

# THE DVD LASER DISC NEWSLETTER

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## Part Two in 4K

“This is only the beginning,” was the last line of dialog in Denis Villeneuve’s ambitious **Dune** (Mar 22), and thus its prophecy is fulfilled with Villeneuve’s 2024 Warner Bros. production, **Dune Part Two**, an SDS Studio Distribution Services **4K UltraHD** Blu-ray (UPC#883929802357, \$50; if you are keeping track of milestones, the first film was bundled with a standard Blu-ray, but the market has since advanced and the **4K Part Two** has no second platter). Together, the two films comprise a 5-hour or so adaptation of the legendary Frank Herbert novel, and even with this expansion, the narrative feels wildly abridged and rushed. At one point early in **Part Two**, which begins immediately where the first film concluded, the hero, a nascent prophet played by Timothée Chalamet, is sent into the desert on his own so that he can experience what the desert has to offer him, but suddenly, after a couple of dreams, he is back again, and the story moves on to the next phase in his development. The dreams, too, will be highly confusing to novice viewers, since they are easily mistaken for actual narrative events, some of which eventually are and some of which are not.

One would think that audiences would rise up in protest at how nonsensical the film is to those not already steeped in Herbert’s lore. From the methods of space transportation to the nature of the mammoth worms that inhabit the sand swept planet where most of the film is set, and to the intricacies of the underground desert civilization hidden from outsiders on that planet, Villeneuve explicates virtually nothing. But like his first film, the magnificent, groundbreaking scale of cinematic vision that he has achieved is so breathtaking in scene after scene that almost any viewer is willing to suspend the irritations of confusion in favor of awe. And for anyone at all familiar with Herbert or the previous adaptations of his work, the story is fully accessible and refreshingly sophisticated in comparison to what normally passes in movies for science-fiction spectacle. Villeneuve does effectively blend the grandeur of the images with valid emotional interactions among the characters, and the love story that slowly forms the spine of the second film is one of its most compelling factors, a vital contrast to the more generalized exploration of motivated political forces that fuels the actual plot. If anything, the spectacle Villeneuve creates is more transporting not just because of the intelligence working behind it, but because that intelligence is guided by the heart.

The greatest experiences in motion picture viewing are those that seize hold of the viewer’s imagination with images, with sound, with emotions and with ideas. That is why the advancements in home video entertainment have been akin to rapture for faithful worshippers of cinema. Bigger screens, greater detail in the sound environments, and enhanced bit rates in the transference of original source materials to the delivery medium have amplified the pure experience of movie watching and the transcendence that accompanies it. At the moment, the **4K** Blu-ray is that pinnacle, and **Dune Part Two** exemplifies why that experience is so worthwhile. No matter how enormous the edifices are that are populated and depicted in a shot, the reality of their presence is unquestioned because of the vivid detail the disc presentation enables. The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1 (the film had alternative aspect ratios in its theatrical release, depending upon the venue, but this non-IMAX framing is what has been settled on for home video, for the time being). One of the film’s worlds is seen in black and white, and when the film cuts from those scenes to shots of the desert, the image comes alive even though it has only transitioned from black and white to shades of brown. Wherever one is on Earth, if one encounters sand it is because there was once water at that location, a transposed suggestion that hydrates the entire storyline—wherever one turns on the fantasy planet in **Dune**, a suggestion of water is indeed present, even though the water is unseen. That was Herbert’s great gag, as it were, and despite the film’s narrative condensation, that is something that Villeneuve communicates beautifully with his images, the sense that dryness is not lifelessness.

Zendaya, Rebecca Ferguson, Josh Brolin, Javier Bardem and David Bautista return from the first film, while Christopher Walken, Florence Pugh

and Austin Butler appear for the first time. The Dolby Atmos sound is grand in every way, from the heart pounding thumps that accompany the appearances of the desert worms, to the detailed fluidity of Hans Zimmer’s musical score. There is an audio track that describes the action in American (“In the open desert, a tiny kangaroo mouse with oversized ears hops cautiously across the sparkling sand, pausing as it comes across a flat, plastic tube jutting out of the ground.”), another track that describes the action in British (“A tiny mouse with huge ears pops out of a sand dune, hopping on two disproportionately large hind legs, like a kangaroo. It hops up to a narrow tube jutting from the sand.”), alternate French and Spanish audio tracks and seven subtitling options, including English. Also featured are 64 minutes of satisfying production featurettes that look at different specific aspects of the film’s creation, from its sound and invented languages to its locations, costumes, effects and more.

## French courtroom drama

The highly absorbing and award winning 2023 French courtroom drama, **Anatomy of a Fall**, has been released on Blu-ray by Neon and The Criterion Collection (UPC#715515296311, \$40). Set in Grenoble, Sandra Hüller is a writer accused of murdering her husband after he is found in the driveway in front of their chalet on a picturesque hillside. Like Criterion’s **Saint Omer** (Apr 24), the film, directed by Justine Triet, provides a fascinating depiction of French courtroom proceedings, which are far more elastic than American courtrooms and genuinely seem more interested in uncovering the truth than in maintaining an ordered environment for verbal combat. Running 151 minutes—which, like most courtroom dramas, seems to whiz right by—the film is an ideal blend of dramatic character construction, psychological revelation and mystery. The film is meant to be discovered fresh, and there is one nice plot turn early on that is actually there from the very start of the movie and might make you halt the proceedings and restart the film to watch it with a new perspective. That’s fine, and in fact it is worth it, since like all of the best courtroom dramas, the more times you view the film and the more familiar the characters become, the deeper you feel the nuances in their emotional relationships as you explore the pleasures of the story’s hills and valleys.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1 and has a vivid presence from beginning to end, as does the 5.1-channel DTS sound. We would take just one issue with the sound mix. At one point in the courtroom proceedings, a recording is played back, but the quality of the recording matches the quality of the rest of the film’s sound mix, which is perfectly fine when the film itself cuts to the matching flashback, but is less believable when being presented in the courtroom as real evidence. No matter. From beginning to end, the film is utterly captivating and an enormous pleasure that offers many return visits.

The movie is about half in French and half in English, so the default setting provides subtitling for the French passages, while the one subtitling option covers everything. There is an alternate audio track as well, which describes what is happening on the screen (“Daniel walks through a snow-covered field with Snoop, a snowy mountain range behind them. He sits on a patch of leaves and tosses a stick. Snoop runs and grabs it. Daniel throws a bigger stick. Snoop grabs it. Daniel throws another. Holding close on Snoop’s leash, Daniel walks down a narrow path, surrounded by trees.”). Along with a trailer, there is a good 26-minute interview with Triet going over many aspects of how she made the film; 33 minutes of wisely deleted and alternate scenes accompanied by an optional commentary from Triet explaining why they were undermining the thrust of the film, along with a 4-minute introduction by Triet; 25 minutes of interesting audition footage with the child actor Milo Machado-Graner and co-star Antoine Reinartz, as the actors explore how to approach their parts; a further 26 minutes of Machado-Graner learning the technical requirements for his part, rehearsing and somewhat literally growing into his role; and a cute 8-minute segment about working with the biggest breakout star from the film, the dog known offscreen as Messi.

## Gripping procedural in 4K

With two actors give equally solid, organic performances, in which they are fully subsumed by their characters, the only thing that separates the amazing talent on display is that one of those actors is also a movie star, while the other is simply a competent player turning in exceptional work. Jason Patric is outstanding in the utterly gripping and raw 2002 Paramount police procedural, **Narc**, but Ray Liotta matches the intensity and believability of his performance frame by frame, even though you know that is Liotta underneath the grit and the goatee. The two play Detroit detectives going through one last look at a cold case involving the murder of another narcotics cop—the former partner of Liotta’s character—and suddenly coming up with leads thanks to the knowledge Patric’s character brings about the population the cop had been penetrating. Directed by Joe Carnahan, the 105-minute film is an entertainment, so it has an expected crime thriller denouement, but that does nothing to undercut the film’s essential realism and its utterly absorbing dramatic, emotional and visceral excitements. Patric is the movie’s centerpiece, his character haunted by his own unfortunate dally with addiction, bad luck during a frantic bust that led to a civilian being seriously harmed, and his need to keep his own budding family from disintegrating. Nevertheless, Liotta’s presence is jaw dropping every time the camera lands on him. As the elder partner, he is deadly serious—there is no twinkle of the good natured humor Liotta usually brings to a part, nor should there be—and a force to be reckoned with, but, like Patric, once you are allowed a glimpse of his inner emotions and demons, you become entirely wrapped up with his impulses and goals.

Carnahan shot the wintry film with an intensity and roughness that might not seem conducive to a 4K replication, but quite the opposite is true. Paramount and Arrow have released the film as a two-platter 4K UHD Blu-ray (UPC#760137145974, \$50) and as a standard two-platter Blu-ray (UPC#760137145981, \$40), and what happens is that the hand held, deliberately jerky camera movements, the grime, and the overall accelerated pace of the film (at one point, Carnahan splits the image into quadrants to move forward a montage of investigation work and interviews; conversely, the film stops in its tracks, appropriately, for an outstanding soliloquy Liotta’s character delivers about a former case) absolutely require the crispness of the 4K delivery to lock in a viewer’s concentration. The colors on the standard Blu-ray are actually a bit brighter, and the film is readily effective, sure, because it is a brilliant mix of drama and realism, but the precision of the 4K presentation is an experience nearly akin to the adrenaline rush the characters are feeling, and it is an unrelenting reinforcement of how remarkable motion picture entertainment can become in the hands of inspired artists.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1. Despite the grain and the grime, the image is smooth, sharp and accurately colored from start to finish, no matter how bouncy the camera gets. The Dolby Atmos sound has an accomplished dimensionality with nicely measured directional effects. It doesn’t blast you away, it just never lets you escape. There are optional English subtitles. Carnahan and editor John Gilroy supply a commentary track on both the 4K presentation and the standard Blu-ray. They provide a reasonable amount of detail about the shoot and what they were trying to achieve, sharing various anecdotes and insights.

On both releases, the second platter is a standard Blu-ray containing a number of additional supplementary features, including a trailer; a substantial collection of promotional photos in still frame; a nice 14-minute interview with Carnahan from 2023 adding more recollections about making the film and the opportunities it created for his career; a good 10-minute interview with cinematographer Alex Nepomniashchy talking about his specific strategies for various scenes and what his challenges were; a thoughtful 16-minute interview with costar Krista Bridges about her experiences and her character; an informative 19-minute interview with costume designer Gersha Phillips about her career, how the outfits for the cast were chosen, and what input the actors had in choosing their clothing; two decent original promotional featurettes (everyone is younger and there are lovely interviews with Liotta) running a total of 33 minutes; another 13-minute promotional featurette emphasizing the film’s look; and an interesting 10-minute 2002 interview with William Friedkin, who provides an incisive appreciation of the film.

