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Long live The Beast

Children love to hear the same story told over and over, but it is a pleasure that does not entirely disappear with adulthood. William Shakespeare is popular not just because he wrote excellent plays, but because the stories he tells are so captivating that people want to see them again and again, especially since the plays are so open to variations in staging and performances. On the other hand, there is the popular gag about murder mysteries—all you have to do is read the first chapter and the last page—but that is not really true, since a well told tale of murder works just as well as something by Shakespeare—who told several tales of murder himself, after all—and is enjoyable not just for its clever twists, but for its atmosphere and the recognizable human-ness of its characters.

We reviewed a fantastic 1952 Argentine adaptation of a classic Nicholas Blake crime story, La Bestia Debe Morir, in Dec 21 and Claude Chabrol's celebrated 1969 version, This Man Must Die, in Apr 07. But now, the story has been placed before the cameras again, with an outstanding six-part 2021 British miniseries that has been released on two platters by AMC+ and RJI Entertainment using Blake's original title for the story, The Beast Must Die (UPC#014381144109, \$35). Those who are unfamiliar with the plot are in for a real treat, since its twists and turns are captivating, but even those of us who are readily familiar with how the story unfolds (it was just a few months ago that, to review La Bestia, we also re-watched This Man) will find the embellishments and execution that has gone into the miniseries to be utterly transfixing. All decently made murder stories put us on Cloud Nine, but this one sent us to Cloud Eleven.

The miniseries format enables the creators to flesh out the role of the police detective, played by Billy Howle, which is a subsidiary part in the two feature films but enables a parallel investigation to the investigation that the protagonist is conducting, contrasting the psychologies and motivations of the two individuals quite effectively. And while everything else is essentially the same, the gender of the protagonist has been changed to a female, played with wonderful precision, by Cush Jumbo. This alteration allows the creators to take another character from the two feature films, a 'famous' actress, and make her more ordinary, giving the entire tale a more rooted and 'believable' foundation, while utilizing the expanded length to explore in even greater detail the emotional impact the events of the narrative have on her psychological state.

It seems that throughout the history of films, and perhaps especially since the advent of television, secondary British actors spend much of their lives working on the stage and maybe landing bit parts here and there in motion pictures, but then suddenly, in middle age, rise to something akin to a prominence as character actors, or suddenly begin landing the leading roles that had eluded them in their youth. People like Ian McShane, Patrick Stewart, or even Helen Mirren, one discovers, had been around forever, but only in the latter halves of their careers made it to the tips of eager fans' tongues. The same mechanism now seems to be coming into place for Jarred Harris, who has been showing up all in all sorts of things. He portrays the antagonist, 'the beast,' and while all of the other performances in the show are excellent, his presence and his performance are exceptional even among these exceptional peers. The key is that he is not in any way playing the character as an evil man. He's wealthy, he's protective of his interests and his being, he is the product of a bullying culture, and he will take advantage of people when he can, but you also see the normalcy and justification in his every choice and action. Plus, he's magnetic, which is especially odd, since you'd expect Jumbo, with her African heritage amid an otherwise predominantly white cast, to always be the standout on the screen. Whenever Harris enters a scene, however, he exudes such charisma and command that you can't take your eyes off of him.

Running 285 minutes, the show is set on the Isle of Wight, which offers an immediate checkmark for those enamored with mysteries that take place in exotic locales. Parts of it are also downright spooky. The script is superb in so many ways, not just in its attention to each character, but in utilizing the specific social dynamics of the location, in smoothing out and filling in the shortcomings of logic that were forced upon the feature films, and in creating, through its primary plot and numerous subplots, a finely orchestrated symphony of suspense and intrigue that builds across every episode to an exquisite crescendo, allowing the program, as a whole, to be replayed often, and thus facilitating a continued and sustained elation.

Each platter has a 'Play All' option. The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The color transfer looks lovely. The 5.1-channel Dolby Digital sound has a pleasing dimensionality and a number of satisfying directional effects. There are optional English subtitles.

A helping of Jayne Mansfield

At the very beginning of Frank Tashlin's 1956 musical film, The Girl Can't Help It, the male lead, Tom Ewell, as himself, primly addresses the audience. At that point, the film is in black and white and is a square in the middle of the screen. When he mentions that the film is a Cinemascope production, however, he realizes there is a problem and he shoos away first the left black covering—it isn't really a curtain, it's more like a seamless sliding panel—and then the right. The film apparently had a stereophonic audio track during its premiere engagements, and one assumes that the sound of the covers moving would have been directional—how could Tashlin resist such an obvious and pleasing gag? We have no idea, however, what happened to the film's stereo tracks. When 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment included the movie in its three-disc Cinema Classics Collection set, Jayne Mansfield Collection (UPC#024543228318, \$43), the film had a stereo track along with the standard mono track, but it was one of Fox's phony re-engineered two-channel stereo jobs. There is a mild dimensionality to the musical score but no directional effects whatsoever. The Criterion Collection, which has now released The Girl Can't Help It on Blu-ray (UPC#71551527-0915, \$40), has not bothered with the stereo option and has left the film in mono. Nevertheless, the fidelity in Criterion's transfer is so bright and warm, the sound feels more stereophonic than Fox's stereo track (Fox's mono track sounds much flatter). The film contains a number of pop hits from the day, and that day was the last great era of monaural recordings. From Julie London singing Cry Me a River to Gene Vincent (a punk ahead of his time) singing Be Bop A Lula, the Criterion presentation is indistinguishable from the versions we have on our phone. So if a real stereophonic soundtrack for the film exists, that's great and one hopes that someday it can be unearthed and restored, but the music is still going to be in mono, because that's how most of the songs that weren't written specifically for the film were recorded.

As Ewell explains in his introduction, he plays a talent agent who is strong armed by a gangster, played by Edmond O'Brien (doing shtick we didn't know he had him), to make the gangster's girlfriend, played by Mansfield, into a star. To make a long story short, Mansfield's character would rather be a homemaker, and she and Ewell's characters fall in love. We reviewed a delightfully clueless 1967 attempt by Hollywood to placate the youth music market, The Cool Ones, in Sep 21. A decade earlier, Hollywood was just as clueless, but less desperate. The Girl Can't Help It essentially serves as a metaphor for Hollywood's myopia when it came to the pop music zeitgeist. The story begins boorishly, making easy, dated jokes about Mansfield's vavavavoom looks—at one point there is a shot of her holding two milk bottles in front of her chest (some will argue that the gags are actually a comment upon boorishness itself, like Tex Avery's wolf, but the differences are academic)—but over the course of its 97 minutes the tale

Mansfield (Continued)

transitions into a genuinely sweet romance, peppered with slapstick and miscommunications. At the same time this is going on, the film's setting is the world of popular music—night clubs, recording studios, radios, record players and so on—and so the film's creators brought in all of these hot acts—Fats Domino, Little Richard, Abbey Lane, Eddie Cochran and a number of others—to interrupt the narrative and play their big hits. For the most part, like Hollywood itself, the characters are oblivious to them. The musicians are just there, as if the reels of the film has been jumbled together with some other movie.

Fortunately, like Ewell pushing away the sides of the screen, time allows one to take in the entire film for what it has to offer. A great deal of the music has endured without losing a blemish. Mansfield is in on the jokes, which makes the humor easier to accept. Ewell hardly seems like a romantic lead, and appears positively geriatric in some camera angles, but if you close your eyes, his voice is impossible to differentiate from William Holden's, and like we said, the film is all about middle-aged men believing that young women find them attractive, an apt symbolic representation of Hollywood executive suites, to be sure.

With Tashlin's cartoonist background, the movie is as much of a delight to the eyes as it is to the ears. Letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1, Criterion's color transfer is an improvement over what had seemed like a terrific Fox effort (shortly after he widens the image, Ewell changes the black and white to color). The film is so visually playful that Fox's presentation seems terrific, but fleshtones are more reserved and hues are a little subdued compared to what Criterion delivers, which, combined with the Blu-ray playback, makes the Fox DVD rather passé.

Both presentations have optional English subtitles and a trailer. Both also contain a commentary track by film historian Toby Miller, who spends part of the time repeating the plot, but also provides backgrounds for the cast and the music acts, analyzes the film's cultural explorations and points out Tashlin's artistry. "One of the extraordinary things about this film is the use of color, very much like a comic strip. We can move between a film noir-like darkness laden with shadow to a moment when a woman's dress will be of a very stark color or there will be chiaroscuro-like lighting in the background, or there will be a mixture of brownie grey reds and ochre tinges."

Criterion's release has a number of other special features, including a 16-minute overview of the technical utilities used in the film, such as Cinemascope and Color by Deluxe; a fun 2004 appreciation of the film by John Waters running 21 minutes; a 30-minute piece specifically about the pop songs and performers in the film, although it is a bit like sloppy seconds after Waters; a very good 14-minute profile of Mansfield; a 41-minute audio-only biography of Mansfield originally broadcast on the Internet; 14 minutes of interesting silent behind-the-scenes home movies taken during the shoot; a 15-minute interview with Mansfield from 1957 ("I had an ocelot at one time. It lasted about a week. We imported it from South America and it was supposed to be 3 weeks old, I think, and instead it was 4 days old and it died. We were so broken up about it because it was a terribly sweet, little pet."); and a giddy 14-minute interview with Little Richard from 1984 on *The Merv Griffin Show*.

The Fox **Collection** release has an alternate Spanish audio track, optional Spanish subtitles and a highly satisfying 2004 episode of *Biography*, running 44 minutes, that provides a comprehensive and almost definitive summary of Mansfield's life and career.

Also featured in **Collection**, Mansfield and Tashlin's follow up comedy, *Will Success Spoil Rock Hunter?*, has a legitimate 4-channel Dolby Surround track, with wonderful separation effects and a very strong dimensionality. Like *The Girl Can't Help It*, the color transfer looks super if one has nothing to compare it to. Fleshtones are accurate but modest and colors are solid and bright, but not glowing. There is a Spanish track in mono, optional English and Spanish subtitles, a trailer and a minute-long newsclip.

The film opens with a meta-monolog by Tony Randall, similar to the one Ewell did, and there are cute references to the previous film, with Mansfield portraying a 'famous actress' who recently starred in a movie called *The Girl Can't Help It*. Randall is an advertising copywriter seeking the star's endorsement for a lipstick and stumbling into her efforts to make her musclemen actor boyfriend, played by Mansfield's flame, Mickey Hargitay, jealous. Betsy Drake and Joan Blondell co-star, with John Williams and Henry Jones as advertising executives. Running 92 minutes, the narrative is more oriented toward a standard romantic farce. There is one admirable sequence that anticipates *A Hard Day's Night*, where Randall's character, who has become famous as the star's paramour, is mobbed by fans, along another meta segment—kind of an Intermission—before the final act, and bits of inventive humor laced between the more predictable but still enjoyable interludes of amusing romantic desperation. Mansfield is actually less objectified than she is in the earlier film, bringing confidence and sharp comical timing to a Marilyn Monroe act that she had perfected on the stage, while holding onto her character's heart.

