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December 30, 2011

## DVD Splurge: December

by **Piers Marchant**

*Some of this month's more arresting DVD releases.*

### Another Earth - BD Edition

**The Skinny:** One of the undervalued cinematic jewels of this past year, the unabashedly sci-fi premise has a mirror earth suddenly approaching our own, which gives one young woman a possible chance at redemption. It also features the break-out performance of star/co-writer Brit Marling, a brainy beauty you will be hearing a lot more of soon enough.

**Studio:** Fox

**Linkage:** [Another Earth - BD Edition](#)

### Branded to Kill - Criterion BD Edition

**The Skinny:** A 1967 pop confection of failed Tokyo hitmen and boiled rice, Seijun Suzuki's over-the-top presentation and endlessly inventive storytelling ensures the film loses next to none of its luscious effect more than four decades later.

**Studio:** Criterion

**Linkage:** [Branded to Kill - Criterion BD Edition](#)

### Justified: The Second Season

**The Skinny:** In all ways better and more gripping than the solid first season, FX's series -- based on a short story by Elmore Leonard -- finds the violent life of U.S. Marshall Raylan Givens and the increasingly intertwined criminal doings of Harlan County inexorably linked. A winning combination of good humor, gunfights and twistedly demented villains.

**Studio:** FX

**Linkage:** [Justified: The Complete Second Season](#)

### Mildred Pierce: BD Edition

**The Skinny:** A brilliantly acerbic dramatic mini-series from HBO, the versatile Todd Haynes (who also directed *Velvet Goldmine* on this week's list) does yeoman work with the novel by James M. Cain, producing a wrenching portrait of a mother-daughter relationship gone horribly -- incredibly -- bad. Kate Winslet is phenomenal in the title role, and the entire production is first-rate. Just don't watch it on Mother's Day.

**Studio:** HBO

**Linkage:** [Mildred Pierce: BD Edition](#)

### Portlandia: Season One - BD Edition

**The Skinny:** Believe it or not, Carrie Brownstein, the genius musician from Sleater-Kinney and, more recently, Wild Flag, is also an accomplished sketch writer and comedienne. Along with versatile SNL vet Fred Armisen, the duo skewer the lofty artistic pretensions and hipster aesthetic of their beloved city, while lovingly presenting it in all its diverse, politically progressive glory.

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Studio: IFC

Linkage: [Portlandia: Season One - BD Edition](#)

**The Increasingly Poor Decisions of Todd Margaret: Season One**

**The Skinny:** If for no other reason than for "Arrested Development" fans a chance to watch Arnett and show comedy fans. (Album Review: The Roots- Undun New Years Eve Fashion Help! Mi facebook fat job in Lond The Weeknd: "Echoes of Silence" Gilt Groupe Goes Philly for Fashion ay twitter misplaced rom Heineken Green Room: 9th Wonder feat. Versace for H&M is back in Stores! es and Phonte', Rapsody & Median Philadelphia Fashion Incubator at Center City Macy's Studio: IFC Phone & 9th Wonder! December 16th at the The Career Wardrobe Tokyo Drifter: Album Review: Rihanna - "Talk That Talk" Mitchell & Ness 2012 Winter Classic Collection

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**Tokyo Drifter:**

**The Skinny:** A

Suzuki's splash Philadelphia Names Sonia Sanchez First Poet Miguel (Theatre of Living Arts) another hitman straight. Don't laureate Mural Arts Program Announces New Project With The Roots (11.07.11) farcical madne: DVD Splurge: December "Evolution 6" Official Trailer (Video) Studio: Criterion The Best (and Worst) Films of 2011 Linkage: [Tokyo](#) Film Review: The Artist The Ultimate Scavenger Hunt Film Review: Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy The Notorious IBE 2011 Trailer Film Review: War Horse vitaminwater uncapped live Presents: Just Blaze!

**Velvet Goldmine**

**The Skinny:** Part *Shogun* rare, part *Ziggy Stardust*, *Red Hot Chili Peppers* and *Queen* rare people miss the many cracks and crevices in the psyche of a ambivalently sexual rock and roll star, and turns them into a peculiarly effective portrayal of fame.

Studio: Lionsgate

Linkage: [Velvet Goldmine - BD Edition](#)

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