Although there are redundancies, the platter also contains the original unedited ‘raw’ interviews used for the promotional interviews, including 103 minutes with Carnahan shot at different points during the film’s production for press materials (including the difficulties he had with producers providing funding and the creative advantages that stress enabled); 22 minutes with producer Diane Nabatoff that is more specifically designed to be included in a promotional featurette; 18 minutes with Nepomniashchy; 16 minutes with Patric; a marvelous 52 minutes with Liotta and a full 36 minutes with Friedkin, who has the final word. “It feels exactly like where he wants you to feel you are. This film is as impressive a debut film as I’ve ever seen. I mean, [Carnahan] is a man with total command of the motion picture medium. Putting aside the subject matter and the technique, it is totally in command of the medium, as was, let’s say, Orson Welles with **Citizen Kane**. This film will last because of the performances. They’re so real, they’re so lacking in the sense of ‘acting.’ I believe this film will be around for many, many years to come, and will be hailed as a masterpiece.”

## For Sayles

John Sayles’s outstanding 1991 Altmanesque film about the interconnecting levels of politics in a Northeastern city, **City of Hope**, has at last been released on Blu-ray by Samuel Goldwyn Films and Sony Pictures Home Entertainment (UPC#043396636415, \$27), having never been issued on DVD (we reviewed the LD in Dec 92). Featuring a cast of close to two-dozen major stars, the film has the breadth and complexity of a novel as it examines, closely, the lives of everyone from children residing in a condemned building and a mental patient wandering the streets to the mayor and his cronies, and many, many layers in between. Tony Lo Bianco stars as the head of a construction company being pushed and pulled by developers, unions and other forces, and Vincent Spano is his wayward son, resentful of how life has treated him but gradually finding a pathway to redemption after meeting a waitress played by Barbara Williams. Joe Morton is a freshly elected member of the city council who is learning how to be a politician as he tries to help his constituents. Angela Bassett, Anthony John Denison, Chris Cooper, David Strathairn, Gloria Foster, Josh Mostel, Gina Gershon, Frankie Faison, Kevin Tighe and Lawrence Tierney are among the other players (Sayles also has a significant part). Often using long takes, Sayles swings in and out of their lives, sometimes as they pass one another on the street oblivious to each other’s stories, but no matter where the camera lands, the rich drama and precise replications of reality are captivating. The film runs 130 minutes, but it could easily have been expanded into a TV series, like **The Wire** or something. Sporting a terrific DTS stereo soundtrack that pumps the noises of garages and construction sites with the same enthusiasm that it handles the blues band playing in a tavern, it is the film’s depiction of the realities of urban life, combined with the color of its interlaced dramas, that makes it so compelling. Above all else, it is a brilliant deconstruction of American politics on the local level, and by extension, a captivating glimpse at how the forces of history are affected by individual interests.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1. The film’s budgetary limitations are responsible for an occasional softness and even haziness in the cinematography, but the transfer is excellent nonetheless, with accurate fleshtones and sharp details most of the time. There are optional English and Spanish subtitles. Sayles also supplies an excellent commentary track. He does describe what is happening in the narrative and on the screen, but only as context for his insights on the performances, his work with the cast and his experiences and strategies as a director (“Whenever you see boxes and trash bags, there’s likely to be a fight, because they cushion your fall.”). He points out that Morton’s character could have been based upon Barack Obama—except that Obama was still in law school at the time the film was made—and he has many insightful comments on the actual state of urban political dynamics and truths. “There’s this phenomena that cops watch cop shows, and what real cops do affect what is in cop shows, but cop shows affect what real cops do.” He also says that while the film garnered terrific reviews, most of the reviews emphasized the film’s bleakness, which was not helpful at the boxoffice. What he is not in a position to say is that while the story itself may have darker narrative components woven into its more uplifting moments, the sheer artistic brilliance of the film as ensemble dramatic moviemaking is so glorious that the upbeat feeling you get from experiencing Sayles’s moviemaking far outweighs what happens to some of the characters.

Sayles’s loving depiction of the 1919 World Series gambling scandal, **Eight Men Out**, has been released on Blu-ray by MGM (UPC#810-134948662, \$23). Again, he gathered a wonderful cast for his 1988 Orion feature, including Strathairn, along with John Cusack, D.B. Sweeney, Michael Rooker, Charlie Sheen, Christopher Lloyd, Michael Lerner, Clifton James and others. He also made another part for himself, as a reporter, so he could hang out with Studs Terkel. Running 120 minutes, the film begins with the final game of the pennant race and then proceeds to delineate the less than optimal wages and bonuses the players gain by making it to the Series, so that they are open and even desperate to supplement their income, as the film works its way through each game and then spends the final half hour on the fallout, including a courtroom sequence. Sayles commits one unforced error in his screenwriting. From 1919 to 1921, the World Series was a best of nine games rather than a best of seven (unless a team won the first four games!), and while he does have a line of dialog about it at the beginning of the film and a couple of more references to it, viewers coming to the movie for the first time could very easily miss it and become confused as the games play out and the suspense builds. For subsequent viewings, of course, it is not a problem, and otherwise, the film is a wonderful period exploration that combines the thrills of the game sequences with the valid political conflicts about the rights of labor, poignant humor and a full array of terrific characters embodied by the marvelous cast.

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The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1, and the color transfer looks great, with smooth, solid hues and accurate flesh tones. An epilog sequence at the end has deliberately subdued colors to set it apart from the rest of the film. The 5.1-channel DTS sound has a mild dimensionality and some scattered directional effects. There are optional English subtitles.

### Ocean's 4K

There is slick, and then there is 4K slick. The three all-star Steven Soderbergh caper movies, **Ocean's Eleven** from 2001 (May 02), **Ocean's Twelve** from 2004 (May 05) and **Ocean's Thirteen** from 2007 (Dec 07), have now been combined on a three-platter Warner Bros. 4K UHD Blu-ray, **Ocean's Trilogy** (UPC#883929818457, \$75). The films have always looked terrific, even on DVD, but they look even more sleek and precise on the 4K Blu-rays, which not only convey the luxurious surroundings (or ersatz luxurious surroundings—after all, two of the films are set in Las Vegas) but enhance a viewer's concentration and attention to the details in the highly elaborate scams and capers the heroes are attempting to execute. The first film is great fun, but the best way to experience them is to set aside 6 hours and watch the three movies together. Not only will you more readily recognize minor characters (such as the chunky bodyguards who work for Andy Garcia's character), but it is generally easier to follow the narratives when you get onto the wavelength of the filmmakers and take their character references, flashbacks and other jumbled scene ordering in stride. With the 4K format, the images are so crisp and the sound is so smooth the entire series takes on a transporting sleekness, with so many delightful details that you want to go through it all again and again.

The featured stars in all three films include George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, Elliott Gould, Bernie Mac, Don Cheadle (though uncredited in the first movie due to a snit with the studio), Carl Reiner, Casey Affleck, Scott Caan, Qin Shaobo and Eddie Jemison. Julia Roberts has a major role in the first two movies (in a particularly amusing sequence, her character pretends to be 'Julia Roberts'), Catherine Zeta-Jones has a significant part in the second film, and Al Pacino has a marvelous role as the villain in the third movie, often speaking—not quoting, but utilizing—dialogue from the **Godfather** films. Robbie Coltrane, Albert Finney and Bruce Willis (as himself) appear in the second movie; Ellen Barkin, David Paymer and Julian Sands all have amusing parts in the third feature; and Vincent Cassel has major parts in the second two films.

The 5.1-channel DTS sound on each film is substantially richer and better detailed than the DVDs, and aids greatly in the delivery of the music, from cocktail lounge classics to Claude Debussy's masterpiece. All three films have an alternate audio track that describes the action ("A sideways view follows a plane through the bright blue sky. It passes over a wire fence leading to a green field."), along with French, Spanish, Italian, German and Czech audio tracks. **Ocean's Thirteen** has fourteen subtitling options and the other two films have thirteen options, including English.

Running 117 minutes, **Ocean's Eleven** breathed new life into a moribund genre (since then, the **Now You See Me** films have picked up the baton, as well), balancing with precision the sense that the entire project is a big joke but is nevertheless to be approached and executed with class and acuity. As 'commercial' as the film may seem, the twists are clever, the dialog is intelligent, the pacing and structure of the film are both relaxing and reasonably intense, and the visual and audio components are classy as all get out. As for the performances, they are what you want to see from the stars, and in the few moments where they get serious, each performer is up to the task.

The two commentary tracks that appeared on the DVD, one featuring Soderbergh and screenwriter Ted Griffith, and one with Pitt, Damon and Garcia, are carried over, as is a 10-minute segment on the film's costumes. Additionally, there are 24 minutes of promotional pieces about the entire **Trilogy** ("I think George Clooney should sleep in a tuxedo.") that does point out the growth occurring to Damon's character over the course of the films, a good 28-minute production featurette (expanding on the DVD's abridged version), and a 14-minute piece about the original 1960 **Ocean's 11** (Feb 02) with reflections on it by Soderbergh, Clooney and others.

The problem with **Ocean's Twelve**—which is still, basically, a really fun movie—is that it immediately erases most of the satisfactions that **Ocean's Eleven** delivered at its end, which is particularly galling because the end of **Ocean's Eleven** deliberately and leisurely (to Debussy) savors all of those satisfactions. Shifting the locale to Europe, the 125-minute film gets a bit too complex with its flashbacks, a bit too loose with explaining how the characters know stuff (which is always a cheat in these movies, but is extra thick cheating here), and a bit too unfocused as to what the actual goals are. Roberts is wonderful, and you wish Zeta-Jones had continued with the gang, but unlike the first film, the movie has an air of sequel cynicism to its execution that can leave a slightly disappointing aftertaste, despite the movie's essential pleasures. Even during its best moments—Soderbergh has an acrobatic thief dance through a multiple-sweeping laser alarm system—there is a lingering sense the creators really aren't trying as hard as they could have. Additionally, the locations in Amsterdam and Rome are lovely, but they don't have that special glitz that Las Vegas can deliver to films.