Film historian Dana Polan provides an excellent commentary track, dissecting the meanings of the film and the era that produced it. He talks about the advertising business, 'maleness' in the Fifties, Tashlin's balancing acting between films and cartoons, and, of course, Mansfield. "Jayne Mansfield herself was someone who very clearly knew how to play with media and have this kind of fake seductiveness. She both was natural and unnatural at the same time, and she would manipulate media to her needs, at

the same time discovering often that she was manipulated. Her story is obviously the sad one, discovering that the times had out-paced her, that there was finally no room for a garish, grotesque figure like herself."

All three films in the collection are letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The boxed set also includes a few postcard-sized lobby card replications. The third film in the set is Raoul Walsh's 1958 comedy western, *The Sheriff of Fractured Jaw*, which has one of Fox's manipulated stereo tracks for its English track, along with a mono track, but, go figure, a full fledged 4.0-channel French audio track. That said, the English stereo track is preferable, because even though the French track brings a more dimensional presence to the music, the sound effects are somewhat subdued. Again, the color transfer looks fine, but not only are fleshtones unremarkable, they change intensity a little bit from one reel to the next. There are optional English and Spanish subtitles, and a trailer.

Kenneth More is an Englishman visiting the Old West as a gun salesman, whose cluelessness leads to him being made sheriff of a lawless town in the middle of a range war. Mansfield, who no longer has her bouffant and, with the shorter hair and western costuming, suggests a surprising kinship to Dolly Parton, is the owner of a local saloon who falls for him. Running 103 minutes, the movie's lack of a major male lead makes it feel a bit unprepossessing at first, but once Walsh leaves the saloon and gets to some scenes outdoors, his interest in the action and the stars seems to perk up. Mansfield actually gives a very nice performance that is outside of her usual screen persona, and while the film does contain dated depictions of Native Americans, it is an enjoyable piece of escapism.

Universally despised when it comes to the supplements on the other discs, Mansfield was top billed in a 1963 romantic comedy, **Promises!** **Promises!**, which represented a milestone in her fall from stardom because of three brief but unhindered topless scenes (which are also repeated at other points in the film as a representation of the another character's memory). She also turned down the Tina Louise part on *Gilligan's Island* around the same time, so her career choices at that point were hardly sound, but the film is not as bad as it has been made out to be. Released by Kit Parker Films and VCI Entertainment (UPC#089859053726, \$20), the 74-minute movie is based upon a legitimate stage farce and is set entirely aboard a cruise liner (boy, were those boats boring back then). Tom Noonan portrays Mansfield's husband, who is given a placebo by the ship's doctor when he asks for something that will help his wife become pregnant. After she becomes pregnant, however, a lot of drinking ensues and Noonan's character becomes less assured as to the baby's paternity. Hargitay and Marie McDonald portray the couple's cruise companions and source of much of the confusions. In many ways, it is actually McDonald's film, since she has more commanding screen time and more to do than Mansfield does, but Mansfield delivers a passable performance and the film is not the horrendous flop it is made out to be. The nude scenes aren't entirely gratuitous, and Mansfield does cut an impressive figure. While the comedy never achieves a real point of laughter, it is coherent, adequately paced and pleasant enough, with a happy ending. We've seen worse.

The black-and-white picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. Except for a couple of obvious repairs, the source material is in very good condition, with smooth contrasts and minimal wear. The monophonic sound is adequate and there is no captioning. Along with a trailer, there are text profiles of Mansfield, Noonan and director King Donovan, and an 8-minute montage of photos from the film, including color shots of the nude scene.

4K Robocop

More cartoonish than it had seemed in 1987 when it was first produced by Orion Pictures, Paul Verhoeven's **Robocop** still sustains itself through its vigorous action, fanatical violence and the becalmed, almost gentle performances of Paul Weller and Nancy Allen to contrast the silly exaggerations surrounding them. The standard 103-minute theatrical film, letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1, and the subsequent 103-minute unleash-the-gore director's cut (about 30 seconds longer, but with different footage here and here) are combined on the two-platter 4K Blu-ray release from Arrow Video (UPC#760137856696, \$50), which has thrown in a 95-minute squared full screen TV version to boot. Nevertheless, and although both platters are in 4K format, it is the *Director's Cut* that delivers the biggest noises and the most thrills. The picture is so sharp that the film's original grain is readily apparent in darker portions of the screen, and some of the innovative special effects are more clearly delineated than they might be on a poorer looking presentation. Nevertheless, the image is otherwise fresh and

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crisp, with finely detailed fleshtones—Weller's cyborg head, after his character takes his helmet off, is very impressive—and it is the sharp picture and the bright hues that make the action all the more invigorating. That the same accuracy also accentuates the clownishness of Verhoeven's staging—there are times when the movie doesn't seem all that different from a Troma production—doesn't matter once the explosions begin and the gunfire starts blasting all around the room. The audio may lack the finesse of a modern sound mix, but for sheer loudness and rambunctiousness, it is hard to beat, especially with the 4K's Dolby Atmos audio track.

Arrow had previously released a two-platter *Limited Edition* (UPC#760137297789, \$50), which the two-platter 4K presentation replicates in its entirety, and the *Director's Cut*, with its accompanying special features, on a single-platter Blu-ray (UPC#760137315988, \$40). Both the picture and the Dolby Atmos sound are still terrific, but the subliminal grip of the 4K presentation helps to tip the scales against the film's more dated shortcomings. It remains an exhilarating and satisfying action feature with sufficient human underpinnings to justify its flights of fancy, and the 4K version provides the optimal delivery of its thrills.

There are optional English subtitles. The *Director's Cut* platter comes with a wonderful 18-minute interview with Allen looking back over her experiences making the film and what it meant for her career; a good 17-minute interview with co-screenwriter Michael Miner about how the project (and his career) got started; a great 32-minute interview with co-screenwriter Ed Neumeier and fans David Birke and Nicholas McCarthy about the creation of the story and its many idiosyncrasies; a terrific 8-minute interview with casting director Julie Selzer about the various supporting players and why they were chosen; a marvelous 11-minute interview with assistant director Mark Goldblatt, who talks about how Verhoeven worked and all of the extra pick-up shots he was charged with completing; a wonderful 13-minute interview with special effects experts Peter Kuran and Kevin Kutchaver that includes clips of their own early efforts as well as explaining what and how they contributed to the feature; a very nice 12-minute appreciation of the Basil Poledouris musical score; a cute 13-minute look at props and memorabilia from the film; a 2007 retrospective featurette running 21 minutes examining the construction and utilization of the Robocop suit (Weller found it rather challenging); another 2007 piece running 17 minutes about the cast members playing the film's villains; an 18-minute segment from 2007 going over the movie's special effects and how they were accomplished; a minute-long clip of Verhoeven explaining how and why his cameo made it into the film; 3 minutes of appropriately excised but interesting deleted scenes; a good 6-minute segment from 2001 in which special effects guru Phil Tippett deconstructs a storyboard comparison of one stop motion sequence; 12 minutes of silent behind-the-scenes footage and trims; two trailers; three TV commercials, an extensive collection of production and promotional materials in still frame; and an excellent 43-minute panel discussion from 2012 with Verhoeven, Weller, Allen, Neumeier, Miner and Tippett.

Originally recorded in 2001 for the theatrical cut and modified slightly for the *Director's Cut*, there is an excellent commentary with Verhoeven, Neumeier, and producer Jon Davison, blending reminiscences about making the film with explanations for the choices that were made and other rewarding insights that go beyond the shorter supplements because they address each scene as it arises.

A second commentary features film historian Paul Sammon talking both about the film's production and its artistic merits. Even though many of the production stories are also told elsewhere, Sammon coalesces them adeptly and provides a number of rewarding insights.

And then to fill in any final gaps in information, there is a third commentary track featuring fans Christopher Griffins, Gary Smart and Eastwood Allen, who share tons of trivia about the shoot ("They actually recorded a hundred and four footstep tests and presented those to Paul Verhoeven, and what they ended up using was a truck timing chain for sound effects, which looks almost like a bike chain, and what they would do is plunk that onto different textures, floor textures, and Foley the 'foot prints' for Robocop.") and the film's personnel.

In addition to the *Theatrical Cut* and the TV version, the second platter includes a terrific 4-minute side-by-side comparison of the *Theatrical* and *Director's* cuts, an interesting 20-minute side-by-side comparison of the *Theatrical* and TV cuts, and a 19-minute compilation of alternate TV scenes, sometimes taken from two different TV versions of the film. The 2001 commentary with Verhoeven and his collaborators is repeated on the *Theatrical Cut* without the minor alterations that were utilized on the *Director's Cut*. Finally, the *Theatrical Cut* can also be accompanied by two different presentations of the Poledouris score, the one that was used for the final film, and his initial effort, which is loaded with passages that were subsequently dropped during the final sound mix. The second track is especially pleasing for those who are enamored with the score.

The *Director's Cut* was also released on Blu-ray previously by MGM/UA Home Entertainment and 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment (UPC#027616091635). The picture and the DTS sound are still decent, but even Arrow's Blu-ray version is sharper, cleaner and has more punch. There are alternate French and Spanish audio tracks, optional English, Spanish, Cantonese and Korean subtitles, and a trailer.

Now everyone can watch 3D Blu-rays

Kino Lorber Incorporated has finally started doing the right thing, and we hope it is not too late. We reviewed Kino's 3D release, *Dynasty*, in Jun 21. In addition to presenting the film in 2D and in polarized 3D, they innovatively offered a third version of the movie that worked with red/blue glasses, which were included with the disc. The presentation suppressed the film's colors to a certain degree, but enabled 3D playback on any color television. In that it has become increasingly difficult to obtain TVs or Blu-ray players that can play the polarized 3D programs (you also have to buy separate glasses for that playback), the inclusion of that third format is a lifesaver for enabling the continued release of 3D programs. The only challenge is to alert fans who don't have polarization playback but love 3D movies that the alternate format is available on the disc. The latest 3D Blu-ray *KL Studio Classics* effort from 3-D Film Archive and Kino, indeed the first release to follow *Dynasty* with all three formats on one platter, is a 1977 Taiwanese action film, *Revenge of the Shogun Women* (UPC#738329256098, \$30).

