



CALENDAR

WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS MONTH



TODAY'S TOP PICK
Dance on Camera Festival 2006

Jan 10
 Dance Films Association celebrates its 10th year of collaboration with its partner, the Film Society of Lincoln Center, with a diverse selection of docs and dance films from around the world, at the Walter Reade Theater in NYC.

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NEWS

In Case You Missed It: The Best of 2005's DVDs

by Thom Bennett
 IFC News

2005 has come and gone. The holidays are over. Maybe you got what you wanted, maybe you didn't, and maybe you got 15 copies of "Revenge of the Sith." Well, thank the retail gods for return policies and the inevitable gift cards. Here are some of the finer DVD releases you may have missed that you should run out and pick up immediately.

Best of the New

"Mysterious Skin" (Strand Releasing): 2005: the year Gregg Araki ("The Doom Generation") took it to a new level and created a film of unbelievable delicacy and beauty. Known previously for his angst-filled, pop culture-obsessed films about doomed teens, love triangles and aliens, Araki's examination of the after-effects of child molestation is an amazing step up for the director. Also released on DVD for the first time — Araki's 1993 film "Totally F***ed Up."



"Omagh" (Sundance Channel Home Entertainment): Based on the true events surrounding the 1998 real IRA bombing of a shopping center in Northern Ireland in which 29 people were killed, "Omagh" is a rare film in which the effects of terrorism are presented through the everyday lives of the family members and survivors. An overlooked and important film.

"The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou" (Criterion): Yet another amazing performance from Bill Murray, yet another amazing film from Wes Anderson. "The Life Aquatic" follows the adventures of the Cousteau-esque Steve Zissou who is reunited with a guy who may be his son and sets off on a mishap filled adventure in search of the elusive 9and possibly non-existent) Jaguar Shark that killed his best friend and partner. There are too many wonderful things in this film to talk about here. Watch it and watch it again, it gets better every time. As if this in not enough, Criterion has loaded the disk with more goodies than anyone could possibly deserve.

Music

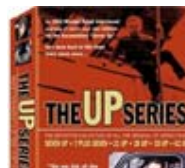
"All Dolled Up: A New York Dolls Story" (MVD): Bob Gruen and Nadya Beck purchased a video recorder in the early 1970s, and began filming a band they happened to be friends with. That band is The New York Dolls. Culled from over 40 hours of footage, "All Dolled Up" presents a fly-on-the-wall look at the NYC phenomenon that was The New York Dolls. Featuring never before seen interviews, amazing performances and antics this is a must have for fans of the band or music in general.



The Director's Series (Palm Pictures): Palm Pictures Director's Label Series (available as both single discs and in a two volume box set) presents the works of such groundbreaking filmmakers as Spike Jonze, Michel Gondry, Mark Romanek and my personal favorite Anton Corbijn. Along with the music videos are short films, commercials, and interviews with the artists (too many to mention) they have worked with. An amazing collection for music and film fan alike.

Documentary

The "Up" Series (First Run Features): One of the most ambitious and rewarding documentary series of all time, Michael Apted's "Up" films began in 1964 when a group of seven-year-old children from different backgrounds were interviewed about their lives and their hopes for the future for the film "Seven Up". Every seven years since, Apted has returned to the



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same group (all now in the forties) to see how their lives have progressed and how different they see things from how they did at age seven. Fascinating! Included in the set are "Seven Up," "7 Plus Seven," "21 Up," "28 Up," "35 Up" and "42 Up."



"F for Fake" (Criterion): Orson Welles' 1972 free-form documentary is about fakers, liars and ultimately about Welles himself. More than most, Welles realized the inherent value and ultimate pitfalls of creating and playing into one's own legend, and fancied himself something of a conman. Criterion has, as always, done an amazing job bringing this film to DVD with this extras filled two-disc set. The hidden gem here is the 1995 feature length documentary 'One Man Band' which outlines and details the many, often legendary, unfinished projects that Welles left behind when he died in 1985.

The Ross McElwee DVD Collection (First Run Features): For those not familiar, Ross McElwee makes amazing documentaries about, well...Ross McElwee. In filming seemingly everyday life events that nearly anyone can relate to, McElwee somehow inevitably stumbles upon some higher meaning to it all. Included in this set are the amazing "Sherman's March", "Time Indefinite", "Six O'Clock News", "Bright Leaves" and the short films "Charleen" and "Backyard".

Classics

"The Man With the Golden Arm": 50th Anniversary Edition (Hart Sharp Video): Frank Sinatra gives a harrowing performance as ex-con Frankie Machine, who, upon being released from prison, wants to stay straight and become a drummer. As hard as he tries, his former life as a card dealer and heroin addict remain inescapable. Released in 1955, the subject matter was shocking, to say the least, and the film was released without the seal of approval from Hollywood's Production Code.



"Unfaithfully Yours" (Criterion): Preston Sturges' ultra-black comedy stars Rex Harrison as a symphony conductor driven to obsession by the thought that his wife may be having an affair. The bulk of the film takes place during a single concert in which he imagines various ways to exact his revenge, set to three separate orchestral works — however, his attempts enact his murderous fantasies don't quite work out as imagined.

Nicolas Roeg's "The Man Who Fell to Earth" and "Bad Timing" (Criterion): Two classic films from the perplexing Mr. Roeg given the Criterion treatment? Who can resist! Whether it be David Bowie as an alien in one of the most artful sci-fi films of all time or Art Garfunkel in a sexually driven affair with Roeg muse (and wife) Theresa Russell, these are must haves. Further evidence that musicians need not be shitty actors (take that J Lo).

The David Lynch Collection (Subversive Cinema): Previously available from davidlynch.com, Lynch's classic "Eraserhead," "The Short Films of David Lynch" and his web-based animated series "Dumbland" are now available to the wider world...and this may be a good thing. "Eraserhead", Lynch's debut feature, is a disturbingly bleak and visually beautiful film that defies description. You see it, you either love it or hate it and that's pretty much how it goes. If you happen to love it, Lynch's short films are even more abstract and disturbing and should you see the light and embrace Lynchianism, the "Dumbland" should speak for itself.

So gather up all of your questionable gifts and gift cards, run to the store, get these DVDs by any means necessary and have yourself a happy 2006.

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"Brokeback" Breaks: Why All the Fuss?

OPINION: "Baraka," "Brothels," and what doc makers owe

Serious? Neil Jordan on "Breakfast on Pluto"

Hot & Bothered: You're Never Too Old...

The Film Geek's Guide to "Hostel" New Releases

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