The platter comes with 28 minutes of deleted and alternate scenes (the film was already running long, but Zeta-Jones lost some choice moments), a good 26-minute production documentary (Soderbergh: "It was fun in the first one watching them be successful, but I felt it would be more fun in the second film to see them just ground down."), and an enjoyable but less detailed 13-minute promotional featurette. Soderbergh and screenwriter

George Nolfi provide an informative commentary track. Nolfi had written a script about dueling thieves, and then collaborated with Soderbergh to adapt it for **Twelve**. He was on hand on the set, since there were often improvisations going on, and peppered Soderbergh with questions about his camera choices, since Soderbergh always does his own cinematography. The result of that collaboration bleeds very nicely into the commentary, since while they do talk about basic filmmaking challenges, they also talk about the risks they were taking with the story (particularly with Roberts character, which the powers that be did not in any way think was a good idea—naturally, it became the highpoint of the film), adapting to the needs of the stars and their schedules (Mac couldn't really be there much), and the intricacies of the very complicated narrative. One conversation scene that Soderbergh wanted to capture during the sunset had to be filmed over two days so he could get reaction shots during that brief time as the sun was going down. He also made use of different film stocks. "For just the Amsterdam scenes, we were shooting on a Fuji negative which has a different palette than the Kodak and tends to accentuate colors that, to my mind, are sort of common in Amsterdam. It has a great sort of yellowish brown, Earth tones, [that] in the Fuji stock tend to be much more prevalent, and it downplays things like reds and blues, so I was trying to have a different look for Amsterdam than for Rome." Soderbergh also speaks about the magic of creativity. "Sometimes you can't articulate why you're doing something other than, 'It feels right,' and then sometimes you can."

In atonement, the 122-minute **Ocean's Thirteen** not only returns to Las Vegas (and consciously examines how much the place has changed in just 6 years), but it also returns to the spirit of the first film. There is quite a bit of humor (including a highly amusing segment set in Mexico about labor relations that could have used just a bit more setup to really drive in its gags), a complicated but not abstract set of goals, and a freedom from the sardonic attitude that undermined **Ocean's Twelve**. While **Twelve** (which Soderbergh refers to as his '**Empire Strikes Back**' in the **Twelve** commentary) is a slight letdown after **Ocean's Eleven**, with **Ocean's Thirteen**, **Twelve** only becomes the change-of-fate second act, with enough variations so that **Thirteen** does not feel redundant and **Ocean's Trilogy** becomes a day spent in escapist paradise.

Carried over from the **Ocean's Thirteen** DVD are 5 minutes of deleted scenes and a 2-minute piece with producer Jerry Weintraub (who also has a bit part in each movie). Additionally, there is another great 30-minute production documentary, a nice 9-minute piece about the different technologies depicted in all three films and a reasonably interesting 44-minute TV documentary from 2007 about several famous thefts and scams. Soderbergh is joined by screenwriters Brian Koppelman and David Levein for the commentary, but it is not as rewarding as the previous two talks. Koppelman and Levein remind one of Caan and Affleck's characters in the films, always joking around and otherwise lacking seriousness at appropriate moments. There is still some worthwhile information about the production logistics and Soderbergh's basic choices, but you have to sift through a bunch of wisecracks to get to it.

### "Écrit et Réalisé par Woody Allen"

With the longest break between films (a 3-year hiatus) since he began making them, Woody Allen has finally brought forth another feature, his 2023 **Coup de Chance**, which has been released on a very lovely Blu-ray by MPI Home Video (UPC#030306227399, \$30). It is not just the film's title that is in French. The entire film was made in France with a French cast and a French crew, and is in French with optional English subtitles. Nevertheless, unlike, say, Joseph Losey's French films, the movie does not feel like a French movie. Although it has more conversation than even **My Night at Maud's**, it has been dressed in French to essentially disguise its very basic, straightforward narrative.

Before the narrative is addressed, however, it should be stated right away that the Blu-ray adds to the film's pleasures immensely. Unlike past Allen efforts, the 5.1-channel Dolby Digital sound has a full and enveloping dimensionality, providing atmospheric noises and accentuating the jazz recordings by Nat Adderley and others used for the score with an intoxicatingly smooth and comforting blanket of carefully articulated tones. Do you love Paris in the fall? That is when Allen shot it, and he basically gave cinematographer Vittorio Storaro carte blanche. Again, at first the film seems like Allen is desperately trying to throw things together, and unleashes Storaro to get the most out of every sunset hitting every fallen leaf, but the result on the BD is one gorgeous image after another. Letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2:1, the image is so sharp and so rich in its chromatic delivery, that between the picture and the sound you are more than willing to sit back and see if Allen has something going.

Lou de Laâge, who has a sort of young Frances McDormand vibe, plays an art expert who is married to a young wealthy money manager played by Niels Schneider, who has a sort of Jeremy Strong vibe. Despite the comfort of her surroundings and dinner parties and such, she begins to have an affair. Nothing happens at first that is not fully predictable and common in movies, soap operas and elsewhere. The 97-minute film needs an entire hour to get up to speed and express its own personality—primarily through the performance of Valérie Lemerrier, who plays the mother of Laâge's character—when its specific narrative variations finally begin to take hold. If the film were in English, one's instinct would be to dismiss it right away and miss out on the pleasures it has to offer. Instead, advancing methodically to the ironic punchline suggested by the title that concludes the film, it is Allen's most satisfying work in quite a while, especially in its exquisite presentation on Blu-ray (though in keeping with Allen's past home video releases, the only special feature is a trailer).

## Stuck on Tarr

Shot over the course of 3 years and set across several days, Béla Tarr's 2000 **Werckmeister Harmonies** utilizes a series of very long takes which present the illusion that the film is happening in real time. Released as a two-platter 4K Blu-ray by The Criterion Collection (UPC#715515294911, \$50), the crisp black-and-white feature depicts, mostly through the eyes of one initially enthusiastic young man played by Lars Rudolph, the total destruction of his community. Running 145 minutes, the film begins in a bar that is closing for the night and then follows the young man as he does a series of midnight chores. He is asked to convey a message to a local leader, who then goes to speak to groups of men who have been gathering in the town's large plaza, where an enormous whale is being showcased in a traveling display. Despite the halfhearted and confused messaging by the leader, the groups eventually coalesce and riot, rampaging through the town and its buildings, and leaving very little undisturbed. The film's ambiguities allow the work to become a universal metaphor—it can be read as man's relationship with god, as a blueprint of social, political and economic dynamics, or as the instability of the human consciousness, and most likely is covering all of those simultaneously. Meanwhile, it is the striking cinematography, letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.66:1, and the amazing congruity of its staging, that holds a viewer's fascination with its progression of detail and the colorings of human interaction. Normally a director would cut from a character leaving point A to a shot of him arriving at point B, but here, you see again and again the long walk between the two points, so that there are a little more than three dozen shots in the film, and yet the events seem to go by quickly because of the minimal cutting. The film is enigmatic and spellbinding, exploring the fragility not just of civilization (which is not an abstract concept in Eastern Europe), but of humanity itself.

Hanna Schygulla has a major supporting part. The film is in Hungarian and is supported by optional English subtitles. The picture on the 4K presentation is only subliminally sharper and smoother than the picture on the standard Blu-ray included in the set, but any additional support to a viewer's concentration enhances the film's impact significantly. There is some mild graininess in the most challenging lighting situations, but overall the impact of the image is both clear and compelling. The monophonic sound has a near-stereo presence and an unnerving bass. Again, the differences between the two presentations are minimal. The standard Blu-ray also contains a trailer and a 21-minute interview with Tarr from 2023 about his career and the film.

Also featured on the standard BD platter is Tarr's first feature film (which he also speaks about in the interview) from 1979, *Familij Nest (Családi tüzfészek)*, about the housing problems under Socialism, as one extended family has to make do in cramped living quarters because the grown sons and daughters cannot obtain their own places from the state. Tarr often uses very tight close-ups and otherwise constrains the view of what is happening around the characters as they interact at home, at work or in public areas. Running 106 minutes, there are some very nice dramatic moments and unsettlingly real exchanges, but like Socialist life in general (apparently), passages in the film are rather monotonous as extended scenes dance around and around the same topic to the point of tedium. The full screen black-and-white picture is in reasonably good condition, with minimal wear, and the monophonic sound is okay. The film is in Hungarian with optional English subtitles and does not pick up where it left off when playback is terminated—the disc goes back to the main feature, instead.

Just as entertaining and enigmatic as **Werckmeister Harmonies** but a great deal more accessible, Tarr's 2011 **The Turin Horse (A Torinói Ló)** is available from The Cinema Guild (UPC#881164000514, \$30). Again, Tarr uses mostly very long takes, in black and white and letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.66:1 (with an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback), allowing the viewer to absorb and ponder whatever the camera is observing. A farmer played by János Derzsi, who has lost the use of his right arm, and his adult daughter, played by Erika Bók, live in a dilapidated stone farmhouse. Every night for dinner, they each eat a roasted potato, without utensils. Title cards mark the passage of six days as a strong windstorm whips around outside without pause, and every day, existence becomes a little more tenuous than it was the day before. A visitor stops by at one point to borrow some booze, and a group passes by at another point, only to have the farmer shoot them off. That is it, so far as the narrative is concerned, and while there are a couple of conversations and voiceover narration, there are also lengthy segments where no one speaks at all, and even more where exchanges amount to no more than a couple of words, yet the 155-minute film remains transfixed from start to finish. There is just enough mystery to the setting and the characters to sustain intrigue. You watch not so much to see what will happen next, but simply to see what will occur next. The true richness of the film is in its textures, which are magnified by the intense contrasts achieved with the cinematography. As for the film's meanings, it is ambiguous enough that you can draw whatever conclusions or allegorical analogies you wish to draw. There are only a handful of films that we would consider playing without sound on a screen hung on the wall, in a continuous loop. **Werckmeister Harmonies** is not compelling enough to do that, but **The Turin Horse** definitely is.