Yeah, shoguns are a Japanese thing, but never mind about that. The film is dubbed in English (and comes with optional English subtitles) and has a very simple plot, which is basically about a town that hightails it to the local monastery when bandits attack. The monastery is run by nuns who have been learning fighting skills since they had a run-in with the bandits previously, and the ensuing fights go on until just the main bad guy, a couple of nuns and fewer townspeople than before are left. Running 86 minutes, even though the nuns have disturbingly sexy buzz cuts, the film has little to offer when it comes to art or dramatic depth. But it has 3D effects up the kazoo, and that is the only thing that matters. We are surprised that no lenses were broken, since again and again, all sorts of objects and poles and even people go flying straight at the camera. The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1, and the filmmakers are also conscientious when it comes to placing objects in the foreground, so that even when something isn't flying at you, there is at least something else there to make other stuff look farther away. It is the industriousness with which the filmmakers pour on dimensional effect after dimensional effect, without let up, that makes the movie such a treat, and now that you can watch it anywhere, it is irresistible.

The 3D effects work great even though the film's color transfer leaves much to be desired, and there are also splices and other incidents of wear. Hues are drab and contrasts are weak. That doesn't stop you from ducking, constantly. The monophonic sound is also fairly bland, although there is an energetic electric disco musical score, clearly added to the dub and not part of the film's original design, that brings an engaging sense of boogie to the proceedings.

To stretch out the 3D pleasures even more, there are also three lame short films. The first is a comical black-and-white piece (note that in black and white, the red/blue 3D format works almost as good as the polarization format) from 1953, *College Capers*, running 15 minutes, about a trio of frat boys who run a panty raid on a sorority house. There is plenty of slapstick and a number of rudimentary effects, the best being a bit with bubbles, oh, and the pillow fight, of course. Four striptease acts are presented in black and white on the second short, the 1953 *Persian Slave Market*, running 11 minutes, with each girl ending up taking more off than the girl before her did. For each of the four segments, the camera is locked off and plays without an edit, having been shot in somebody's backyard in Los Angeles. Since the girls don't get all that close to the camera and the source material is a little washed out, you don't get to see all that much even though there is full nudity by the end, but that's part of the tease, right? The final short, from 1973, *Two Guys from Tick Ridge*, is a compilation of color 3D clips narrated in voiceover by a pair of men with yahoo accents who are supposedly watching the films in a screening room. They are actually pretty accurate when it comes to razzing the quality of the effects, but running 16 minutes, it is a little livelier than *Persian Slave Market*.

Gross opportunities

Three voter registration volunteers from the North are caught in a phony speed trap in a small Southern town and end up in jail and worse in the 1966 Jerry Gross drive-in fodder, *Girl on a Chain Gang*, released on Blu-ray by Something Weird and Film Detective (UPC#760137867586, \$20). The film was shot entirely on Long Island, although to its credit, it does not look like it. There are rarely any establishing shots, as it was clearly built in piecemeal fashion. While there is no nudity, there are rapes, assaults and other exploitation activities. Here are the dynamics that you have to wrap your head around: The acting is atrocious, but the performances are fully enjoyable. The story is ludicrous, but the plot is continually involving. And while the 95-minute film feels like it is barely patched together, with the 'chain gang' part not arriving until the final 15 minutes, it still delivers every bit of grungy drama and gawky action you are expecting.

The full screen black-and-white picture has a number of disguised splices and looks weirdly wobbly in one sequence, but the transfer is nevertheless terrific, with as crisp and clean an image as is possible to tease out of the source material. The monophonic sound is also in presentable condition, and there is a legitimately decent musical score, by Steve Karmen. There are optional English subtitles and a rewarding 13-minute profile of Gross' career. There is also a light commentary by film historian Jennifer Churchill, who talks about Gross (he mostly produced and distributed, as this was one of his few efforts as a director), about the film's cast, about the beguiling charms of exploitation features, and about how people in the South are actually a lot nicer than what you see in the movie, mostly.

Melville line up

John-Pierre Melville's 140-minute epic caper film from 1970, **Le Cercle Rouge**, has been released as a 2-platter 4K Blu-ray by The Criterion Collection (UPC#715515269513, \$50). In addition to the 4K platter, the release includes a standard Blu-ray platter, which Criterion had also released separately (UPC#715515070119, \$40). We reviewed Criterion's softer-looking DVD release in Jan 04.

The 4K format is terrific for big showy event films, to be sure, but it is also irresistible when it comes to atmospheric films crafted by a master cinematic artist, and that is what makes the 4K release of **Le Cercle Rouge** so compelling. The film's methodical narrative follows several characters as they eventually come together to pull off a jewelry heist. It is the journey and not the destination that holds the film's appeal. The central plot thread follows a convict played by Alain Delon who is given an early release in a prison in Marseilles and drives back to Paris, meeting by chance an escaped prisoner along the way, played by Gian Maria Volonté. Quite a bit of the movie is taken up by the drive, turning it in some ways into a road film. Melville was obsessed with American movies, and so while the film is set in France, it has an intriguing American vibe to it. Delon is driving an American car, and stops at one point in a diner that could easily be situated in the Midwest, as could the muddy off-road fields he must detour across at times. Set during the winter, with a lovely low-key jazz score by Eric Demarsan, every moment is drenched in a mood that is enhanced on every level by the quality of the 4K playback. Even when Henri Decaé's cinematography is noticeably grainy, the grain is just another element in the film's delicately restrained chromatic design. Along with the solidly delivered monophonic sound, the images are mesmeric.

The film accelerates when the characters reach Paris not through editing but through the visual stimulation of the Parisian locales and the realization that the components of the heist are coming together, especially when they case the jewelry establishment they intend to rob. Again, it is because the 4K delivery is so detailed that everything from the faces in the over lit nightclub to the shear textures of the jewels are made more vivid and more involving, and quicken a viewer's pulse.

Melville's films never end well for their characters and the conclusion of **Le Cercle Rouge** is especially abrupt and arbitrary. There are unexplained betrayals and unlikely appearances. If the presentation were any less meticulous the drama would collapse and time would feel wasted, but with its pristine delivery, the film is such an adventure of style and corruption that the ending can be taken in stride as necessary closure and nothing more.

Yves Montand co-stars, and André Bourvil is the cat-loving policeman who unknowingly finds himself in the center of everything. Although there are no significant female parts in the story, Melville very cleverly has every random girl near Delon share eye contact with him, periodically infusing the film with a fresh burst of sexual energy. The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1, and the film is in French with optional English subtitles. The 4K platter has no special features. A trailer, a 30-minute interview with assistant director André Bourvil, a 26-minute interview with Melville expert Rui Nogueira and 50 minutes of terrific archival footage from various programs featuring interviews with Melville, behind-the-scenes material and more are carried over from the DVD.

Delon has a mustache in **Le Cercle Rouge**, but he is clean shaven in Melville's 1967 **Le Samourï**, another Criterion Blu-ray (UPC#71551520-6310, \$40), and he isn't just cool, he's hyper-cool. He plays a hitman and the 105-minute film is about the fallout that occurs after he kills a nightclub owner at the beginning, but if he had just tossed his hat and his overcoat afterwards and put on a grungy t-shirt, he would never have had any more problems. But how could he? The whole film is predicated upon him looking consummately suave and dashing from beginning to end, and as a result, the movie is too glorious to change a frame. Unlike **Le Cercle Rouge**, the ending, although still inevitably dour, is coherent—or, at least, most of what happened can be pieced together in a logical way from the information provided. But again, the ending does not matter. The film, as it plays out, is a sensory delight, with exquisite cinematography, a stimulating jazz score and Delon's well-dressed presence, and it utterly captivating. In the same methodical manner that **Le Cercle Rouge** proceeded, Delon's character stays a step ahead of the police inspector, played by François Périer, who wants to bust him for the crime. We reviewed Criterion's DVD release in Nov 06, and it looked and sounded great, but the BD is even better, with a solid, crisp picture and richly textured monophonic sound. The film is utterly engrossing, and Criterion's presentation, all the more so.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1. The monophonic sound is smooth and solid, and the film is in French with optional English subtitles. Along with a trailer, the 24 minutes of terrific archival interviews and the 32 minutes of background information and analysis that appeared on the DVD have been carried over to the BD. Additionally, there is reasonably good a 23-minute piece that falls into the second category, specifically going over Melville's work and relationship with Delon, illustrated mostly with clips from **Le Samourï**.

Melville's first feature film, the 1949 **Le Silence de la Mer**, released as well on Blu-ray by Criterion (UPC#715515144919, \$40), is kind of an outlier in his oeuvre, although it is considered the first leg in an eventual trilogy of films about the war that concluded with **Army of Shadows** (Oct 20). Nevertheless, it has no scenes of action and could readily be turned into a

stageplay with a single set and three cast members. Set during the Occupation in a small town in rural France, a retired farmer played by Jean-Marie Robain and his younger niece, played by Nicole Stéphane, are obliged to provide a room in their house to a German officer, played by Howard Vernon. While they cooperate, they also give him the silent treatment, pretending to ignore him whenever he enters the living room. He is cultured and aristocratic, and talks to them pleasantly even though they don't answer back. As the year progresses, he gradually become disillusioned with the Nazis, but there is no surprise or twist ending or anything like that. The film, running 87 minutes, is instead simply a journal (Robain supplies a substantial voiceover narration) of the year he stays with them, and how the arrangement affects each character.

Melville's next film would be a collaboration with Jean Cocteau, **Les Enfants Terribles**, and the influences of Cocteau's style are intriguingly pronounced, especially when one compares it to Melville's later films, which are less ethereal. If carefully examined, you realize the Melville is compensating for the limited nature of the drama with consistently intriguing and inventive camera angles that somehow remain invisible if you aren't paying attention to them. Shot on a miniscule budget, the film is a worthy beginner's effort. Its relatively sympathetic portrait of a specific German (though not of the Germans as a whole), which arises gradually and deliberately as the movie proceeds, was far more daring in its time than it may seem today. Unlike Melville's later movies, the tale is not gripping, but it is consistently interesting and occasionally stimulating, regarding both what the characters do say and what they do not.

The full screen black-and-white picture is in decent shape for the film's age and budget. There are no significant flaws, just a general softness in appearance. The monophonic sound is similarly a little scratchy but workable. The film is in French with optional English subtitles.

