



CHECK LOCAL LISTINGS FOR THEATERS AND SHOWTIMES

VIDIOTS

UPCOMING DVD RELEASES AND REVIEWS

BY B. LOVE & JOHN B. MOORE

GLENN TILBROOK & THE FLUFFERS: LIVE IN NYC

Along with having the best-named backup band in the history of rock, Glenn Tilbrook—former frontman of influential UK pop band Squeeze—is also a fantastic songwriter. Live in New York City showcases this better than just about any of his albums. Coming across relaxed and humble in a small club, Tilbrook runs through nine classic Squeeze songs as well as seven from his solo albums (including the satirical anti-war song “Don’t Stick Around Long”). The concert ends with Tilbrook & the Fluffers playing their encore on top of the club’s bar. Simply brilliant!

KINGDOM OF WAR, PART 1 & 2

From Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon to Hero and Red Cliff, there’s something about Asian historical action films I simply can’t resist. This 2-part epic from director Chhatreelcherm Yukol (The Legend of Suriyothai) follows the story of King Naresuan the Great, who liberated the Siamese from Burmese control. Part 1 follows his life as a child prince, captured by the Burmese king and raised in a Buddhist monastery, while part 2 follows his growth in strength and military capability, becoming king and rising up against his nation’s oppressors. For fans of martial arts action, it’s definitely worth checking out.

LOUIE: SEASON ONE

If you look up the word sardonic in the dictionary, chances are you’ll find a picture of comedian Louis C.K. His FX series makes up for the failure of “Lucky Louie” on HBO, blurring the lines between reality and fiction as it follows his life as a newly divorced, well-meaning father of two daughters struggling with mid-life misadventures. C.K. writes, directs, stars and produces every episode, and the result is an unapologetic, unflinchingly honest look

inside the man’s soul. It’s also one of the most hilarious shows on television, with an often-brutal edge that puts C.K. alongside Larry David among the most daring comics working today.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS MOTION PICTURE TRILOGY: EXTENDED EDITION

Tolkien fans will rejoice at the release of this remarkable set, which contains extended editions of all three of Peter Jackson’s exceptional Lord Of The Rings films on 15 HD Blu-Ray discs. It also includes more than 26 hours of additional content, including the behind-the-scenes documentaries created by Costa Botes (the filmmaker given unprecedented set access to the productions by Jackson himself) as well as the original extended edition special features. All in all, it’s a must-have collectible for fans of one of the most critically acclaimed film trilogies ever made.



SWAMP PEOPLE: SEASON ONE

The most surprising revelation about this History Channel reality show is how the network manages to portray the families in an honest, non-exploitative manner. The show focuses on a number of Louisiana families who make their living in the swamps catching alligators and snakes. Yes, the Cajun accents 15 disscare thick enough to require subtitles, but there are no ridiculous scenarios constructed simply to make fun of the gator hunters and no goofy music added to mock the characters. It’s just honest, fascinating portrayals of families using generations-old techniques to live off the land.

SQUIDBILLIES: VOLUME FOUR

Squidbillies is by far the best cartoon depiction of redneck, inbred squids living in Georgia’s Appalachian Mountains since... well, ever. The Adult Swim show packaged in tidy 10 minute episodes was conceived by the same brains behind Adult Swim staple Aqua Teen Hunger Force, so if that show has you scratching your head, it’s probably best to skip Squidbillies. It will be your loss though, unless you can find another adult-targeted cartoon that tackles cults, Al Qaeda, Widespread Panic as narcs, and features an original song by Todd Snider about Florida’s 2000 election debacle. Go ahead, I’ll wait...

sorry Kyle Chandler). The story begins and ends here for the most part—a town running from an unseen monster by order of the USAF with nothing but the movie kids to save them; but is it a story about kids making a movie amidst chaos or is it a story about chaos of fighting off a hostile alien? Lacking in the believable crisis department, in my opinion, it proves top heavy with deep motifs about life, love and communication in relationships. Bottom line? Don’t see it expecting an action-packed mystery ride like Lost, and don’t see it expecting an enlightening alien-human connection like ET has. This is something wholly different. And while suspenseful and fun, it’s ultimately short-lived in my memory, making it one close encounter you can easily mistake for a daydream.

—Jenni Williams

THE TRIP (N/R)

★★★★☆

Cut down (though not enough) from a three-hour British miniseries, The Trip is a road movie and a reverse buddy movie – instead of bonding as they go along, Steve Coogan and Rob Brydon increasingly get on each other’s nerves. Their dry humor is for specialized tastes but right up my alley. Coogan usually plays variations on the same arsehole, epitomized by his “Alan Partridge” TV character. Here the character is named Steve Coogan and has been commissioned to write about restaurants in the North of England, his native territory. His girlfriend, who is more food-savvy, is in America, so he invites his Welsh sort-of friend, occasional co-star Brydon along for company. They spend a lot of time doing dueling impressions of other actors (Michael Caine, Al Pacino, Sean Connery) while Coogan tries to bed a woman in every port. His lonely ambition is contrasted, sometimes movingly, with Brydon’s contentment as a family man with a mid-level career. Though admittedly not for everyone, I found this a Trip well worth taking.