The image transfer is outstanding, spotless and finely detailed. The 2-channel Dolby Digital sound brings a dimensionality to the wind and to Mihály Vig's hypnotic musical score. The dialog is in Hungarian with optional English subtitles, and all things considered, it is probably best to suppress the subtitling for most of the film (the character borrowing the liquor delivers an interesting soliloquy that requires translation, but very little else in the film does). Along with a trailer, there is a full 50-minute question and answer session for the film conducted at a film festival. Also featured is a 12-minute black-and-white short Tarr made in 1978, *Hotel Magnezit*. Shot on videotape, the squared full screen image is fairly soft much of the time. The film is essentially a well staged dramatic exercise, about a destitute man being evicted from the hostel where he has been staying, and his arguments in a common bunkroom with the other members as he packs his things. Tarr uses a lot of close-ups, presumably to

minimize how much of his location he needs to include, and while the piece can seem to begin haphazardly, it does indeed build effectively to an interesting dramatic twist about the man's past and what the others think of him. Finally, film critic Jonathan Rosenbaum speaks over the first 71 minutes of the feature film to provide something of a commentary, providing a fascinating history of Hungarian filmmaking, talking extensively about Tarr's entire career and describing most of his other movies, and going into detail about the film's meanings, references and dynamics. He is also of the opinion that although nothing much seems to happen in the movie, it is mysterious enough that one can feel compelled to watch it again and again.

## Verisimilitude and serendipity

Movies can be a very strange mix of a dedication to capturing reality down to the minutest detail and a wildly improbable depiction of circumstances designed to entertain. Even the best filmmakers do this, and the reason, either consciously or subconsciously, is that they want to get as much right as they possibly can, to make it easier to believe or, at least, accept the fabrications. The opening of Sidney Lumet's terrific 1996 urban crime tale from Paramount, **Night Falls on Manhattan**, released on Blu-ray by Paramount and Arrow Video (UPC#760-137145943, \$40), is a depiction of newly installed New York City assistant prosecutors receiving their orientation, and it has quite probably been lifted word for word and example for example from the real thing. If they didn't shoot it in the actual locations, then they made comprehensively precise copies of those locations for their shoot. The verisimilitude is intense and exciting in and of itself. So, when, a moderate amount of time later, one of those young prosecutors, embodied by Andy Garcia at the most gorgeously handsome point in his acting career, becomes in a matter of a few months the actual elected New York County District Attorney, you take it in your stride. After all, the film only has 113 minutes to spin its tale.

And in the truly terrific films, you can add serendipity to the verisimilitude. A minor—at the time, but rising—character actor landed a significant role in the film and plays it with his trademark Italian-American twinkle, right down to the chipped tooth that Lumet so enthusiastically highlights in his close-ups. Indeed, if the idea of using James Gandolfini and Ian Holm as plainclothes NYPD partners isn't counterintuitive perfection in casting, we don't know what is. Holm's character is also the father of Garcia's character, and thus things become morally complicated when the facts behind a failed collar start peeking out of the cover up. That Richard Dreyfuss has the best laugh in his final scene, as a high-priced attorney who was defending a seriously bad drug dealer, would be the icing on the cake, except that the film also features captivating performances by Ron Leibman, Lena Olin and Dominic Chianese, among many others. It is Lumet's obsession with getting the details of police procedure, courtrooms, offices, tenements, and middle class houses in Queens so exactly right that enables the film to lump together one significant action sequence, a romance, exciting courtroom dynamics, dramatic family confrontations and soul-searching moral quandaries without losing a viewer's attentive involvement. Indeed, the suspense climax of the entire film is Garcia's character, alone, holding a piece of paper in his hand and staring at a shredding machine, and in keeping with suspense moments, not only are you screaming at the screen but there is an appropriate, unexpected twist that takes you by complete surprise and leads perfectly into that final moment with Dreyfuss.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1, and the color transfer is exquisite. Somehow, Lumet and the cinematographer, David Watkin, manage to sustain the traditions of urban grime and graininess that come with NY cop films while still delivering an image that, as it has been replicated on the Blu-ray, is smooth, solid and intricately detailed. The picture quality makes Garcia look even more gorgeous, and Olin even more gorgeous still (and Holm's costumes a touch too pristine for his character, but who's complaining?). The 5.1-channel DTS sound has mostly centered sound effects and dialog, but there is beautiful Mark Isham jazz score that wafts throughout a the field of presentation with a smoothness of its own. We reviewed Paramount's DVD in Dec 98. Both the picture and sound looked fine, but do not have the strength and immediacy that the BD is able to provide. There are optional English subtitles. Along with a trailer, two commentary tracks have been carried over from the DVD, Lumet supplying illuminating information about his craft and his interaction with the NYPD, and Garcia and Leibman, along with producers Josh Kramer and Thom Mount, talking about what it is like to work with Lumet. Additionally, exclusive to the BD, there is a passable 60-minute overview of Lumet's career from 2002, naming each of his films up to that point (it ends anticipating what would have been an intriguing production except that it never got made, James Jones's *Whistle*) and pausing to go into detail on a number of them (it never dawned on us before how many times Sean Connery worked with Lumet, apparently grateful for the opportunity he was initially granted to escape James Bond). Featured as well are three TV commercials, 30 minutes of nice promotional interviews with the cast and Lumet, and 13 minutes of terrific behind-the-scenes footage.

## Petrocelli

Barry Newman was, briefly, a big movie star, and toward the end of his ephemera, he landed his own TV series, *Petrocelli*, which lasted for just two seasons, but earned him a couple of award nominations and made his subsequent disappearance into lower registers of the credit scrolls all the more baffling. It was a great series and hopefully it will come out on disc someday, but in the meantime, Paramount and Kino Lorber Incorporated have released the film that the series was based upon, **The Lawyer**, as a *KL Studio Classics* Blu-ray (UPC#738329266080, \$25). Like the series, Newman plays a lawyer named Petrocelli working in Texas (where everybody mispronounces his name) in the 1970 Sidney J. Furie feature, which immediately preceded **Vanishing Point** (Apr 09) as Newman's first starring role. Furie is one of our least favorite famous directors. He has made a couple of good films and is greatly admired in some circles, but has also made a few clinkers and even in his better efforts, we often find the choices he makes to be discomfiting. His shots are too tight—it doesn't help that the image for **The Lawyer**, which is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1, feels like too much as been masked off the top and bottom—and he lacks a sense of respite.



Robert Colbert, of **Time Tunnel** fame, plays a doctor who is accused of murdering his wife, although he claims he awoke from a night of partying to witness the murder, with blurred vision, before being knocked out again from behind. William Sylvester—the movie has a terrific cast—plays the partner of Colbert's character; Diana Muldaur is the wife of Newman's character; and Harold Gould is the prosecuting attorney. Newman's character is churlish at times, encouraging people to underestimate him, but he is clearly thinking several steps ahead of everyone else. As for the film's depiction of the justice system, the courtroom scenes stretch the limits of believability, but most of the film is set in a smallish town, and this is the state whose heritage includes Judge Roy Bean. Running 120 minutes, the movie is not **Anatomy of a Murder**, but it does establish an approach that made the TV series so satisfying, giving a decent amount of attention to the practice of law rather than being entirely focused on the solution of the crime, and riding on the appeal of Newman's subversively charming personality.

Adding to the film's essential appeal, the picture transfer is gorgeous. Colors are bright, fleshtones are accurate and everything is vividly detailed. The image is smooth and sharp. The monophonic sound is also strong and fairly clean, and there are optional English subtitles. Newman passed away in 2023, but shortly before his death and by all appearances in good health, he sat for a wonderful 22-minute interview about making the film and his relationship with Furie, who had, in effect, 'discovered' him. It is a joyful talk from beginning to end. There are very few actors whose work on its own could comprise a trilogy, but that is how we would view Newman's presence in **The Lawyer**, **Vanishing Point** and **Fear Is the Key** (Mar 24). There is no narrative link between the three films and his character is wildly different in each one, yet there is an intriguing compilation of performance that takes Newman's basic intense Northeastern urban personality and colors it in three distinctive ways through the three films to create a greater and more compelling protagonist than any one of his appearances in those films do on its own. His character begins as morally neutral in the first film, verges into immorality in the second, and then appears to continue that path until brilliantly turning the tables and thrusting clearly, if not obsessively, into morality in the third. It is a Seventies filmmaking arc well worth savoring. Also featured is an equally rewarding 10-minute collection of interviews with Muldaur. The first half is an audio-only interview from 2012 about **The Lawyer**, and the second half is a lovely promotional interview as part of a featurette about a film she and Newman made with Furie in 2022, **Finding Hannah**. Finally, the film is accompanied by commentary track featuring Furie fanatics Daniel Kremer and Paul Lynch, with inserted recordings from an interview with Furie. They mention the film briefly now and then but spend the majority of their time talking about Furie and his career, discussing his various features and going over how he approached directing, speaking extensively about how he worked with actors and with cinematographers.

### Murders

Three very early Paramount sound films that form a regular series of murder mysteries based upon stories by S.S. Van Dine have been released on a single Blu-ray platter by Universal and Kino Lorber Incorporated as a *KL Studio Classics* title, **Philo Vance Collection** (UPC#738329266516, \$40). William Powell stars in the films as Vance. Each squared full screen monophonic feature is in black and white, and there are optional English subtitles.

The 1929 *The Canary Murder Case* is a very primitive sound film. There are no intertitles, but the acting is stodgy and scenes are limited to a handful of sets (there is also a horrendously belittling presentation of an African-American actor playing a bellboy). Directed by Malcolm St. Clair, the film is a very primitive murder mystery as well, with a final twist that is as obvious as it is ludicrous. But all of that said, it is a fascinating movie, with an outstanding visual performance by Louise Brooks (she was dubbed by Margaret Livingston) and an opportunity to see Powell begin to ease himself into a character type that served his career quite well (not just as Vance, because he would carry it on as Nick Charles in the **Thin Man** movies, and elsewhere). Brooks' precision in her manner in front of the camera is electrifying, and sets her apart from every other actor in the film. The voice she is given is weird, but it is the way she commands the camera's attention that makes her performance work so well. As for Powell, he is really kind of the opposite from Brooks, delivering a 'cool,' nonchalant performance that is far more relaxed than the players around him and sets him apart with the confidence and unflappability that he projects through his character. The film also demonstrates why two character actors rose to prominence when sound first came in because of their distinctive voices—Eugene Pallette and Ned Sparks—and it makes you wonder how in the world Jean Arthur, whose performance is absolutely leaden and just plain awful, despite her distinctive voice—ever got cast in another movie again. Brooks plays a popular stage performer—her act apparently consists of swinging above a theater audience in a feather costume with a lot of bare leg—who has several men chasing after her charms. Powell's character is invited by the authorities to assist in examining the crime scene and sorting out the suspects. As we have pointed out before, the murder mystery genre seems to have a kind of a built-in potential for its own death, since each story must out-do previous stories in cleverness. Fortunately or unfortunately, the meter was reset to zero when motion pictures were invented, so the 80-minute film is in every way a benchmark for other films to surpass, which somehow they have managed to keep on doing for almost a century. We have no complaints.