The supplement is outstanding. Along with an all too brief, truncated interview with Melville from 1959 about the film, running 2 minutes, there is a 77-minute biographical profile, covering almost everything (none of the documentaries on the discs being reviewed ever mention his marriage) including his childhood, his years in World War II (which he claims were his 'happiest') and his filmmaking career. The piece contains some interviews that have also appeared in featurettes on the other discs, but as a comprehensive profile, the program does an excellent job of bringing it all together. Even better, there are two outstanding segments, running a total of 59 minutes, deconstructing the movie itself and how it was made. The film was, in essence, the first French New Wave feature (according to another documentary, Godard came to Melville asking what he should do about **Breathless**, because the editing was a mess, and it was Melville who told him to release it 'as is'), shot on a miniscule budget using the cheap, unused ends of other film stock reels, with a minimal crew and lighting. It was everything that mainstream French films at the time were not.

Finally, there is a 19-minute black-and-white short film that Melville made in 1946, his very first movie, **A Day in the Life of a Clown**. The documentary profiles a circus clown known as Béby, presenting footage of him at work and somewhat staged footage on the street and at home (going to bed at night, he says his prayers with his dog), intercut with his snapshots and other memorabilia, all of which is narrated in voiceover by Melville. In some ways, the movie is a tribute to the silent era. Melville's films are often accused of lacking humor, and while that is not entirely true, the clown's antics amount to more comedy than what is manifested in the rest of Melville's movies, combined.

Movies present streams of ideas and feelings, and in the best films, those ideas and feelings both converge and contrast, once in a while at the same time, to enwrap the viewer in the drama and the action. Melville's 1961 story of life in Occupied France and the Liberation, **Léon Morin, Priest**, utilizes its contrasts and convergences exceptionally well. Emmanuelle Riva is a clerk in a small business office in Grenoble in the French Alps that is populated entirely by women once the war gets underway. Born Catholic, she is an avowed atheist, but begins seeing a priest, played by Jean-Paul Belmondo, to talk about spiritual matters and eventually convert back to Catholicism again. Several of the other women in the office also see him regularly since, other than the German soldiers, he is the only hot guy in town.

The film's brilliance comes from how it nurses this basic premise. The suspense of the Occupation lingers in the background, while sexual frustration is at the forefront. Yet there are long (but carefully measured) conversations about faith and Christianity, on par, essentially, with what Luis Buñuel achieved in **The Milky Way**. At one point, Belmondo's character explains that the Jehovah of the **Old Testament** is seen as an old man, while Jesus, in the **New Testament**, is a young man, in fact taken at the prime of his life. He is talking about the Bible speaking to a younger generation, and indeed presenting the younger generation as the source of salvation, but at the same time, Belmondo and Riva are icons of the French New Wave. They ARE the younger generation, and the parallels are intrinsic to what the film achieves. Melville swirls everything together beautifully, using the plot (will these two remain platonic?) as an excuse to drench the viewer with stimulating metaphors (the occupiers are like sin, and collaborators must be cleansed through confession), valid ruminations on the purpose of religion (of which, some would argue, cinema is a viable alternative) and the true nature of existence. It is one of those films that holds new subtleties, revelations and inspirations with every viewing, and one of the reasons why going to the movies is a perfectly viable alternative to attending something of a more dogmatically organized nature.

The Criterion Blu-ray release (UPC#715515084611) runs 117 minutes, which was superseded by an excellent StudioCanal Kino Lorber Incorporated *KL Studio Classics* Blu-ray (UPC#738329238728, \$30) that runs 128 minutes. The black-and-white picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.66:1 on both. The Criterion presentation has some scattered wear and a few softer or grainier sequences, but for the most part, the image is solid and details are sharp. The Kino presentation is immaculate, crisp and free of wear throughout. On both, the monophonic sound is fine and the film is in French with optional English subtitles. Both come with a trailer.

Melville's initial cut, which we would long to see, ran an extra hour, but he trimmed it down (to great boxoffice success). Criterion's special features include an additional 4 minutes of deleted scenes, but those scenes are incorporated in the Kino presentation, along with a longer, key sequence in which the heroine assists a Jewish family.

Criterion's release also has a pretty cool black-and-white interview with Melville and Belmondo from 1961 running 5 minutes and an excellent 35-minute history and analysis of Melville's artistry, running over scenes from the film.

Kino has a good 61-minute overview of Melville's films conducted by two French filmmakers who worked with him (the one flaw is that when clips from the films are shown, the titles of the films appear at the bottom in white, conflicting with the white subtitles that are also in that area), Rémy Grumbach and Philippe Labro (Melville's actual last name is Grumbach and Rémy is his nephew; Melville died in Labro's arms one night at a restaurant), and a very nice 30-minute interview with assistant director and subsequently acclaimed filmmaker Volker Schlöndorff, talking about his experiences on the set, how Melville approached directing, and the different aspects of his personality. Additionally, the supplement also contains another presentation of *A Day in the Life of a Clown*.

There is a commentary by film historian Mike Siegel, who focuses on the film's production history and the backgrounds of the cast and Melville. Siegel has written extensively about Sam Peckinpah and goes over a number of parallels between Melville and Peckinpah's on-set behaviors, although he never mentions if Melville had a preference for drink. Much of what he has to say is informative—he also reads some great passages from Belmondo's autobiography—but rarely analytical.

Alain Resnais shorts

Like many filmmakers, Alain Resnais began his career making industrial and educational short films. His work garnered an Oscar, and his films demonstrate an exceptional artistic talent and command of the medium. Icarus Films has released *Alain Resnais Five Short Films* (UPC#85456500-3774, \$35), containing films Resnais made between 1948 and 1957. Superficially, all of them are standard shorts with specific purposes, but each is also in some ways quite exceptional, and the collection as a whole offers a number of artistic rewards. All of the films are in French with permanent English subtitles, and there is no 'Play All' option.

With George Delerue doing the orchestration for Pierre Barbaut's music, and a script by Surrealist writer Raymond Queneau, *Le Chant du Styrene*, from 1956, is about plastics, but really, if you are ever in your lifetime going to see a movie about how plastics are made then this is the movie you should see. Running 14 minutes, it is in widescreen format, with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1, and is in absolutely gorgeous color. It begins with a dance of popular items made entirely by plastic and then works its way backwards to how those items are pressed, how the sheets used for the pressing are compiled, and so on, down to pondering at the end if it was plants or animals millions of years ago that became oil, coal and shale. You'll want to share it with every Benjamin Braddock you know.

Two of the films are very similar, although watching one leads you immediately to wanting to watch the other. Both the Oscar-winning *Van Gogh* (due to one of those Academy of Arts and Sciences quirks, the screenwriters, Gaston Diehl and Robert Hessens, received the award and not the director, Resnais), from 1948, running 18 minutes, and *Paul Gauguin*, from 1949, running 13 minutes, are in a squared full screen format and are in black-and-white. Each follows a generalized arc of the artist's life through a voiceover narration as the images are comprised entirely of the artist's paintings, presumably presented in a chronological order that is illustrating the biography. The absence of color in both programs is intrinsically challenging, bringing a magnification to the intensity and textures of the brushstrokes themselves, but at every moment creating a frustration in the knowledge that there is more to be seen than what is on display. The thematic similarities that saw both artists sink emotionally in contrast to the soaring spirit of their talents is also amplified by the neutering of their chromatic choices.

A rousing variation of that format is applied to another full screen black-and-white effort, the 1949 *Guernica*, which uses some of Pablo Picasso's earlier artworks before segueing into isolated close-ups of the characters and objects in his great masterpiece. Of course, that painting, which is never viewed in its entirety, is already in black-and-white, so that even though the earlier works were not, the absence of color streamlines the transitions and references. The narration is not about Picasso, however, but about the inspiration for the painting, the first modern mass slaughter of civilians by a mechanized military entity, something that however horrifying it seemed in its day, was nothing compared to what has come since. Yet, despite the blend of poetry and horror, it is the way in which the film, which

runs 14 minutes, brings focus to Picasso's specific strategies for imbuing images with emotion that makes *Guernica* so profoundly compelling.

A technical tour de force, the opening of the 1956 *Tout la Mémoire du Monde* was clearly inspired by *Citizen Kane*, but even after it leaves the confines of the *Kane* allusions, it continues to be so visually enrapturing (and gorgeously transferred) that it remains just as stimulating as it was in its opening moments. Running 21 minutes, the full screen black-and-white film is a comprehensive profile of the Bibliotheque Francais—France's cross between the Library of Congress and The New York Public Library—beginning in its basement and rising through the corridors and stairwells to visit its different departments and delineate its different services, as a narrator intones the noble glories of its existence. With a musical score by Maurice Jarre (again orchestrated by Delerue), the cinematography and the editing are so precisely calibrated that the film itself lives up to that narration. Meanwhile, always lingering in the background because of how beautifully it has been composed, there is the unspoken possibility that film might very well be superior to the written word.

In 1955, Resnais made a short that was such a watershed accomplishment in documentary cinema it has been released on Blu-ray by The Criterion Collection, *Night and Fog* (UPC#715515181518, \$30). Made just a decade after WWII, the film was not the first to present footage from Nazi death camps, but it was the first film to give the Holocaust a proper historical context and framework. Opening on color footage of the remains of a concentration camp in the Fifties, the film utilizes black-and-white archival material to move chronologically through the history of Germany's efforts to sequester, exploit and eliminate human beings the country's rulers did not care for. The film also provides details of how the camps functioned (there was an interim level of management, run by convicted criminals) and waits until near the end to share the horrifying—but unfortunately, enduringly topical—footage of the emaciated and the dead. Using its lyricism like lacquer atop a painting to preserve its emotional content, *Night and Fog* is a powerful, compelling motion picture, and has lost none of its impact despite the many other films about the Holocaust, both fictional and non-fictional, that followed.

The full screen image transfer is outstanding. The color material is bright, fresh and spotless. A careful effort has been made to transfer the archival footage as crisply and presentably as possible while retaining the wear inherent in its sources, so as to accentuate the 'now and before' theme that the film is exploring. The program is in French with optional English subtitles. The monophonic sound is solid, providing a delicate stability to Hanns Eisler's musical score (again orchestrated by Delerue).

To fill out the ample space on the BD, along with a 5-minute audio-only interview with Resnais from 1994 reminiscing about the film's production and a 15-minute appreciation of the film's subtleties, there is an excellent and highly rewarding 99-minute deconstruction of the film that covers everything from the work of the historians who initiated the project to the intriguing changes that were made in the narration (making it harsher) when it was translated into German. Audio excerpts of an interview with Resnais are included, and every conceivable aspect of the film and its creation is addressed.