—Steve Warren

THE TOPP TWINS (N/R)

★★★★☆

The otherworldly nature of New Zealand makes it the perfect location for The Lord of the Rings, but even that may not prepare you to experience their homegrown pop stars, Jools and Lynda Topp, “yodeling lesbian twins.” Imagine if k.d. lang had never progressed musically from her country period but had cloned herself and created characters to use in sketch comedy. Then imagine that she had been an activist for multiple liberal causes but had endeared herself to an audience of farmers and blue-collar workers, many of them elderly. If that’s too mind-boggling to imagine, see it for yourself in this documentary that traces the Topp Twins’ career back to their busking (street-singing) days in 1982. They say you can’t love two women equally at the same time, but you will when you see this film.

—Steve Warren

TROLLHUNTER (PG-13)

★★★★☆

This film puts some wit in the “Blair Witch” formula and is a lot more watchable, despite the required scenes of young people running through the woods in the dark with a handheld camera. Contrary to the Spielberg dictum, Trollhunter shows its monsters early and often, but the design and effects are good enough that they never get old. If the only trolls you know are the unpopular kids in high school, the movie fills you in on the necessary mythology: trolls are attracted by the blood of Christians; sunlight, even artificial sunlight, makes them explode or turn to stone; the largest variety, the Jotnar, is over 200 feet tall. You’d think people would notice them, but they usually stay in designated areas where humans don’t venture; and the Norwegian government, in its wisdom, covers up killings and other mayhem caused by trolls to keep the public ignorant of their existence. It doesn’t make a lot of sense but it’s pretty fun, with some moments of excitement. At least it’s not Romeo and Trolliet.

—Steve Warren

VIDAL SASSOON: THE MOVIE (PG)

★★★★☆

Though not shaped as well as a Sassoon hairstyle – what seems like a summation is followed by three anticlimactic segments – Craig Teper’s fairly interesting documentary shows Vidal Sassoon as a key factor in England’s trendsetting status in the ‘60s, along with the Beatles’ music and Mary Quant’s fashions. Now in his eighties, married to his third wife and still working out to stay in shape, the temperamental perfectionist reflects on his life. At his mum’s urging he transferred his interest from designing buildings to designing hairstyles. He started his own business in 1954 at the age of 26, but it took him nine years to perfect the signature “5-point style” that put him on the map. He expanded from salons to schools and a product line he eventually sold. The ‘60s nostalgia should placate viewers who don’t care to know that much about Sassoon.

—Steve Warren

VIVA RIVA! (N/R)

★★★★☆

Most movies we see from or about Africa deal with big issues – genocide and the diamond trade – so African genre films, like the romcom White Wedding and this violent crime drama, are welcome diversions. Riva (Patsha Bay Mukana) returns to Kinshasa, Congo, after ten years in Angola, bringing a load of stolen gasoline during a shortage. His old friends give him a hero’s welcome, as does some of the criminal element. Others – including, late in the film, his own parents – have it in for him. The man he stole the gas from follows him to Kinshasa, along with a couple of assassins, and Riva makes a powerful enemy of local crime lord Azor by flirting with his woman, Nora (Manie Malone). Riva is not as charming as similar hustler types in other movies, more like a Fred Sanford who thinks he’s Superfly. Compared to the woman-beating scum around him he’s our hero by default, just not a likable one, which reduces the likeability of Viva Riva! There’s so much sex in the movie you wonder how anyone has the time or energy for crime, but they do. Nora warns, “Money is like poison. At the very end it always kills you.” No spoilers here, but don’t get too attached to any of the characters. They don’t all make it to the finish line.

—Steve Warren

X-MEN: FIRST CLASS (PG-13)

★★★★☆

This prequel takes us back to the origins of not only the X-Men, but of the relationship between its founders Charles Xavier aka “Professor X” (James McAvoy) and Erik Lehnsherr aka “Magneto” (Michael Fassbender). We witness how both men are mutants by nature (Xavier a telepath and Lehnsherr a master of magnetism), but their attitudes towards mankind are based in nurture. Xavier grows up pampered in a mansion in Westchester, NY and develops an early friendship with a young Raven Darkholme aka “Mystique” (Jennifer Lawrence). In Europe, Erik is placed in a Nazi concentration camp, where he’s forced to develop his powers under the auspices of a cruel officer (Kevin Bacon). The two are eventually thrown together as Charles is recruited to hunt down Sebastian Shaw (Bacon), who appears to be working as a communist spy. In response, Charles and Erik team with CIA operative Moira MacTaggart (Rose Byrne) and form their own team of mutants to combat Shaw and stop his ultimate plan: to engulf the world in a nuclear apocalypse. This movie truly belongs to Fassbender, who plays every side of Magneto and plays it honestly. Director Matthew Vaughn takes the heart of a serious cold-war drama and expertly blends it with the larger-than-life tone of superhero stories. Vaughn came close to getting the director’s chair for The Last Stand before the deal fell apart, but he’s come back and delivered arguably the best film in the franchise. X2 holds a special place in my heart, but for sheer ambition, confidence and style, X-Men: First Class is the best X-Men movie to date and one of the best movies I’ve seen so far this year.

—Matt Goldberg