The picture has an aged softness to it, and a few glimpses of wear, but is generally in decent condition, and somehow looks especially crisp during Brooks' close-ups. The sound is of course limited by the age of its recordings, but it does the wooden performances of the other cast members no favors, further dampening whatever intonation their voices can manage.

The second film from 1929, *The Greene Murder Case*, is a great cinematic advancement. The camera work is downright impressive, including what might be a matte shot around what is supposed to be a rooftop garden, but comes across

as if it is genuinely set on the roof of a mansion and they had drone cameras way back then. There is also a scene set in a darkened room that deftly presents lighting from candle and flashlight sources. Powell's performance in the first movie was fully competent, but even he is better in the second film, mastering the same varied cadence and pitch that he would continue to employ for the next three decades. Pallette also returns as the slow-witted police sergeant aiding Powell's character in the investigation, and Arthur returns as well, as an entirely different character than the one she played in the first movie. She's still a rookie, but her performance is not as gratingly bad as it was in the first film. Set entirely in the mansion (and on its roof), the inhabitants are bound to stay there or else forfeit a share of an inheritance. One is bedridden, another two are in love, and so on. Although the villain is readily identifiable if you know your genre tropes, the 67-minute feature still keeps you guessing so far as the details are concerned up to the last few minutes, and the finale is genuinely exciting. Directed by Frank Tuttle, it is a great little film that shows both the sound format and the murder mystery genre each finding an assured footing in the still budding artform.

The picture is again a bit soft, with occasional flurries of scratches, but generally looks quite good, and the quality of the sound is much stronger than the first feature. The wonderfully witty and informed film experts, Kim Newman and Barry Forshaw, supply commentaries for both films. They explain that the first feature was initially intended to be a silent film and had to be altered midstream when sound came in—in what was probably a bad career move, Brooks held out for more money to do the voice work and didn't get it—and they dryly point out that sound pretty much spoils the primary twist in the case. They also talk extensively about Van Dine and his detective, pointing out that critics past and present found the Philo Vance character to be a phony intellectual (they also suggest, based upon the books, that he is gay), and from there they contemplate murder mysteries and famous sleuths in general, as well as going over Powell's fine career and the other members of the cast and crew in each feature. They point out how vastly improved the second film was, even though it was made just 4 months after the first. "Interesting, the change in acting style. This is still an early sound movie. Already, the acting style, generally, is more nuanced than it was in silent films. Quite often in this film, there is a sense of a proscenium arch. So everyone's presented as if they were on stage." "And that's something that is very 1929 as a look."

The final film, *The Benson Murder Case* from 1930, is the best yet. The mystery is the least guessable of the three (unless you follow an obvious pattern in their structures), there is some variety to the locations, and the performances are all good fun, particularly Paul Lukas in a comical turn as a gigolo (that he is not quite young enough is part of the joke). After an opening scene in a stockbroker's office during a market crash, the locale shifts to the broker's upstate house on a dark and stormy night (adeptly conveyed by the sound mix) as several disgruntled clients visit, along with Powell's character, who happens to be staying next door. The murder occurs right in front of him, but even he is baffled for a while about the perpetrator. Running 64 minutes and directed again by Tuttle, the film moves briskly and the audio, although scratchy, is relatively sophisticated, freeing the characters to go where they please. Although Powell solves the murder with his usual flair, there is one mystery that is left for the ages—why is the bottom button of Pallette's vest unbuttoned, while Powell's buttons are fastened all the way down?

While still a bit soft, there are fewer scratches, or maybe we just didn't notice them because the story was so engaging. Film historian Jason Ney supplies a commentary track, doing a decent job of filling in the pieces that Newman and Forshaw allow to slip by in their entertaining discussions of the other two features. He delves deeply into the history of the production and the backgrounds of Powell and Van Dine (including the intricacies of Van Dine's mystery 'rules'), as well as going over the transitions that were occurring in Hollywood with sound.

### Metaphysical horror

A French metaphysical horror anthology from 2022, **Pandemonium**, has been released on Blu-ray by Arrow Video (UPC#760137146001, \$40). Directed by a filmmaker known as 'Quarxx,' it opens on an accident victim, played by Hugo Dillon, lying face up in the middle of an eerie, fogbound mountain road. He opens his eyes and another man begins speaking to him. Very shortly it is determined that they have both died in the accident and are experiencing the challenges of the afterlife. This story is a bookend, with Dillon's character moving on to kick off the two other stories by hovering over their victims before returning in the finale for his own adventure in what the French, always interested in good cooking, call 'Enfer.' The second story is about a little girl who thinks that a monster has killed her parents. The third story is about a lawyer attempting to comprehend her young daughter's suicide after ignoring the daughter's complaints about bullying at school. Running 95 minutes, the film is reasonably intense and creepy, offering up equal amounts of second rate horror effects and first rate metaphysical contemplation, which linger in the imagination longer than they have any right to.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.4:1. While the visual and makeup effects are less than state of the art, the cinematography is superb and conveys the film's ethereal disturbances quite effectively. The crisp and vivid transfer may accentuate the limitations of the effects, but it also enhances the movie's disturbing atmosphere and conveys the precision of every narrative detail, making it a worthy trade off. The 5.1-channel DTS sound has a viable dimensionality and can also be unsettling at times. The film is in French with optional English subtitles and comes with a trailer; 4 minutes of footage from the film's premiere, with audience reactions; 22 minutes of good behind-the-scenes footage as the crew tries to figure out the best way to accomplish the special effects; a 17-minute interview with prosthetic designer Olivier Afonso talking about the challenges in the makeup designs and his experiences working on the film; and 25 minutes of interviews with Quarxx, who explains that the stories are linked as depictions of guilt and talks about why he made the film, the problems he encountered during the shoot (including some, such as a snowstorm, that fit quite well into the narrative), the effectiveness of the performances, how they shot the actual birth of a baby, and how his boom operator became his composer.

### Hepburn tries to be a nun

Dependent almost entirely upon Audrey Hepburn's star power, Fred Zinnemann's 1959 **The Nun's Story** runs 149 minutes and breaks down into three distinctive acts. In the first, the viewer is given a glimpse behind the scenes as Hepburn's character enters a Belgian convent to become a nun. While the film cheats by not showing how the novices learn the elaborate choreography they must follow in their ceremonies, it nonetheless (pardon the pun) focuses on the details of the process by which the candidate learns the ways and means of obedience to the church. The second part is the heart of the film's actual entertainment, as Hepburn's character is assigned to be a nurse in the Belgian Congo, eventually working with a conscientious doctor nicely embodied by Peter Finch. Shot on location, the film's mix of dramatic medical sequences, nuances of faith and travelog imagery is irresistible, particularly as it is simply the centerpiece of a longer work. In the last act, Hepburn's character returns to Belgium at the outbreak of World War II, and finds that the moral conflicts of wartime are just too extreme to justify an overriding commitment to neutrality, even if it involves the soul. Somebody had to write the autobiographical tale upon which the film was based, right?

Released by Warner Bros. as a *Warner WB Archive Entertainment* Blu-ray (UPC#840418304570, \$22), the color transfer is exquisite, which adds greatly to the film's appeal, again in particular during the African sequence. The accuracy is so smooth and sharp that you find yourself examining Hepburn's face in fine detail to detect any application of makeup—there has to be mascara, at the very least. Edith Evans, Peggy Ashcroft are among the costars (less dependent upon makeup, although even the other supporting nuns look paler than Hepburn) and Dean Jagger has an interesting role as the father of Hepburn's character. But it is Hepburn who is carrying the film from start to finish, with just the round part of her face showing for most of it, and having revved up a movie star career to full speed by the time the film was made, the production demonstrates just how appropriate and well deserved her success was. It is easy enough for a character actress like Evans and Ashcroft to deliver a performance while ensconced in a habit, but Hepburn's challenge—conveying the gradual shifts in emotional commitment that her character undergoes—is far more complicated and impressive. That she's also gorgeous doesn't hurt, either.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1. The monophonic sound is strong and clear. There are optional English subtitles, and a trailer.

### Ladd classic

For the most part, the Alan Ladd films made at Paramount have never appeared on home video before, and are at the very least obscure movies that are just now being given the attention they deserve on Blu-ray by Paramount and Kino Lorber Incorporated as *KL Studio Classics* titles. The 1952 Charles Vidor adventure, **Thunder in the East** (UPC#738329266509, \$25), has big stars joining Ladd in an (studio-based, of course) exotic locale with action, intrigue and a solid romance. Indeed, the film's final act is everything you could ask for in a Hollywood production, if you don't mind that the unbearable suspense and tension concludes with the good guys totally slaughtering the bad guys. Ladd is an every-man-for-himself arms dealer who wants to unload a plane full of guns in a small Indian state, shortly after independence, hoping the local prince will be interested in protecting his interests against a bloodthirsty band of rebels. A small contingent of British citizens are also at risk as the rebellion gathers steam. Delivering an excellent performance that not only enlivens every moment of the film where she appears, but brilliantly solidifies the romantic payoff at the end, Deborah Kerr is the blind daughter of a minister, while Charles Boyer is a Hindustani—yeah, that's Hollywood doing its thing—pacifistic assistant to the prince, who locks up the guns and won't allow them to be released even as the horde of rebels are storming the gates of the palace (which, conveniently, has an airfield in its backyard, isolated from the attack by cliffs). John Williams, Corinne Calvet and Cecil Kellaway are also featured. Running 97 minutes, the film is pure, old fashioned, West-centric entertainment, and thanks to Vidor, there's not a moment in it that lacks momentum, logic or sheer cinematic pleasure.

The squared full screen black-and-white picture is in passable shape. Once in a while, a shot is a bit soft, and there are a number of stray speckles, but there is no wear that is pronounced enough to interfere with the movie's joys. The monophonic sound is fine and there are optional English subtitles, along with an original trailer. The late film expert Lee Gambin and costume expert Elissa Rose supply a passable commentary, although there are quite a few digressions that have little to do with the film at hand. Initially, Rose addresses the outfits that the cast is wearing, but she doesn't offer too much insight, while Gambin, in going over the careers of the cast and Vidor, often ends up describing other films in great detail. They do address the film's imperial perspective in depth, but overall, the talk is just moderately insightful.