There are no roles outside the gates of Eden

Barbara Eden became so associated with her most famous television role in *I Dream of Jeanie* that you can't even call the fate of her career 'typecasting.' It's not that she hasn't had other parts or had a few starring roles here and there, as she continued to work in TV for many decades, but she has never really been able to live down the indelible impression she initially made and she never got a chance, afterwards, to really show off what she was capable of as an actress. She gives a terrific performance, for example, in the 1974 telefilm, *The Stranger Within*, based upon a Richard Matheson story and released on disc by Warner Home Video as a *WB Archive Collection* title (UPC#883316211397, \$13), but it is a telefilm, with Matheson's script designed to be intriguing with as minimal a budget expenditure as possible.

Eden's character plays the wife of a college professor played by George Grizzard. When she becomes pregnant, it creates tension because he's had a vasectomy, but she insists that she has not been unfaithful. When they decide to have the pregnancy terminated, she becomes severely ill, but as soon as the termination is cancelled, the illness goes away. She begins to have extreme mood swings and starts reading voraciously every book she can find. Meanwhile, the baby appears to be growing at an unusually rapid pace. Running 74 minutes, the film delivers exactly what it promises to deliver under its restricted format, presenting a fantasy through conversations and emotions instead of special effects. The viewer remains intrigued enough to see what will happen next, and Matheson is skilled enough to deliver a viable conclusion to the tale. Everything else belongs to Eden, who manages her character's sudden emotional shifts and obsessive behaviors with an appealing naturalness that never calls attention to her craft. She clearly had the skills as an actress to make feature films, but even though she had a name, it was tainted to the point that she was never really given the chance she deserved.

The full screen picture has fresh colors and is reasonably sharp, but the source material does have lines and scratches in a few places. The monophonic sound is passable and there is no captioning.

Adieu, Alexander Fu Sheng

A rousing 1984 Shaw Bros. martial arts adventure, **The 8 Diagram Pole Fighter**, has been released on Blu-ray by Arrow Video (UPC#760137-100775, \$40). A clan is massacred because of a betrayal during a battle, but one member escapes and eventually makes his way to a monastery where he attempts to become a monk, while at the same time improving his pole fighting skills. Unfortunately, he cannot remain sequestered forever, especially since other members of his family are being threatened by the villains. Directed by Lau Kar-leung, Gordon Liu stars, with Kara Hui. This was also the film that Hong Kong superstar Alexander Fu Sheng was working on when he was killed in an auto accident. He appears in quite a bit of footage at the beginning of the film, but Hui, as his character's sister, takes his place for the climactic fights at the end. While spoilers should be kept to a minimum, it is worth noting how well the fighting sequences are apportioned throughout the film and particularly how, only during the climactic fight, the hero utilizes the pole to perform a specific, bloody attack on the villains he is fighting with. Not only does this move achieve an invigorating thrill that makes the 98-minute film's conclusion emotionally satisfying, but it is also highly comedic, so that a viewer, at least one who can stomach the gore, is cheering with laughter and delight every time it happens.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1. The color transfer is excellent, with finely detailed hues that sometimes even achieve a glossy immediacy normally reserved for films produced several decades later. The monophonic sound is crisp. The film is in Cantonese, with optional English subtitles, along with a Mandarin track and an English track, although we found the Cantonese presentation to be preferable. A 6-minute tribute to Fu Sheng's career that was created by Shaw Bros. to accompany his films theatrically after he passed away is presented, along with two trailers; a decent collection of memorabilia in still frame (including a calendar); 4 minutes of alternate opening and closing titles; a good 23-minute introduction that explains how the film was re-conceptualized (and actually made more cheerful) after Fu Sheng died; a touching 20-minute interview with Liu, who talks about the film but continually circles back to speaking about what a loss Fu Sheng's death created; a passable 33-minute interview with co-star Lily Li talking about the film, her long experience in the business, and the way that younger women can play older women but older women have a much more difficult time playing younger women; and a terrific 32-minute interview with co-star Yeung Ching-ching, talking about her martial arts career and her transitioning from an actress and stunt double to a fight choreographer and director.

There is also an excellent commentary track by China historian Jonathan Clements, who not only deconstructs the film and speaks about the backgrounds of the cast and the crew, but talks extensively about both the Chinese historical period being depicted, and the history of the stories that grew out of this period and how the film is an adaptation of them. He discusses the repeated invasions China underwent by what is referred to accurately in the subtitles as 'barbarians' and inaccurately in the English dub track as 'Mongols' (who didn't show up until several centuries later), and points out why this theme of interlopers being in charge of the land was popular in Hong Kong at the time. "In Hong Kong, in the 1960s, we have a film industry that very often allegorizes the situation in the People's Republic, that regards China itself as being under the sway of another foreign invader, Communism, and which regards the Communist Party as an evil, insidious elite, passing itself off as representing Chinese values, but actually ransacking Chinese culture and persecuting the just. And people of Hong Kong are the lifeboat to the South, preserving what is truly Chinese. And so the vast majority of films being cranked out by the Shaw Bros. martial arts stable are about [heroes representing the true culture rebelling against invasive rulers]."

Castellari cop movies

Two Italian crime films directed by Enzo Castellari and starring Fabio Testi are paired on the two-platter Arrow Video Blu-ray release, **Rogue Cops and Racketeers** (UPC#760137101147, \$70). Castellari does not have the elegant style that other Italian directors are noted for. His movies are rough hewn, his characters wear blue collar wardrobes and he has little restraint when it comes to violence and sex. But that is also his appeal. His action scenes are energized and his narratives do not pull punches.

Both films are letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1. The color transfers on both films look terrific. Once in a while the cinematography will be compromised by the lighting and such, but the transfers are impeccable. The monophonic sound is solid and sharp. Both films are in Italian with optional English subtitles and reasonably decent alternate English dubbed tracks. Both come with trailers and decent collections of memorabilia in still frame.

Testi is a cop facing a tough protection racket gang in *The Big Racket*, from 1976. After a number of incidents in which the gang terrorizes and brutalizes several uncooperative business owners and their families (and push Testi's car over an embankment in an amazing shot that has the actor tumbling inside the spinning car), Testi's character recruits several of the embittered victims and stages a counterattack. Running 104 minutes, the film seems a bit cumbersome at first, but the action scenes are invigorating, and build to the point where the final, grand battle becomes everything a viewer is expecting and hoping for. Vincent Gardenia co-stars. He's dubbed on the English track, and it sounds like he is dubbed on the Italian track as well, although he originally performed the dialog in Italian.

The supplement includes a terrific 30-minute talk with Castellari from 2021 in which he discusses his relationship with various members of the cast and the crew, explains his thought process and reveals how he achieved the amazing inside-the-car roll with Testi, essentially constructing a poor man's gimbal with the help of some large tires. Also shot in 2021 is a great 19-minute interview with Testi. Although his shirt buttons are losing the battle with his protruding belly, from the chest up he is dapper and conveys the same movie idol appeal he had in the Seventies. A former stuntman, he talks about all of his stuntmen friends who became actors, about his rewarding relationship with Castellari, and about how the film was addressing a genuine social issue, even though it was doing it in an exploitive—or, at least, critically frowned upon—manner.

There is a terrific 28-minute interview from 2021 with the film's editor, Gianfranco Amicucci, who not only talks about what he did on the movie, but discusses his whole career and shares insights about his craft, such as how using slow motion in a scene doesn't just amplify the action, it can also combine other actions, linking material at normal speed that is happening simultaneously. In other words, no matter how many people are shooting at each other or being shot, all at the same time, you can show each one just by cutting back and forth with one that is happening in slow motion. He also mentions something we had never heard before—in the old days, editors could only recut footage a couple of times, because the sprockets would wear out and they would have to have a new copy printed to continue experimenting with the edit, which was expensive and incurred the wrath of producers. Hence, really good editors had to get it right the first time. In another nice 2021 interview running 43 minutes, co-star Massimo Vanni talks about his career (Castellari, his second cousin, got him started) and what the other cast members in *Big Racket* were like.

Additionally, there is an excellent 45-minute piece about the film's music. The two primary musicians, brothers Guido and Maurizio De Angelis, were known by more than a hundred and fifty different band names over the course of their prolific careers, but were known most widely as the group, Oliver Onion, the name under which they were still touring when the documentary was recorded in 2021. Along with the band's history, there is an extensive deconstruction of the soundtrack during specific scenes (no mention is made, however, of how much one of the themes sounds like something from Iron Butterfly).

Italian genre film experts Adrian J. Smith and David Flint supply a passable commentary track, talking about how the film fits into Castellari's work, going over the backgrounds of some of the cast and the crew, suggesting a little too liberally that the cop films are similar to the Spaghetti Westerns, and pointing out specific moments of Castellari's filmmaking skills.

Since the filmmakers try really, really hard to sustain the secret until it is revealed, even though the major plot twist in Castellari's 1977 **The Heroin Busters** is immediately guessable, we will refrain from saying anything at all about the story so as to discourage any further guessing ahead of the opening credits. Testi and David Hemmings star, with the same ensemble of Castellari's supporting players who populated *Big Racket*. We can say that the movie has a social conscience, clearly intending to publicize the dangers and corruption caused by illegal narcotics. The story is easy enough to follow, and the drama is substantive, but logic is an early and constant victim of the movie's forward motion. From the narrative to practically every action scene, nothing makes sense if you stop to think about it, but the film's value as entertainment is safe because there is never time to think about anything but the next fight or chase. Like *Big Racket*, all of the nudity in the film is associated with violence. Testi, whose shirt buttons faced no challenges in 1977, cuts a dashing figure on the screen, and Hemmings was still in the transitional time when his shirt buttons were relatively free of internal pressure as well. Running 93 minutes, the film has car chases, motorcycle chases, chases through industrial construction sites, and even an airplane chase, which is the most logic-defying sequence of all, but one supposes that those are the sorts of things that happen when drugs are involved.

The same four men who sat to talk about *Big Racket* also speak about **Heroin Busters**. In a 24-minute talk, Castellari admits he knew nothing about drugs, which is probably why some sequences seem so screwy. He reminisces about the trip the filmmakers took around the world to shoot on location, although in Columbia they never went further than their hotel to stage a few scenes. Testi, speaking for 16 minutes, also has marvelous stories about their adventures, nice things to say about Hemmings, and many other memories about the shoot. Vanni talks for 21 minutes about his experience on the set and the other cast members he worked with. Running 20 minutes, Amicucci goes over the challenges he faced on the film (Castellari was unable to get all of the airplane footage he needed), as well as discussing the mysteries of pacing (sometimes a good scene will have to be cut short, while a weaker scene must be extended, all because of where they appear in the story) and the sad semi-collapse of the Italian film industry. The latter is partially a rant over the same things everyone complains about—things aren't like they were in the good old days—but he has some salient points concerning how the removal of restrictive rules on film funding, just as the technologies were changing, led to an enhanced collapse of small budget features and lower income bracket film attendance.

