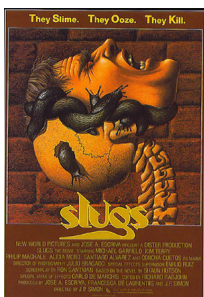
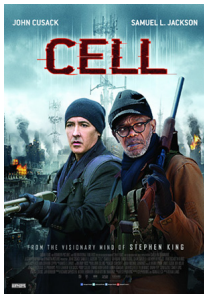


DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for Sept. 30, 2016

Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
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It's time for another look at highlights arriving on store shelves. There are a lot of summer releases arriving, so many will already be familiar to readers. Of course, there are some intriguing little films arriving, too. 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!

Cell - This adaptation of the Stephen King horror novel didn't get much of a release earlier in the year. It reunites John Cusack and Samuel L. Jackson (who appeared together in *1401*). The story is a spin on the zombie genre and it involves an electrical signal that turns cell phone users into mindless maniacs. Reaction was very, very poor for the thriller. Isabelle Fuhrman and Stacy Keach also appear.

Central Intelligence - Just before their high school reunion, a mild-mannered accountant agrees to meet up with a kid he helped from being bullied. Turns out the awkward teen is now a secret agent... or perhaps just a deranged individual. This comedy was a hit at the box office and earned respectable reviews, too. It stars Dwayne Johnson, Kevin Hart, Amy Ryan, Danielle Nicolet, Jason Bateman, and Aaron Paul.

Eat That Question: Frank Zappa in His Own Words - Musician Frank Zappa is the subject of this documentary, which chronicles his entire career using archival clips and interviews. Apparently, there's plenty of unseen concert footage as well. Reviews were very strong for the picture, saying it broadened our knowledge of the performer.

The Innocents - Based on a true story, this French/Polish period drama is set at the end of WWII. While stationed in Poland, an intern for the French Red Cross comes across several nuns who are pregnant after being raped by a group of Red Army soldiers. As she treats them, her patients attempt to deal with their attack and the possibility of being ostracized by their community. Praise was nearly unanimous for the feature.

Mike and Dave Need Wedding Dates - On a decidedly lighter note, this comedy involves two wild and crazy brothers who must find perfect dates for their sister's Hawaiian-set wedding.

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After going public with their search, they think they've found the perfect match. Unfortunately, they've been duped by woman just as dopey and crude as they are. Reviews were poor. The cast includes Zac Efron, Adam Devine, and Sam Richardson.

The Neon Demon - Here's a weird one. The latest from director Nicolas Winding-Refn (*Bronson*, *Drive*,

Only God Forgives

) is about a young model who arrives in Los Angeles searching for fame and fortune. Unfortunately, her cruel, beauty-obsessed competition is also willing to do anything to stay relevant in the fashion world. Reaction to this effort was polarized and it's easy to see why. It's bizarre beyond words and is most certainly an acquired taste. It stars Elle Fanning, Christina Hendricks, Keanu Reeves, and Jenna Malone.

The Shallows - In this thriller, a surfer decides to ride some waves in a remote area of Mexico. After being attacked by a great white shark, she finds herself stranded on a rock formation some distance from the shore. As days pass, she attempts to find a way to safety. The movie did quite well at the box office and garnered generally positive reaction from reviewers. Blake Lively plays the lone surfer.

Warcraft - The hugely popular computer game gets the big screen treatment in this sci-fi fantasy. It depicts a war between humans and an army of invading orcs from a parallel world. The movie flopped at the North American box office and with critics, although it seems to perform well in other parts of the world.

Who Gets the Dog? - An estranged couple in the process of getting a divorce can only agree on one thing — that their dog is wonderful. A custody battle ensues, as the pair pulls increasingly devious and mean stunts to win their case and take sole guardianship of the animal. I wonder what the dog thinks? It stars Alicia Silverstone, Ryan Kwanten, and Randall Batinkoff.

Blasts From the Past!

Back in the day, Vestron used to distribute many low-budget horror and action pictures on VHS.

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They've long since gone under, but Lionsgate has picked up their catalog and is now releasing several titles as part of a new, limited edition Collector's Series Vestron Video Blu-ray line.