### Down the hatch

Checking off two boxes in the 'must see' column right away, John Farrow directed the 1951 Paramount submarine movie, **Submarine Command**, a Paramount Kino Lorber Incorporated *KL Studio Classics* Blu-ray (UPC#738329266493, \$25). Checking off another box, William Holden stars as the sub's skipper, taking the helm of the boat during the final days of World War II and then coping with the ennui of peacetime until the Korean War puts him back in action. The film runs 87 minutes and the middle, non-combat act is quite lengthy, but Farrow's mastery over the combat scenes are highly engaging, and his approach to the central drama is adept enough to sustain interest between those more suspenseful bookends. Nancy Olson stars as the wife of Holden's character, very tolerant of his moods even as he starts lingering over alcohol to nurse the guilt he feels from his by-the-book choices at the beginning. William Bendix is another career sailor, who resented those choices but somehow ends up on the same boat again for the final mission. Don Taylor is also featured, and Noel Neill and Wayne Hickman have smaller parts. Farrow had the full cooperation of the U.S. Navy and shot the film on genuine diesel subs with experienced extras, so if you are like us, any movie that goes down the hatch to show the crew performing actual tasks will have

your eyelids glued open. In a curious and perhaps purposeful way, the long center of the movie conveys the frustration and anxiety that Holden's character is feeling not just topically, but viscerally, since the viewer becomes as restless and alienated as he appears to be.

Oh, and did everybody in submarines really smoke cigarettes like that in those days? The squared full screen black-and-white picture is somewhat inconsistent. It does have sharp, clean sequences, but there are also quite a few segments that look substantially softer or have fleeting speckles. Naturally, one tends to notice this more often in the middle of the film than during the battle scenes. The monophonic sound is reasonably strong and there are optional English subtitles. Kino's go-to commentators for war films, Steve Mitchell and Steven Jay Rubin, supply an informative commentary, going over the careers of the cast and Farrow, but also talking about war movies and submarine films, and discussing the various equipment as it appears.

### Ultra-Gothic Lang

A great complement to Alfred Hitchcock's **Suspicion**, Fritz Lang's woolly 1947 **Secret beyond the Door**, released by Paramount and Kino Lorber Incorporated as a *KL Studio Classics* Blu-ray (UPC#738329266486, \$25), begins with an heiress, played by Joan Bennett, marrying an architect played by Michael Redgrave, after knowing him for just a few weeks. It is only after they are wed that she starts seeing hiccups in his personality, but she doesn't really begin to worry until they get back to his enormous house (which she learns is mortgaged to the hilt) and discovers that his 'hobby' is redesigning the rooms in the house to replicate rooms where notorious murders have been committed. Oh dear. The 98-minute film plays along with that for quite a while, before transitioning into **Spellbound**, adding a touch of **Notorious** and then ending with **Rebecca**. Were it any other director, the film might come across as a hack, but under Lang's masterful command of the medium, it is an ultra-Gothic thriller with sex always brewing very close to its surface (Bennett even wears an oo-la-la outfit at one point), despite the dilutions of the Production Code. While the characters may be trapped in Psychology 101, the film is unrestrained with its evocative, unnerving and outright creepy moments, aided by Lang's supreme fluency in visual metaphor. One stairwell is decorated with masks. The heroin cuts the base off of a candle so she can make a copy of a key. What happens is that Lang creates a 'movie world' as a substitute for the real world, so that the film's simplicities and exaggerations become metaphors themselves for the emotional struggles the characters are undergoing. Redgrave conveys not so much shifts in moods but complete alterations in his personality, while Bennett's creates a strength that make her emotional swings believable—she wants to love him, even though her feet are telling her to run away as fast as possible. They first meet when their eyes lock while watching two other men fight with knives over another woman, and from that moment on, provided you can abandon your prejudgments and biases, the film may seem unreal, but it is transfixing.

Of course, as film historian Alan K. Rode explains on his commentary track, audiences didn't think so, and the movie was a huge flop that created a hiccup in Lang's career (although he went on to make some outstanding films afterwards) and didn't help anyone else associated with it, either. Anne Revere, Natalie Schafer and Barbara O'Neil co-star. The squared full screen black-and-white picture generally has an immaculate transfer most of the time (another reason Bennett's sun lounging outfit is worth freezing), although there are a few scattered speckles. The monophonic sound is fine, lending support to Miklós Rózsa's classic score, and there are optional English subtitles. Rode focuses on Lang's career in the Forties, but also goes over the lives of Bennett and producer Walter Wanger, as well as offering up quicker profiles of other members of the cast and the crew. He also mentions that the film was substantially trimmed and altered after it was taken away from Lang.

### Star power

What is a movie star? We can name one individual who doesn't have good looks, whose acting skills are rudimentary, and who has never headlined a blockbuster film or led a hit TV series, and yet we can never get enough of him and will go out of our way to seek out any program in which he appears, which is enough to certify him as an honest to goodness movie star of the first order. We'd run across eight lanes of traffic to get his autograph if we could. The 2014 film that he is headlining isn't even very good, but we still had a great time simply because not only is he top-billed, he is the center of the entertainment. We are of course talking about none other than Danny Trejo, who plays a cop named, now get this, Frank 'Bullet' Marasco in the Filmhub release, **Bullet Director's Cut** (UPC#810162441395, \$18). Except that he drives a kind of midsize muscle car, allusions to a certain alternately-spelled Peter Yates film which also had a hero named 'Frank' are nonexistent (now we could argue that Chris Ridenhour's music picks up on some of Lalo Schiffrin's riffs, but it is a stretch).

Originally running 87 minutes, the 2023 **Director's Cut** lasts a full 93 minutes and is promoted by Filmhub as the version that adheres closest to director Nick Lyon's 'vision,' whatever that is. The action scenes tend to be deliberately jerky, but they aren't all that well staged anyway, so anything that kind of obscures their shortcomings is a plus. The grandson of Trejo's character is kidnapped, along with the daughter of the governor, by a maniacal gangster, played with fully juiced evil by Jonathan Banks, who wants to stop the state from executing his son. In a nice star resurrection piece of casting, John Savage plays the governor. While the story is clear enough—the gangster wants Trejo's character to confess to the crime so that the governor's pardon will be justified—the logic connecting one scene to the next is very shaky. But like we said, it really doesn't matter that Lyon doesn't know how to stage a gunfight or that the script is ludicrous. Trejo is there, in the center, and he eats up so much of the camera doing absolutely nothing that you can't wait until he wastes another bad guy and then does nothing some more. Obviously, it is much more comforting to be walking beside him in a dark alley than running into him there, and that is what makes the film worthwhile. His face is so gnarled with life that he makes Charles Bronson seem like an Adonis, but the vibe is the same. The camera loves the detail.



The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.25:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The masking seems awkwardly tight, to the point where names in the opening credits are partially cut off on the bottom. The colors are adequately delivered. The film is deliberately dark and drained looking, but the transfer doesn't add to the irritations that Lyon already achieved with his visual concepts. The stereo sound has a basic dimensionality and harsh edges. There is no menu, but optional English subtitles can be activated manually. A cute sequence with Banks appears after some of the end credit scroll has gone by, so don't get too anxious to shut the film down when the scroll first appears.

### Christie's life

A three-part BBC biographical documentary on the life of Agatha Christie, **Agatha Christie: Lucy Worsley on the Mystery Queen**, has been released on a single-platter DVD by BBC (UPC#883929819096, \$20). That Worsley, having done quite a few British documentaries, has enough oomph to get her name into the title along with Christie speaks to both the show's strength and its weakness. To the show's benefit, Worsley doesn't just tell good stories, she personalizes them, so that the tale of Christie's life, which is every bit as mysterious and romantic as one of her novels, takes on a much greater immediacy and engagement than it would with a generic, unseen narrator. On the downside, she is on camera a lot, so that as much as the show is about Christie, it often seems like it is about Worsley, too, who travels to all of the major locations in England and the Middle East crucial to Christie's biography and sort of plants herself again and again in Christie's place. In the balance, however, Christie wins out. The 185-minute program feels complete and comprehensive, addressing everything from the inspirations for many of the major novels (as well as sensible plot descriptions) to the events in her personal life that scandalized newspapers and contributed to her maturation and independence. While we would still like to know exactly how she got from the automobile accident to the spa, Worsley's general research behind what really occurred during Christie's immortalized 11-day disappearance is viable. The show includes many insights (Christie wrote *Curtain* out of concern that she might die in the Blitz), and uses a deft back-and-forth between highlights of her personal life and the appearance of her most significant novels to keep the narrative colorful and moving forward. In one of the best segments, Worsley sits down with a black literary scholar to discuss the original title of *And Then There Were None*, which they place within the context of its time in an enlightening manner. Worsley also visits the actual stage where *The Mousetrap* is being performed to talk about its inspirations and success, and we immediately spotted one cute touch that could easily be missed—the arched doorway in the center of the set forms a pair of mouse ears. Worsley argues persuasively that Christie's life and writing both followed and contributed to the development of British society in the Twentieth Century. She also concludes the story on such a compelling romantic note that Kleenex may be required to see it through.

The disc has a 'Play All' option and is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The color transfer is bright and sharp, making the locations look especially compelling. The two-channel Dolby Digital sound brings a decent dimensionality to the musical score, and there are optional English subtitles.

### The man in the glass booth

All 115 days of Adolf Eichmann's 1961 trial in Israel were filmed in black and white and then transferred to videotape for preservation. Some of that footage has since disappeared, but there are still hours of it available, and those hours have been edited down, combined with other contemporary news reports and so on, to create a fascinating 103-minute documentary created by Elliot Levitt and released by Virgil Films and Kino Lorber, **The Eichmann Trial** (UPC#829567142721, \$20). Reminiscent of **Point of Order** (Aug 08), the film proceeds chronologically through the trial, from opening statements and a lengthy parade of witnesses (one collapses during his testimony) and then to the defense's case, the closing statements (including Eichmann), the verdict and the sentencing. Eichmann stands and sits with three guards inside of a bulletproof glass closet to the left of the judges, while his advocate sits with the prosecutor in front facing the judges and the witnesses speak at a podium on the right. A number of future Israeli leaders drop by in the audience, including as Golda Meyer and Moshe Dayan—the courtroom is designed somewhat like a theater—and Hannah Arendt is there for the stretch. But the documentary is anything but banal. Eichmann consistently keeps his cool, managing to be both polite and contemptuous, as if the entire proceeding were beneath him, but the aura of evil simmers around him due to the juxtaposition of the accusations and the evidence. The scope and horror of what happened in Nazi Germany was still not entirely understood in 1961, but much is made of how exceptional those events were. During the ensuing decades, thanks to movies, books and so on, the world has a much better comprehension of what occurred, but at the same time, there is a better perspective, as well. It is unquestionable that the individuals specifically responsible for the organization and execution of Adolf Hitler's ideas deserved whatever punishment they received, and the trial makes that exceedingly clear no matter how much Eichmann begs to differ. However, the Nazis may have been the agent, but the Holocaust occurred because of the advancements in technology that enabled it, and as technology has continued to advance, humanity's inhumanity continues an apparently unstoppable progression, as well. The event was not as exceptional as people thought at the time.