The sound is especially crisp and that is ideal for the very busy and invigorating Goblin musical score. A 39-minute history of Goblin, with all of the band's subsequent spin-offs (at one point, there were two legitimate versions of the band doing tours at the same time) and reconfigurations, is provided, also squeezing in a passable deconstruction of how the music works in the film. Finally, there is a 24-minute interview with a drug cop, Nicola Longo, whose exploits provided some of the episodes in the film. He got to be good buddies with the filmmakers and talks about his experiences in the entertainment world, as well as the things he saw as a cop.

Smith and Flint supply another commentary, again going over the basics of the film's production and the backgrounds of the cast and crew, although their assessment of the film itself is somewhat limited (they don't realize that the Columbia footage is genuine), but occasionally on the mark. "The first half hour or so, maybe the first half of the movie in a way, is quite dark—not so much action-packed, more just seedy and tense and unpleasant."

The Heroin Busters is also available as a DVD from Ryko Distribution and Blue Underground (UPC#827058104999, \$15). The picture has the same 1.85:1 letterboxing, with an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The color transfer is a little lighter than the BD and the image is not quite as solid, although generally it looks pretty good. The sound is much blander and the film is in English only, without captioning. Along with a trailer, however, there is a good commentary track from 2004 featuring Castellari, his son and an interviewer, in which they talk extensively about the cast and the crew, and share many details about the production and what happened on the set. Castellari basically admits that he made up a lot of it as he went along.

Plodding Puzzle

A 1970 Universal film directed by Jerry Schatzberg, which is not only plodding and opaque, but is unequivocally inferior to the film it comes closest to imitating, **Darling, Puzzle of a Downfall Child**, has been released by Universal and Kino Lorber Incorporated as a *KL Studio Classics* title (UPC#738329251352, \$15). Faye Dunaway plays a former Vogue cover girl, discussing her life on tape with a close friend in a remote beach house (it does have a cozy atmosphere), as flashbacks then flesh out the incidents, turning points, and the inevitable emotional breakdown that sent her into an early retirement. Roy Scheider, in one of his impressive pre-**French Connection** roles, plays a major boyfriend, Viveca Lindfors has a very nice turn as a photographer, and Barry Primus, Barry Morse and Barbara Carrera (briefly but memorably) are also featured. Running 104 minutes, the film is vaguely appealing as a product of its era (although it is supposed to have some action set in the Fifties, not that there is much of an attempt to dress it that way), and Dunaway's performance is both interesting and affecting, but the editing is atrocious, almost consistently cutting away from what you are interested in seeing, and wrong choices seem to be not just one of the movie's primary themes, but its guiding design.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The color transfer looks fresh, but the cinematography is a bit murky at times and there are occasional speckles. The monophonic sound is adequate, and there are optional English subtitles, a trailer, an alternate 2-minute opening Universal forced on the film for its American release (essentially erasing what mystery the movie hoped to tease the viewer with—fortunately, the disc's presentation uses the intended version), a passable 2-minute introduction to the film, and a very good 2020 interview with Schatzberg about the movie, which was his first feature, running 15 minutes.

Filmmaker Daniel Kremer and film historian Bill Ackerman supply a commentary track. Both are enormous fans of the film but never really back up their justifications for praising it except to lump it together with other good movies and bad movies from its era that also has loose constructions and independent production histories. They do talk about the film's creation, overlapping but reinforcing what Schatzberg shared, and they talk about Dunaway's career, as well as the contributions and backgrounds of several other members of the cast and crew, other films about the fashion industry and specific aspects of the movie's staging. It is a decent talk, but it won't change anyone's mind about what the film has to offer.

DVD News

CRITERION CORNER: The Criterion Collection is releasing the recent Ryusuke Hamaguchi hit, **Drive My Car**, with a program about the making of the film, featuring behind-the-scenes footage and interviews with actors Reika Kirishima, Hidetoshi Nishijima, Masaki Okada, Yoo-rim Park, Dae-Young Jin, and others; an interview with Hamaguchi; and press conference footage from the film's premiere at the 2021 Cannes International Film Festival. Carl Franklin's **Devil in a Blue Dress** is being issued in 4K format with a commentary featuring Franklin; a conversation between Franklin and Don Cheadle; a conversation between Walter Mosley, author of the novel on which the film is based, and novelist and screenwriter Attica Locke; an on-stage conversation between Franklin and film historian Eddie Muller, recorded at the 2018 Noir City Film Festival in Chicago; and the screen test for Cheadle. David Lean's **Summertime** will include an interview with film historian Melanie Williams; an interview with Lean from 1963; and audio excerpts of a 1988 interview with cinematographer Jack Hildyard. Bong Joon Ho's **Okja** is being released in 4K with a conversation between Bong and producer Dooho Choi; interviews with actors An Seo Hyun and

Byun Heebong; interviews with members of the crew about the film's cinematography, visual effects, and costume and production design; and short programs including a director's video diary, featuring Bong, Paul Dano, Jake Gyllenhaal, Tilda Swinton, Steven Yeun and others. Martin Scorsese's **Raging Bull** is also getting the 4K treatment and will come with video essays by film critics Geoffrey O'Brien and Sheila O'Malley on Scorsese's mastery of formal techniques and the film's triumvirate of characters; three audio commentaries, featuring Scorsese and editor Thelma Schoonmaker, director of photography Michael Chapman, producers Robert Chartoff and Irwin Winkler, casting director Cis Corman, music consultant Robbie Robertson, Theresa Saldana, John Turturro, sound-effects supervising editor Frank Warner, Jake La Motta and screenwriters Mardik Martin and Paul Schrader; **Fight Night**, a making-of program featuring Scorsese and key members of the cast and crew; three short programs highlighting the longtime collaboration between Scorsese and Robert De Niro; a television interview from 1981 with Cathy Moriarty and the real Vikki La Motta; an interview with Jake La Motta from 1990; and a program from 2004 featuring veteran boxers reminiscing about La Motta. Finally, Sofia Coppola's **The Virgin Suicides** is being released in 4K format, as well, featuring interviews with Coppola, cinematographer Ed Lachman, Kirsten Dunst, Josh Hartnett, novelist Jeffrey Eugenides, and writer and actor Tavi Gevinson; **Making of The Virgin Suicides**, a 1998 documentary directed by Eleanor Coppola and featuring Sofia Coppola, Eleanor and Francis Ford Coppola, Dunst, Hartnett, Scott Glenn, Kathleen Turner, James Woods, Eugenides and others; **Lick the Star**, a 1998 short film by Sofia Coppola; and a music video for Air's soundtrack song **Playground Love**, directed by Coppola and her brother Roman Coppola.

NEW IN BLU: The following titles were recently issued on Blu-ray—Pathogen (AGFA); The Burden, Current Revolution The Transformation Cannot Be Stopped, Tidewater (Blue Water); Death on the Nile (Buena Vista); Chosen, Forgiven, Nun Nancy, A Patriot's Day, The Z (Burning Bulb); The Other French New Wave V.1 (Canadian International); Draguse/Le Bijou D'Amour, My Best Part, The Sexy Box, Stop-Zemlia (CAV); The Girl Can't Help It, The Ice Demon, Night Creatures, Only Yesterday, The Tale of Princess Kaguya (Cinedigm); Project Space 13 (Circle); Eyimofe This Is My Desire, The Girl Can't Help It, Miracle in Milan, 'Round Midnight, Walker (Criterion); Slashdance (Culture Shock); Scream Queen (ETR); Girl on a Chain Gang (Film Detective); The Whistle at Eaton Falls (Flicker Fusion); Prehysteria 2 (Full Moon); To What Remains (Giant); Feel So Good, Girls Can't Surf, I'll Find You, Madelines, The Magic Plant, Schemers (Gravitas); Agoraphobia, Ashburn Waters, Bloodline, Crazy 2 Crazy (Horrorpack); Last Looks, V/H/S/94, Vicious Run (Image); Ode to Nothing (Kani); The Abominable Dr. Phibes/Dr. Phibes Rises Again, Armageddon, The Body of My Enemy, Breakout, Dementia, Fabian Going to the Dogs, Film Noir The Dark Side of Cinema VI, From the Journals of Jean Seberg, Grand Slam, The Immortal, In the Heat of the Night, The Indian Tomb, Jigsaw, Man on the Flying Trapeze, Moon Manor, My Afternoons with Marguerite, New Year's Evil, The Olive Trees of Justice, Oranges and Sunshine, Rocco Schiavonne Ice Cold Murders Season 1, The Round-Up/The Red and the White, Screams of a Winter Night, Tentacles, The Violent Breed, You Can't Cheat an Honest Man, You're Telling Me (Kino); Killer Selfie (Leomark); C'mon C'mon, Desperate Riders, Expired, The Humans, Extreme Prejudice, Moonfall, WarHunt (Lionsgate); Uneath (Lyons Den); Voyage of the Chimera (Machinations); Alive, Kunoichi Lady Ninja (Media Blasters); Superior 8 Ultra Brothers, Ultraman Ultra Seven X Complete Series, Up All Night Complete Series (Mill Creek); Sibyl (Music Box); Caligula and Messalina, Caligula The Untold Story, The 8 Diagram Pole Fighter, Hard Rock Zombies/Slaughterhouse Rock, The Little Rascals The ClassicFlix Restorations V.5, Manhattan Baby, Reform School Girls, Rogue Cops and Racketeers, Stone, Twisting the Knife Four Films by Claude Chabrol, 2LDK (MVD); The Beautician and the Beast, Benjamin Franklin, The Blind Swordsman Zatoichi, CSI Vegas Season 1, Escape from Alcatraz, 45 Years, He Said She Said, Jackass Forever, Jersey Girl, King David, Let It Ride, Orange County, Ordinary People, Scream, The Shipping News, Soapdish, Thief of Hearts, Win a Date with Tad Hamilton! (Paramount); One for the Road, Stanley Long's Adventures (Powerhouse); French Blood Mr. Pig (Rising Sun); Bound for Glory, Tom Sawyer (Sandpiper); Backwoods Marcy (Saturn's Core); Learning to Breathe, Lola (Shoreline); Jockey, Parallel Mothers, Spider-Man No Way Home (Sony); Buster Williams Bass to Infinity (Three Sided); Beverly of Graustark (Undercrank); Chucky Season 1, Cyrano, The King's Daughter (Universal); The Desperate Hour (Vertical); American Flyers, Doctor Who Galaxy 4, Doctor Who Tom Baker Season 6, Fandango (Warner); The Long Night, The Spiritwalker (Walk Go); Where Are You Jay Bennett? (What Were We Thinkin); The Long Walk (Yellow Veil)