The first two titles are long out-of-print flicks making their Blu-ray debuts. One is the cheesy horror/comedy *Blood Diner* (1987) about a roadside establishment run by two cannibals who put a little something extra in their dishes. The second is *Chopping Mall* (1986) aka *Kill Bots*, which will definitely be a guilty pleasure of many readers out there.

Also from Lionsgate is the 30th Anniversary Edition Blu-ray of the cult flick *Highlander* (1986). This one involves a battle of many centuries between immortal swordfighters. Well, they're immortal until they are decapitated, anyway. By the modern setting of this story, there are only a few left, leading to some elaborately choreographed fencing duels in New York City scored to the music of Queen.

Shout! Factory has some childhood classics coming your way in a new Blu-ray set: *Bill & Ted's Most Excellent Collection* contains *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure* (1989) along with *Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey* (1991). The first features them traveling through time to help prepare for a history final presentation, and the second sees them traversing the afterworld with the likes of The Grim Reaper.

Lady in White (1988) is a spooky ghost story that earned a lot of praise when it was first released. The story is about a boy who encounters a ghost and finds himself targeted by the person responsible for the death.

Also celebrating an anniversary is the brilliant horror/comedy, *An American Werewolf in London* (1981). The title pretty much explains the story and the sense of humor.

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Not to be outdone, Warner Archive has some great made-to-order titles that are now available. On Blu-ray, there's Clint Eastwood's *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* (1997). It's an underrated movie based on the real-life murder of a millionaire in Savannah, Georgia, and features a reporter investigating the crime and the numerous, eccentric suspects. John Cusack, Kevin Spacey, and Jude Law star.

On DVD, there's plenty of horror and sci-fi features to pick from. Mark Hamill stars with Michael Berryman and Jimmy Walker in *The Guyver* (1991). It's about a man who fights monsters after discovering a suit that fuses with his body and turns him into a cyborg warrior.

Warner Brothers has also added a couple of great titles on Blu-ray. *Salem's Lot* (1979) is flat-out one of the creepiest mini-series ever produced. It involves a vampire invading a small country town and the efforts of some locals to stop it. Directed by Tobe Hooper from the Stephen King book, it's one of the freakiest and most effective adaptations of the author's work.

Cat's Eye (1985) was an anthology film written by Stephen King. It's not a straight-up horror picture and is more of a thriller with a few supernatural elements. There are three tales linked by a roaming cat — two of them are exceptional. One involves a man who puts himself in great danger to quit smoking, while another involves a down-on-his-luck athlete who takes on a desperate bet. There's also a cat-centric wrap-up involving a nasty intruder in a suburban home. The movie stars James Woods, Robert Hays, and Drew Barrymore and is an awful lot of fun.

Russ Meyer is also getting the special edition treatment with his film, *Valley of the Dolls* (1967). It's about a group of woman trying to survive the seedy underside of show business, often through the use of illicit substances.

Arrow Films has an elaborate Blu-ray of the horror flick *Slugs* (1988), which involves, well, slugs causing horrific problems in a small town. It's a slimy and graphic B-movie with very impressive creature effects — it also has a lot of fans.

Before his work on *The Twilight Zone* TV series (1959-64) and *Planet of the Apes* (1968), Rod Serling wrote

Patterns

(1956), a very well-reviewed drama about a businessman struggling with his ambition and

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ethics.

Kino also has an interesting Blu-ray title: *Cabo Blanco* aka *Caboblanco* (1980) is an action/crime movie about a group of unsavory types attempting to find Nazi gold lost off of the coast of Peru.

The Cohen Film Collection is bringing a double feature of films by Douglas Sirk. The Blu-ray contains *A Scandal in Paris* (1945) and *Lured* (1947). On a less stellar note, Blue Underground has the less-than-stellar low-budget remake of the 1936 sci-fi epic

Things to Come

. This one's called

The Shape of Things to Come

(1979) and it stars Jack Palance. The poster looks cool, but the movie isn't. Finally, Vinegar Syndrome is releasing the cheeseball Paul Naschy title,

Count Dracula's Great Love

(1973) in high definition.

You Know, For Kids!

Here are some titles that youngsters may enjoy.

Courage the Cowardly Dog: Season 4

The Halloween Tree (1993 animated, made-for-TV movie)

Howard Lovecraft and the Frozen Kingdom

Power Rangers Dino Charge: Rise (Spooktacular Halloween Edition)