The squared full screen picture is in excellent condition. Yes, some tapes are in better shape than others, but for the most part, the image has the vivid immediacy of a well preserved soap opera. There are times when footage of atrocities are fleetingly interlaced with the footage of the trial, and while one assumes that the anomaly is simply a flaw in the source material, it retains a compelling emotional resonance regardless of whether it is deliberate or not. Music and sound effects such as crowd noises have a strong dimensionality on the 5.1-channel Dolby Digital audio track, while the trial itself, of course, is monophonic. Held in four official languages, passages that are

not in English are supported by permanent English subtitles, while passages that are in English are supported by optional English subtitles. Also featured are a trailer and 3 minutes of newsreel footage that remains interesting even after you sit through the documentary, for the capsulation that the pieces present of the trial and its aftermath. An excellent 30-minute interview with Levitt goes over how he researched and compiled the footage, the various discoveries he made along the way (newsreels from different countries had different perspectives on the trial) and what can be learned from the material presented in the film.

### DVD News

**CRITERION CORNER:** The Criterion Collection will be releasing the 168-minute Bernardo Bertolucci's **The Last Emperor** in 4K format, although apparently the longer and better 218-minute version will not be in 4K. The release will also have a commentary featuring Bertolucci, producer Jeremy Thomas, screenwriter Mark Peploe, and composer-actor Ryuichi Sakamoto; *The Italian Traveler*, *Bernardo Bertolucci*, a film by Fernand Moszkowicz tracing the director's geographic influences from Parma to China; footage taken by Bertolucci while on pre-production in China; two documentaries about the making of the film; a program featuring Vittorio Storaro, editor Gabriella Cristiani, costume designer James Acheson, and art director Gianni Silvestri; an archival interview with Bertolucci; and interviews with David Byrne and cultural historian Ian Buruma. **Brief Encounters / The Long Farewell: Two Films by Kira Muratova** will come with an archival interview with Muratova. Martha Coolidge's **Not a Pretty Picture** will include an interview with Coolidge conducted by filmmaker Allison Anders and *Old-Fashioned Woman* (1974), a documentary by Coolidge about her grandmother. Two separate films by Albert Brooks are being issued in 4K format, **Real Life**, which will also feature interviews with Brooks and Frances Lee McCain, and **Mother**, which will have interviews with Brooks and Rob Morrow.

**NEW IN BLU:** The following titles have recently been released on Blu-ray—Acid Bath V.13, Acid Bath V.14, Mind Melters V.41, Mind Melters V.42, Mind Melters V.43, Mind Melters V.44 (Acid Bath); Hey Folks! It's the Intermision Time Video Party! (AGFA); Altered Perceptions (Ariztical); Breaking Her Will (Bill Zebub); The Other Dimension and the Films of Fabio Salerno (Bleeding Skull); Alvin's Harmonious World of Opposites, The Viper's Hex (Bounty); The Exhibitionist, *Le 7<sup>me</sup> Mensonge*, The Legend of El Chupacabra, Shawn's Senior Year (Burning Bulb); The Great Land of Small (Canadian); Zero Woman Red Handcuffs (Cauldron); Delusion, Intimate Lessons, Kinski's Paganini (CAV); Dracula 2000, The Island of Dr. Moreau, Orphan (Cinedigm); Meet John Doe (Classicflix); All That Breathes, Anatomy of a Fall, Girlfight, A Story of Floating Weeds/Floating Weeds, Three Revolutionary Films from Ousmane Sembène (Criterion); All the Young Wives/My Pleasure Is My Business (Dark Force); Dead Wrong (Deadly Instinct); Kin-Dza-Dza (Deaf Crocodile); One Life, Sasquatch Sunset (Decal); Kim's Video (Drafthouse); Out in the Ring (ETR); Quantum Cowboys (Factory 25); The Spirit of '45 (Film Desk); All about Lily Chou Chou, Club Zero (Film Movement); Against the Storm Herbert Kline in a Darkened Europe (Flicker Alley); Bad CGI Gator, Countdown to Esmeralda Bay (Full Moon); Seeing Red 3 French Vigilante Thrillers (Fun City); A Most Atrocious Thing (Giant); American Mileage, Chasing Raine, Nothing's for Free The History of Freeride Mountain Biking, Seven Days, Transition (Gravitas); Tableau (Indie Rights); Back from the Dead, Big Man on Campus, Bushman, The Chase, Daisy Miller, De Humani Corporis Fabrica, Fletch, Fletch Lives, The French, High Noon, The Hour before the Dawn, Io Capitano, The Lawyer, Monk Season 6; Monk Season 7, Philo Vance Collection, Pursued, Republic Pictures Horror Collection, Revenge of the Ninja, Saigon, Sci-Fi Chillers Collection, Secret beyond the Door, Slam, Submarine Command, Teaserama plus Varietease, Thunder in the East, Vitagraph Comedies, The Wolf House (Kino); Wolves (Leomark); Arthur the King, Damaged, Imaginary, Knox Goes Away (Lionsgate); Red Right Hand (Magnolia); Castle Keep/Bobby Deerfield, Dead Wrong (Mill Creek); Coup de Chance, Into the Blue (MPI); The Beauty of Beauties, Butcher Baker Nightmare Maker, The Church, Crimson Peak, Dance Me Outside, Deathdream, The Devil's Honey, Frivolous Lola, The Great Alligator, Hardware Wars, Joy Sticks, Lady Reporter, Narc, Night Falls on Manhattan, Pandemonium, Prison Walls Abashri Prison I-III, A Queen's Ransom, Sabotage, The Sect, She Is Conann, Shinobi Band of Assassins / Revenge / Resurrection, Subversives The Lowest of the Low, The Valiant Ones, We Go On (MVD); Amanda (Oscilloscope); Bob Marley One Love, Get Rich or Die Tryin' (Paramount); KRISPR (Petrie Willink); Midnight Desires (Quality X); Boycise in Belgrade, Borderline, C.A.M. Contagious Aggressive Mutations, Frankenstein Legacy, A Home for the Holidays, Katernica, Punch, The Real Story 1917 (Rising Sun); In the Land of Saints and Sinners (Samuel Goldwyn); Mom N' Pop Indie Video Store Boom of the 80s/90s! (Saturn's Core); The Brother from another Planet (Shoreline); American Hustle, The Cleanse, Man's Castle, Thunderheart, The Vertical Ray of the Sun (Sony); Axe Grinder, The Occultist, Revenge of the First Wives (Sterling); Insert Coin (Ten Point Oh); The Tunnel (Umbrella); The American Society of Magical Negroes (Universal); Drift (Utopia); The Bricklayer (Vertical); Devil's Doorway, Dune Part Two, Friendly Persuasion, The Good Die Young, The Mask of Fu Manchu, The Nun's Story, Of Mice and Men, Paris Blues, The Powerpuff Girls Complete Series, The Rain People, Scooby-Doo! on Zombie Island/Scooby-Doo! Return to Zombie Island, You're a Big Boy Now (Warner); Creation of the Gods I Kingdom of Storms, Noryang Deadly Sea (Well Go); Too Much Sleep (Whole Grain); Daniel Isn't Real (Yellow Veil)

**NEW IN 4K:** The following titles were recently released in 4K format—The Addams Family 1 & 2, Gretel & Hansel, Killer Klowns from Outer Space (Cinedigm); Peeping Tom (Criterion); Cry-Baby, High Noon (Kino); One from the Heart (Lionsgate); The Crow (Miramax); Butcher Baker Nightmare Maker, Cathy's Curse, Cemetery Man, The Church, Crimson Peak, Deathdream, The Devil's Honey, Frivolous Lola, The Great Alligator, Narc, The Sect, The Valiant Ones, Witch Story (MVD); Bob Marley One Love, Once upon a Time in the West, Star Trek III The Search for Spock (Paramount); American Sniper, Dune Part Two, Magic Mike, 12 Strong (Warner)

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Current Attractions

The following titles recently appeared for the first time:

- Acid Bath V.13 (Acid Bath)
Acid Bath V.14 (Acid Bath)
After Midnight (Screamtime)
After the Storm (Dreampscape)
Alarm (Film Movement)
Alice & Jack (Paramount)
Alien Betrayal UFOs and the Biggest Cover Up in History (Alchemy)
Alien Worlds Pyramids and Temple Secrets Exposed (Alchemy)
All That Breathes (Criterion)
Altered Perceptions (Arizical)
Alto (Dreampscape)
Alvin's Harmonious World of Opposites (Bounty)
Always Midnight (Screamtime)
Amanda (Oscilloscope)
Amelia's Children (Vignogna)
American Message (Gravitas)
The American Society of Magical Negroes (Universal)
Armilyville Bigfoot (SRS)
Armor Mio (Film Movement)
Anatomy of a Fall (Criterion)
Ancient Origins Kingdoms under Ice (Alchemy)
Any Minute Now (YinYin)
Are Parents People? (Alpha)
Around Midnight (Screamtime)
Art of Falling in Love (Dreampscape)
The Art of Grieving (Filmhub)
Arthur the King (Lionsgate)
As I Am (Freestyle)
The Assumption (Filmhub)
The Astrology of Pandemics (Filmhub)
Attendant (Filmhub)
Backyard Village (Filmhub)
Bad CGI Gator (Full Moon)
The Badger Game (Filmhub)
Battle over Britain (Cinegridm)
Beats Babe Bingo (Filmhub)
The Beautiful Risk (Filmhub)
Before I Die (Screamtime)
Best Friend from Heaven (Dreampscape)
Betrayals (Filmhub)
Betty's Bad Luck in Love (Cinegridm)
Beyond the Tree Line (Freestyle)
Bigfoot Encounters in the Pacific Northwest (Filmhub)
Bigfoot The Legend Is Real (Filmhub)
Billy the Kid and the Lincoln County War (Filmhub)
Black Mid Exposure (Filmhub)
Blacks & UFOs (Filmhub)
Bleeding Butterfly (Filmhub)
Blue Skyman 3 (Warner)
Bob Marley One Love (Paramount)
The Bond (Filmhub)
Bond Money (Filmhub)
Bordeaux (Rising Sun)
Bounce Patrol Baby Sharks and More Kid Songs (Filmhub)
Boyce in Bedgrade (Rising Sun)
The Bricklayer (Vertical)
The Bridgewater Triangle (Filmhub)
The Brown Hyena of Makgadikgadi (Dreampscape)
Building the Eiffel Tower (Paramount)
Bullet Director's Cut (Filmhub)
Bunnyman Vengeance (Filmhub)
The Busher (Alpha)
Businessman (Kino)
The Businessman (Filmhub)
C.A.M. Contagious Aggressive Mutations (Rising Sun)
The Cancer Detectives (Paramount)
Captured (YinYin)
The Cat Town Story (Filmhub)
Crashing Rain (Gravitas)
Crashes Eve (Filmhub)
Class of Her Own (Freestyle)
Club Zero (Film Movement)
The Come Up (Filmhub)
Confessions of Crime (Alan Ferguson)
The Conjuring House Experiments (Filmhub)
Coopde Crance (MPi)
Couting Chances (Filmhub)
Creation of the Gods I Kingdom of Storms (Well Go)
Critical Nexus (Filmhub)
The Crossing Bridge (YinYin)
Dance Together (Dreampscape)
Daniel Isn't Real (Yellow Veil)
Darkest Inferno to Paradise (Paramount)

- Retrospect (Paramount)
The Dark Military (Filmhub)
Dark Writer (Filmhub)
Day Labor (Freestyle)
De Humani Corporis Fabrica (Kino)
The Dead End (Filmhub)
The Dead Flowers (Alchemy)
The Dead (Electric)
Dèjà Vu (Filmhub)
Destined to Fly (Filmhub)
Desire (Filmhub)
Destiny All Neighbors (AMVD)
The Devil's Honey (MVD)
Devil's Snare (Filmhub)
Dani & Devine Meet the Apocalypse (Filmhub)
Discipline (YinYin)
Disturbia (Paramount)
Dog Man (Filmhub)
Down Bad Life in the Hood (Filmhub)
Down the Road (Filmhub)
The Dummy Fagor (Filmhub)
Dune Part Two (Warner)
Eating Up Easter (Dreampscape)
Eggs (Filmhub)
The Eichmann Trial (Kino)
Eternal Message (Gravitas)
The Empire Builder (Dreampscape)
The Empty (YinYin)
Eternity (Dreampscape)
Even Odds (Filmhub)
Execution (YinYin)
The Exhibitors (Burning Bulb)
Exp Plan The 4th Move (Filmhub)
Exploiting the Known (Dreampscape)
Expunged Test Case (Filmhub)
Fading Petals (Filmhub)
Faith Hope and BBQ (Filmhub)
Failing for Destiny (Filmhub)
Father Brown Season 11 (Warner)
Fighting Married (Filmhub)
Fighting Fish (Filmhub)
Find Me (Filmhub)
Fitting In (Breaking Glass)
Flashes The Director's Cut (Filmhub)
Flowslate The FPV Drone Documentary (Filmhub)
Fluffy Gardens V.1 (Dreampscape)
Fluffy Gardens V.2 (Dreampscape)
Fluffy Gardens V.3 (Dreampscape)
Fluffy Gardens V.4 (Dreampscape)
Fool for Sale (Gravitas)
Forbidden Knives (Filmhub)
Forbidden Fruits (Filmhub)
Forbidden Knowledge Order of the Grail (Alchemy)
Kopy Kings (Filmhub)
KRISPR (Pèire Willink)
Lakota Girls (Filmhub)
Last Alchemist (Filmhub)
The Landline Detective Our Precious Hope St. Louis' Little Jane Dow Revisited (Filmhub)
Our Worlds Collide (Freestyle)
Over Florida (Filmhub)
The Pale Man (Filmhub)
Parasaurus (Filmhub)
The Panty Ghost Documentary (Filmhub)
Paranormal Extremes Text Messages from the Dead (Filmhub)
The Passing (Filmhub)
PBS Kids 15 Sibling Stories (Paramount)
The People's Games (Dreampscape)
The Pigeon People (Filmhub)
Pimp Blues (Filmhub)
The Pining (Filmhub)
Popular Theory (Breaking Glass)
President Evil (Filmhub)
Pressurized (Filmhub)
Punch (Rising Sun)
The Psychic (Filmhub)
Queen of the Deuce (Kino)
Quest for Atlantis (Alchemy)
Ralphie May Too Big to Ignore (Filmhub)
Rant Rant Rant (Freestyle)
Real Cases of Shadow People The Sarah McCormick Story (Filmhub)
The Real Story 1917 (Rising Sun)
Red Light District Shark (Filmhub)
Red Right Hand (Magnolia)
Red River Moon (Filmhub)
Remaining Light (Filmhub)
Remembering Every Night (Kino)
The Resilient Heart (Filmhub)
Resitution Road (Filmhub)

- Retrospect (Paramount)
The Toxic Avenger The Musical (Giant)
Traffic Safety Scare Films of the Past (Alpha)
Trail of Terror (Alpha)
Trail of the Royal Mounted (MVD)
Trakked (Filmhub)
Transition (Gravitas)
Trap House (Filmhub)
Tree Line (Filmhub)
Tried & True (Filmhub)
TriedSOS (KDMG)
Truth or Dare (Filmhub)
Turbinas (Filmhub)
Turpin and Company (Alpha)
Twisted Fiction (Filmhub)
Ukraine on Fire (Filmhub)
Uncropped (Kino)
Underground Lizard People They're Coming for You (Filmhub)
Up Country (Filmhub)
Uge (Filmhub)
Vanity Vans (Filmhub)
Vegas Stones 100 Degrees at Midnight (Filmhub)
Venez (Filmhub)
The Vex (Bounty)
Watch Your Six (Filmhub)
We Go On (Filmhub)
The Wedding Planners Season 1 (Dreampscape)
Wendigo Demonic Evil (Alchemy)
Werewolf (Filmhub)
What about Christmas? (Filmhub)
What Ya Life Like (Filmhub)
When Cowboys Were King Collection 2 (MVD)
The Whole City Club (Filmhub)
Why Me (Filmhub)
Why We Walk (Gravitas)
Without Love (Filmhub)
Without Ward (Filmhub)
Without Your Love (Filmhub)
Wolves (Leomark)
The Woods (Filmhub)
WW2 Documentary Double Feature Battle for Europe/We Are the Marz (Alpha)
Yellow Bird (Filmhub)
\*Did not appear on last month's Coming Attractions listing
Coming Attractions
The following select DVD titles are promised for the near future. How many of them will show up is never a certainty. Logical subdivisions still appear at the top within each division, titles which did not appear on last month's list are marked with an arrow (→) and are added to the bottom of subdivisions so that the longest awaited titles appear at the top within each grouping:
From Ancomri:
D-Day 80 Anniversary
→ Twisters The Real Story
From A.M.D.:
History of Evil
From Bridgestone:
→ A Fireman for Christmas
→ Burning Ballerina
→ Christmas
→ Christmas
From Burning Bull:
→ Ceremonie Secrete
→ Fighting the Fire
From Cineclimb:
Shilo
Come Fly with Me
→ Holiday Road / Heaven Down Here
Return to Lonesome Dove Roll with It
→ Love & Jane / Paging Mr. Darcy
→ The Good Place
→ Rancore Series (9 platters)
→ Perfect Harmony / Mid-Love Crisis
From Cinema Guide:
Typhoon Club
From Cinema Libre:
→ Am Tempo
From Cineverse:
→ Don't Look Deeper
From Criterion:
Querelle
Victims of Sin
The Underground Railroad
Black God White Devil Perfect Days

- From Samuel Goldwyn:
→ The Three Musketeers, Part II Milady
From Random:
→ Virt
→ The Get Rich Quick Scheme
From Real Vault:
→ My Marriage
→ War of the Wildcats
→ Strawberry Roan
→ New Year Special
→ C' Man
→ A Minor Miracle
→ The Lie
From Rising Sun:
→ Dark Prism
→ My Beautiful Sheep
→ Behind India
→ The List
→ The Apartment
From Sandpaper:
Article 99
Warrriors of Virtue
Winter People
A Family Thing
From Sony:
→ Wicked Little Letters
→ Darkness of Man
→ Shotgun Stories
→ Ghostbusters Frozen Empire
From SRS:
Amityville Backpack
→ The Whole God
→ Nanoshark
→ The Frontrooms
From Strand:
A Prince
From 360:
→ Ancient Astronauts II
→ Forgotten Mysteries of the 19th Century
→ Ancient Mysteries
→ The Mystery
From Lionsgate:
→ Destruction on a Periodic Basis
→ Innovators of Black History V.1
→ Ancient Symbols 2
→ Great Mysteries of Tutankhamun
→ America's Most Deadly
→ The Mystery of the Atomic Bomb
→ Automata The First A.I.
→ Ice Age History & Future
→ The Egyptian Origins of Christianity
→ The Face on Mars
→ Greatest Mysteries of Ancient Egypt
From Tribeca:
In Her Name
→ An Awkward Sexual Adventure
From Trinity:
World of Tanks and Commanders
From Universal:
Monsters of California Warehouse 13 Complete Series (16 platters)
→ The Long Game
→ Blacklight / Memory / The Marksman
→ Xena Warrior Princess Complete Series (30 platters)
From Vertical:
→ Fast Charlie
→ Ruby's Choice
→ Final Heat
→ Princess Halle and the Jester
→ The Evil Fair Queen
From VMI:
Death on the Border
From Warner:
Beetlejuice Complete Series (10 platters)
Call the Midwife Season 13
→ Challengers
→ Dexter in Paradise Season 13
→ Dexter's Laboratory Complete Series (12 platters)
Supernatural & Los Season 3 True Detective Night Country
Welcome Back Kotter Complete Series (12 platters)
→ Young Sheldon Complete Series
From Wild Eye:
→ Bigfoot Exorcist
→ From Yellow Veil:
→ Without Name