NEW ON 4K: The following titles have recently been issued in 4K format—Death on the Nile (Buena Vista); Dracula Sucks, Sex World (CAV); For All Mankind (Criterion); In the Heat of the Night (Kino); Moonfall (Lionsgate); Madman, Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, Scanner Cop, Scanner Cop II, Schizoid/X-Ray, 12 Monkeys (MVD); The Man Who Shot Liberty Valence, Scream, (Paramount); I Spit on Your Grave (Ronin), Heavy Metal/Heavy Metal 2000, Spider-Man No Way Home (Sony) The Alfred Hitchcock Classics Collection (Universal); Singin' in the Rain (Warner)

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Current Attractions

The following titles recently appeared for the first time:
Acting: The First Six Lessons (Freestyle)*
Adriatic (Bayview)
Advice to Love By (Cinedigm)
Alaskan Dinosaurs (Paramount)
All Hallows' Eve Horrors (Glamboy)
The American St. Nick (Lifesize)
Ancient Maya Metropolis (Paramount)
Animals with Cameras Season 2 (Paramount)
Antisemitism (Film Movement)
April (Bayview)
Aquaman King of Atlantis (Warner)*
Armageddon (Kino)
The Art of Crime First 5 Seasons (MH-Z)
Bad Apple (Paramount)
Batman and Me (Freestyle)*
Battle for Jericho (Bayview)*
The Beast Must Die (AMD)
Beast of Bodmin Moor (Bayview)
Before We Die Season 1 (Paramount)
Benjamin Franklin (Paramount)
Beverly of Graustark (Undercrank)*
Births Deaths and Marriages (Bayview)*
Bleed with Me (Image)
Blood for Flesh (SRS)
The Body of My Enemy (Kino)
Book of Secrets Aliens, Ghosts & Ancient Mysteries (Reality)
The Bones on Greenwich Shore (Bayview)*
Born Dead (Bayview)
The Burden (Blue Water)*
Burned by Love (Leomark)
Butterfly Blueprints (Paramount)
Caligula and Messalina (MVD)
Caligula The Untold Story (MVD)
Carlo Goldoni (Lifesize)
Carousel of Revenge (Lifesize)
Chesapeake Shores Season 5 (Cinedigm)
Chocolat City 2 Vegas/Chocolate City 3 Live Tour (Patriot)
Chosen (Burning Bulb)*
Chucky Season 4 (Universal)
C'mon C'mon (Lionsgate)
County Line Legal Action (Dreamscape)
Creation Stories (Image)
CSI Vegas Season 1 (Paramount)
Current Revolution Nation in Transition (Blue Water)
Current Revolution The Transformation Cannot Be Stopped (Blue Water)*
The Curse of Dracula (Jinga)
Cyrano (Universal)*
Damaged Care (Paramount)
The Danny Thomas Show Season 4 (Reel Vault)*
Dating & New York (MPI)
Dead by Midnight Y2Kill (Magnolia)
Death on the Nile (Buena Vista)
Delicious (Samuel Goldwyn)
Dementia (Kino)
The Desperate Hour (Vertical)

Desperate Riders (Lionsgate)
Dingo (MPI)
The Divided Brain (Film Movement)
Double Play (Freestyle)*
Dragon Knight (High Fliers)
The Dreams of Rene Sendam (Mill Creek)
Eagles of Mercy (Lifesize)
Erosion (Lifesize)
The Exorcism of God (Lionsgate)
Expired (Lionsgate)
Eymofne This Is My Desire (Criterion)
Fabian Going to the Dogs (Kino)
Falling for Figaro (MPI)
The Fallout (Warner)*
Family Squares (Universal)
Flies Nymphs and Trophy Trout (Lifesize)
The Forbidden Door (MVD)*
Forgiven (Burning Bulb)*
French Blood Mr. Pig (Rising Sun)
From the Journals of Jean Seberg (Kino)
Ganesh Mantras (Wownow)
Gasoline Alley (Paramount)
Ghosts of the Ozarks (Decal)
The Girl Can't Help It (Criterion)
Girl on a Chain Gang (Film Detective)
Girls Can't Surf (Gravitas)*
Gitel (Bayview)
Grand Slam (Kino)
The Great Season 2 (Paramount)
The Handmaid's Tale Season 4 (Warner)
The Heart of Africa 2 Companions (Excel)*
High-Risk High-Rise (Paramount)
Holiday in Spain (Redwind)*
The Horror at 37000 Feet (Paramount)
The Humans (Lionsgate)
The Ice Demon (Cinedigm)
I'll Find You (Gravitas)*
The Immortal (Kino)
Jackass Forever (Paramount)*
Jackass Forever (Paramount)*
Jackie Gleason Television Treasures (MPI)
Jigsaw (Kino)
Jockey (Sony)
Jurassic Island (Uncork'd)
Karen Kingsbury's The Bridge The Complete Story (Cinedigm)
Kimi (Warner)*
King Knight (Decal)
The King's Daughter (Universal)
Last Looks (Image)
Last Sun of the Night (Bayview)
Last Survivors (Vertical)
Last Will & Testament (Strikeback)*
The Laws of the Universe The Age of Elohim (Random)
Leatherbites (Bayview)*
The Ledger (Paramount)
Liberated Zone (Lifesize)
A Life among Whales (Indiepix)
Locked Down (Warner)
Loinless Zombies (Bill Zebub)
The Long Night (Well Go)
The Long Walk (Yellow Veil)
The Lost Valentine (Cinedigm)
Luella Miller (Lifesize)
Madelines (Gravitas)*
Magdala Rose (Bridgestone)
The Magic Plant (Gravitas)*
Man in the Box (Bayview)
The Man with Four Legs (Bayview)
Manhattan Baby (MVD)

The Meaning of Hitler (MPI)
The Meditation Guide Meditation on Joy (Wownow)
The Meditation Guide Music Meditate with Beethoven (Wownow)
Mesmerized (DigicomTV)
Miami Heat (KDMG)
Miracle in Milan (Criterion)
Modern American Artists (Bayview)
Moonfall (Lionsgate)
Moonfire (Bayview)
Mother (SRS)
Mr. Oizo Volga Phar (Ed Banger)
My Best Part (CAV)
My Felling Playmate (Glamboy)
My Sweet Monster (Lionsgate)
National Geographic Trafficked Season 2 (Buena Vista)
Navigating the Chaos (Reality)
Nezura 1964 (SRS)
Nick Jr. Spring Is Here (Paramount)
The Novice (MPI)
Nun Nancy (Burning Bulb)*
Octopus Pot (Leomark)
Of Mice and Men (MVD)
Oral Fixation (Lifesize)
Outlaw's Buckle (ITN)
Parallel Mothers (Sony)
A Patriot's Day (Burning Bulb)*
Prehysteria 2 (Full Moon)
Pride (Paramount)*
Puzzlehead (Lifesize)
The Quarry (Jinga)
Queens of Mystery Season 2 (AMD)
Reed's Point (Uncork'd)
Reed Metal (Leomark)
Ricky Powell The Individualist (Paramount)*
Ride for Glory (Bayview)
The River (Lifesize)
Robotapocalypse (Greenfield)
Rocco Schiavonne: Ice Cold Murders: Season 1 (Kino)
Rookie Season (Strikeback)*
'Round Midnight (Criterion)
Schemers (Gravitas)*
Scream (Paramount)
Sea of Wheat (Leomark)
Seal of Desire (Vision)*
Secrets in the Scat (Paramount)
See You Then (Breaking Glass)*
Servants (Film Movement)
60 Seconds to Live! (World Wide)
Slippery Slope (Lifesize)
Slow Machine (Grasshopper)
Snakes and Ladders (Bayview)
Snuff Tapes (Jinga)
Soul Man (Bayview)
Soundtrack to Sixteen (Bridgestone)
South Beach Love (Cinedigm)
Spearfishing (Bayview)
Spider-Man: No Way Home (Sony)
Spiritwalker (Well Go)
Super Intelligence (Warner)
Survivor Season 41 (Paramount)*
Take Back the Night (Dark Sky)
Tales of the San Joaquin River (Green Planet)
A Taste of Hunger (Magnolia)
10000 Black Men Named George (Paramount)
Things to Do 1. Fly a Plane (Lifesize)
Third Floor (Bayview)
This Good Earth (Random)
3 Psychopaths (Leomark)
Tidewater (Blue Water)*
The Tiger Rising (Paramount)*
To What Remains (Giant)
Tom Sawyer (Sandpiper)
The Trick (Paramount)
Tulare The Phantom Lake (Green Planet)
2LDK (MVD)
Ultraman Mebius Collection (Mill Creek)*
Under the Vines Season 1 (AMD)
VHS 94 (Image)
Vicious Fun (Image)
Voyage of the Chimera (Machinations)
WarHunt (Lionsgate)
Water beneath Our Feet (Green Planet)
We Need to Talk about Cosby (Paramount)*
The West Wittering Affair (Lifesize)
When You Return (Green Planet)
Where Are You Jay Bennett? (MVD)
Wikipedia The Documentary (Wownow)
With/In (Vision)
Writing with Fire (Music Box)
WWJJD The Journey Continues (Cinedigm)
Yakari A Spectacular Journey (Breaking Glass)*
You Had Me at Aloha (Cinedigm)
You're Watching Video Music Box (Paramount)*
The Z (Blue Water)*
*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 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 Adler:
→The Watermelon Heist
From AMD:
The Larkins Season 1 Kin Season 1
→Help
→Agatha Raisin Season 4
→The Gulf Season 2
→The Chelsea Detective Season 1
→Ride with Norman Reedus Season 2
From Bayview:
→Red Sky
→Blood Lust
→Junior High Spy
→Junior Spy Agency
→Elevator
→Piggy
→101st: A Company
→I Am Soldier
→Back from Hell
→Unbroken
→Todd Oliver Funny Dog
→Lovers on Borders
→Journey in the Void
→Railway Heroes
→Goodbye Mr. Loser
→Cursed
→Cloudy Mountain
→Quan Dao Journey of a Boxer
From Blue Water:
→The Reluctant Radical
From Breaking Glass:
→Workhorse Queen
→The Pink Queen
From Bridgestone:
Blind Trust
Hollywood No Sex Please
→Yellowface Asian
Whitewashing and Racism in Hollywood
→The Messiah
→Class of '85
→The Debacle
→Damaged Goods
→The Witches of Hollywood
→I, Douglas Fairbanks
From Bright Iris:
→The Boys in Red Hats
From Buena Vista:
→Turning Red
→National Geographic The Incredible Dr. Pol Season 20
From Burning Bulb:
→Toilet Zombie Baby Strikes Back
→The Story of Mother's Day
→WJHC-AM
→A Moses Prayer for Easter
→One Cop's Journey
→Hallowe'en Heres
→Anything but Christmas
→The Hike
→The Mountaineer
From CAV:
Only the Good Parts Season 2
→Ivone Queen of Sin
From Cheesy Flicks:
All the Kind Strangers
→The Alpha Incident
→Anatomy of a Psycho
From Cheng Cheng:
→A First Farewell
From Christians:
→Never Again
From Cinedigm:
The Wedding Veil The Perfect Pairing/Raising a Glass to Love
Dinosaur World
Beverly Lewis' The Reckoning
Love Strikes Twice
WWE VrestleMania 38
→WWE Elimination Chamber 2022
→My Name Is Lopez
→Boon
→The Wedding Veil Unveiled
→One Summer
→Sesame Street Poty Time Plus!
→When Calls the Heart In Like a Lion/Turn of the Page
From Cleopatra:
A.K. Tolstoy's A Taste of Blood
From Criterion:
The Funeral
Mississippi Masala
The Worst Person in the World
Rouge
Farewell Amor
Drive My Car
→Okja
→Summertime
From Dark Sky:
Let the Wrong One In
From Decal:
The Cursed
Wyrmmwood Apocalypse Kicking Blood
→Sundown
→Ted K. Unabomber
→Gamestop Rise of the Players
→All My Friends Hate Me
From Demirdjian:
They Call Me Zarko
From Devilworks:
→Hollow
→The Nanny's Night
From Deutchman:
→Searching for Mr. Ruffog
From Duke:
→TT 1996 Natural Born Winners
→TT 1997 Blazing Saddles
→TT 1998 Bravehearts
→TT 1999 Clash of the Titans
→TT 2000
From Eftmaniac:
→Aliens Clowns & Geeks
From Excel:
→Undaunted
From Film Detective:
→The Brain from Planet Arous
From Film Movement:
Why Is We Americans?
→Caged Birds
→Playground
→Lady Chatterley's Lover
→Julietta
→Pushing Hands
→Lovecut
→Putin's Witnesses
→Mystery in St. Tropez
From Film Trauma:
→Only the Good Parts V.2
From Flicker Alley:
High Tide/The Guilty
From Forbidden:
→Forbidden Zone
From 4Digital:
→The House of the Devil
→Blood in the Water
From Freestyle:
→Double Play
From Full Moon:
Cinderella
→Gore in Venice
From Giant:
→Why Don't You Play in Hell?
→The FP
From Grasshopper:
Virgin Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors
Ascension
From Gravitas:
Eddie and Abbie and Ellie's Dead Aunt
The Institute
From Image:
Kandisha
Martyrs Lane
Death Valley
Slasher Flesh and Blood Season 4
→Terror Lake Drive
From Indiepix:
Presagio
→Straight to VHS
→ScarFate
From Inevitable:
Hell or High Seas
Loggerheads
Human Hibachi
The Legend of Calamity Jane
Loggerheads
The Cosmic Hoax An Exposé
Hell and High Seas
Stone Protectors
From ITN:
Bull Shark
Land Shark
→Horror High
→Serpent of Death
From Jinga:
The Cosmic Hoax An Exposé
Human Hibachi
The Legend of Calamity Jane
Summer Scars
→Frostbite
From Kandoo:
→Cut and Chop
From KDMG:
→A Living Dog
→Echoes of the Past
→Inside the Circle
From Kino:
Mau
Last of the Dogmen
Gomorra Season 5
The Wobblies
The Unmaking of a College
Gagarine
The Revolution
Viva Maestro
The Sanctity of Space
A Taste of Whale
The Wiggles Super Space
Sacco & Vanzetti
Sunrise
Son of Samson
Violent City
→Bix Ain't None of Them Play Like Him Yet
→Rocco Schiavonne Ice Cold Murders
→Kaddish

