to steal unreleased recordings from him. Notices were good for the drama. Some felt it focused on the music and didn't provide enough new information about the man, but all admired Cheadle's impression of the legend and felt that fans would enjoy. The feature co-stars Ewan McGregor, Emyatzy Corinealdi, Michael Stuhlbarg, and Keith Stanfield.

A Perfect Day - This English-language Spanish production tells the story of a group of foreign-aid workers stationed in a violent war zone in the Balkans. They're followed for 24 hours as they contend not only with wounded fighters, but government red tape. More members of the press liked the feature than disliked it. Some found it scattershot, but more were impressed enough by the low-key work of the two male leads to give it a minor recommendation. The cast includes Benicio Del Toro, Tim Robbins, Olga Kurylenko and Melanie Thierry.

The Perfect Match - A playboy gets a taste of his own medicine in this comedy. When his best friend bets him to stay with the same woman for a month, the protagonist agrees, believing that he is immune to love. However, the tables are soon turned and as the month progresses, he begins to develop feelings he never knew he had. Reviews were poor, calling it a formulaic effort that feels more like a TV-movie than a feature film. It features Terrence Jenkins, Cassie Ventura, Paula Patton, Donald Faison, and Joe Pantoliano.

Rio, I Love You - Following in the footsteps of *Paris, I Love You* and *New York, I Love You*, this anthology is composed of 10 shorts from various directors (including John Turturro), all set within the city of Rio de Janeiro. Sadly, critics disliked the final product and called this chapter the worst of the series thus far. They thought the locations were beautiful, but found the segments lacking in drama and the end result more of a commercial for the city than an engaging narrative. It stars Vincent Cassel, Rodrigo Santoro, Jason Isaacs, Fernanda Montenegro, Harvey Keitel, John Turturro, Ryan Kwanten, Vanessa Paradis, and Emily Mortimer.

Blasts From the Past!

What a busy week! As always, Olive Films have an interesting slate of noteworthy titles arriving on Blu-ray. *Gang Related* (1997) is a crime flick featuring the final onscreen appearance of Tupac Shakur. It's about corrupt detectives trying to cover their tracks by both criminals and authorities. This is the first opportunity to pick it up on Blu-ray.

If Westerns are your thing, *Gun the Man Down* (1956) is being released for the first time on Blu-ray. James Arness plays a robber out for revenge against the partners and girlfriend who set him up. Speaking of criminals, *Hoodlum* (1997) is a period gangster film with a great cast... it stars Lawrence Fishburne and features Tim Roth, Andy Garcia, Vanessa Williams, Cicely Tyson, and Queen Latifah in supporting roles.

'Neath the Arizona Skies (1934) is a very early effort from John Wayne. Long before *Stagecoach* (1939), he plays a cowboy out to help a young woman receive her rightful inheritance after her mother passes away.
The Outsider

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(1979) is a drama starring Craig Wasson about a Vietnam veteran who joins the IRA, only to find that he is being manipulated by his superiors.

Finally, *The Ratings Game* (1984) is a TV-movie about a trucking magnate who attempts to become a famous TV producer and sets about rigging the system to do it. It marks the directorial debut of Danny DeVito, who stars with Rhea Perlman, Gerrit Graham, Vincent Schiavelli, Michael Richards, and Jerry Seinfeld. Besides a re-mastered image, this release also includes short films made by DeVito, deleted scenes, and a featurette.

Shout! Factory has some horror titles coming your way on Blu-ray. *Bad Moon* (1996) is a goofy but well-shot werewolf flick starring Michael Pare as a beast who ingratiates himself with his sister's family. The only one who can save the clan is the family dog... yep, you read that right... the pooch is the hero. The disc includes the theatrical version as well as a director's cut and multiple commentaries. There are also documentaries on the feature, as well as an unused opening scene. Sounds like a great package for B-movie fans.

One of the best horror/comedies of the '80s is the zombie flick, *The Return of the Living Dead* (1985). It's a fantastic little film. Besides some memorable creatures and scare scenes, this one has a biting sense of humor and features some subtle digs at the military and government. Besides a sharp new transfer, the "Collector's Edition" contains two full Blu-rays chock full of bonus material. There's so much that it literally would take pages to list. Rest assured, if you're a fan of the movie, you'll probably want to pick it up.

Criterion also has three Blu-rays coming your way. *Muriel, or The Time of Return* (1963) is French Director Alain Resnais's follow-up to the arthouse classic

Last Year at Marienbad

(1961). It's a drama about an antiques dealer, but of course, presented as a series of memories, which means that events are strangely choppy and inconsistent. They've got more coming from the same director as well.

Night and Fog

(1955) is a short and chilling documentary from the filmmaker about the Holocaust. The distributor is delivering both titles with new transfers and plenty of extras. On a different note, Criterion is releasing the three-hour Chinese martial arts masterpiece

A Touch of Zen

(1971) on Blu-ray. It comes with a 4K digital restoration and plenty of interviews with the movie's director and cast members.

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Kino has a Blu-ray of the Sean Connery period drama, *Cuba* (1979). In it, he plays a British advisor on the island nation who finds himself stuck between the dictatorial President Batista and rebel forces led by Fidel Castro. The lead also finds some time to romance a lady.

Arrow always delivers quality and loads of extras in their Blu-rays. The latest is the eccentric and erotic thriller from Ken Russell, *Crimes of Passion* (1984). It stars Kathleen Turner and Anthony Hopkins. The plot involves a fashion industry worker who discovers that a designer/co-worker moonlights as a prostitute. This Blu-ray/DVD combo features two cuts of the movie, director audio commentary, deleted/extended scenes, interviews, and other bonuses.

Finally, silent film fans can, courtesy of Milestone, pick up a Blu-ray of the western *The Daughter of Dawn* (1920), which is notable for a cast that includes real Native American tribes. And if you were interested in the two inexpensive *William Castle Double Features* discs from Mill Creek that were slated to be released a couple of weeks back, they were delayed, but are now officially available.

You Know, For Kids!

Here's what is being made available for youngsters.

Caillou: Caillou Goes for the Gold

Underdogs

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