→Hello Bookstore
→Alien Abduction Answers
→Ahed's Knee
→Hit the Road
→Times Square
→Almost Summer
→Stunt Rock
→Wood and Water
→Alien Abduction Answers
From Leomark:
Invader
Outerworld
Decadence
Despiser
→A Soul Journey
→Alterverse
→Ghost Quest
→Big Shots
From Lionsgate:
Lockdown
Abraham Lincoln
→BMF Black Mafia Family Season 1
→Great Escapes with Morgan Freeman Season 1
→X
→The Devil You Know
→Fortress Sniper's Eye
→History's Greatest Mysteries Seasons 1 & 2
→Power Book II Ghost Season 2
→Everything Everywhere All at Once
→The Secret of Skinwalker Ranch Season 1 & 2
From Magnolia:
→Indemnity
→The Burning Sea
→You Are Not My Mother
From Media DW:
→World Ends at Camp Z
From Mill Creek:
The Yellow Wallpaper
→What Doesn't Kill Us
From Moonstone:
→All Those Small Things
From Movie Time:
People Out of Control 3
New York City
From MPI:
King Otto
The Beta Test
Clean
Spindled
Kurt Vonnegut Unstuck in Time
→Bloody Oranges
→Mascarpone
→The Adventures of Ozzie & Harriet Season 1
→The Adventures of Ozzie & Harriet Season 2
→The Feast
→We Need to Do Something
From Music Box:
The Rose Maker
Strawberry Mansion
From MVD:
Harvey (Art Carney)
Riffi Noir Death Whistles the Blues / Riffi in the City
Robocop The Series
Dark Night of the Scarecrow 2
The Brave One
A Dangerous Man
→Catch the Fair One
→Marvelous and the Black Hole
→The Diary of Anne Frank
→Monday Morning
From One Media:
American Illuminati
13 Demons You Play You Die
Midnight Fright Show The Master Collection
Bigfoot Country
Accidental Exorcist
Alien Contact Outer Space
→Ancient Gods of Egypt
→Ancient Aliens and the New World Order 2
→Grindhouse
Nightmares
→60 Seconds to Die
→Assassin's Revenge

→Death Island
→Hellcats Revenge
→666 New World Order
→#fromjennifer
→Nuclear Crises Planet Earth
→Knights Templar Rise and Fall
→The English Royal Family
From Paramount:
The Good Fight Season 5
American Horses
Without Remorse
Great Mammoth Mystery Sandton Season 2
Ridley Road
→No Activity Season 3
→Asking for It
→Nancy Drew Season 3
→Elinor Wonders Why A Wonderful Journey
→Infinite
→Panama
→Flood in the Desert
→Augmented
→Ray Donovan The Movie
→Blues Clues and You Let's Learn with Blue Season 3
→Finding Your Roots Season 8
→Becker Complete Series (17 platters)
→Why women Kill Season 2
→Paw Patrol Rescue Knights
→Billions Season 6
→The Smurfs Season 1 V.1
→Nature American Arctic
→Now Hear This with Scott Yoo Season 3
→The Patrick Star Show Season 1 V.1
From Passion River:
Valerie
Since I Been Down
From Reality:
USO Aliens and UFOs in the Abyss
Forbidden Knowledge
Alien Artifacts
Real Magick
→Alien Chronicles What the President Doesn't Know
From Rising Sun:
Girl with a Straight Razor
From Ronin:
Skin A History of Nudity in the Movies
From Samuel Goldwyn:
→Luanna A Yak in the Classroom
→Big Gold Brick
From Sandpiper:
→Eye of the Needle
From Sony:
→Uncharted
→The Boys Seasons 1 & 2
→Umma
From SRS:
Serpent's Breath/Requiem for a Whore/Bought & Sold Friday the 12th Triple Feature
Chulnu Trilogy
→Death Toilet Trilogy
→House Squatch
→Jaws of the Shark
→Uktena The Horned Monstrosity
From Strand:
→Animals & Men
→The Evening Hour
→Kill It & Leave This Town
→Africa
→Saturday Fiction
From 1091:
→American Reject
From 360:
The Face in the Wall
→The Glasses Parts 1 & 2
From Time Life:
Austin City Limits Country
From Tricoast:
→Violence Voyager
→British Rock Born in a Basement
From Uncork'd:
Confession
→Isolated
From Universal:
Jurassic Camp
Cretaceous Season 1
Tyson's Run
The Last Kingdom Season 5
→The Last Kingdom Complete Series
→A Week in Paradise
→The Sinner Complete Series
→Sing 2
→Illumination Presents 10 Minion Mini Movies
→9 Bullets
→La Brea Season 1
→The Land Before Time Complete TV Series (4 platters)
→Hacks Season 1
→The Umbrella Academy Season 2
→Gold
From Vertical:
A Day to Die
→Measure of Revenge
→Supercool
From Vision:
→Blial A New Breed of Hero
→7th Street
→From VMI:
→Defining Moments
From Warner Bros.:
→Animaniacs Season 2
→The Batman
→Curb Your Enthusiasm Season 11
→Dog Eraser Reborn
→The Fallout
→Kimi
→King Twetty
→Licorice Pizza
→Lucifer Season 5
→Scooby-Doo and Guess Who? Season 2
→The Split Season 2
Succession Season 3
→Titans Season 3 & 2
→Traces Season 2
→The Witches
From Well Go:
→Row 19
→Hostile Territory
→IP Man Awakening
From Wild Eye:
Violator
Jurassic Shark 2
Aquaocalypse
Freak
City of Rott
City of Rott 2
City of Rott Otherworld
→Needles 3
→Moon of the Blood Beast
→Sharkula
→Fortress of Sin
→The Last Ghost Hunters
→Asylum of the Devil
→The Unkind
→Slumber Party Slashathon
From World Wide:
→The Scout
From Wownow:
Corporation
YouTube Paris
Nightclub The Documentary
Puppy-Pedia The Dog Encyclopedia Season 1
Little Historians Declaration of Independence
The Salem Witch Trials
→DMT
→Avenger Dogs Season 1
→Krishna Mantras
→Surya Mantras
→Australia
→Chernobyl Disaster
→The Shadow Banking System
→Social Media
→Project Mkultra
From Yellow Veil:
→They Look Like People