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Finally, Borsalino

It's the Thirties, in Marseilles. Alain Delon and Jean-Claude Belmondo stroll into a casino. Delon, in a tuxedo, is impeccably dressed. Belmondo, also wearing a tuxedo, is dressed smartly, but his bowtie is ever so slightly askew where Delon's is perfect, in every shot. Paramount Pictures' first great gangster film of the Seventies, Borsalino, is at long last available on home video in America, as it is being released on Blu-ray by Paramount and Arrow Video (UPC#760137131984, \$40). Directed by Jacques Deray, the 1970 feature paired France's two biggest movie stars at the time in a delightful, grinning bromance set amid mob wars for control of the city. The two begin as petty criminals, but over the course of the film's 124 minutes, they identify and take down the various corrupt officials and racketeering businessmen until just the two of them are on top (dressing better and better, every step of the way). The blend of drama, action, comedy, charm, abundant and beautifully tailored costumes, choice period locations and lovely, classic automobiles are all woven tightly together with one of the greatest musical scores ever conceived—a jaunty, immediately addictive piece with multiple variations by jazz composer Claude Bolling.

The film is in French with optional English subtitles, but your pickier friends can be appeased by a decent English dubbed track—the film is such a crowd pleaser that even people who have no idea who Delon and Belmondo are will immediately pick up on the screen talent that made them superstars, and be carried through the film by their savoir faire. On both tracks, the monophonic sound is crisp and clean, and Bolling's bass shakes you just the way it is supposed to.

Letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.66:1, the picture transfer is immaculate, clarifying every bead and every silken thread in Jacques Fonteray's magnificent wardrobe designs. Flesh tones are accurate and the crispness of the image enhances the immediacy of the entertainment. A great 11-minute piece is included that specifically deconstructs the accomplishments of Fonteray's costumes, along with a similarly satisfying 12-minute deconstruction of Bolling's music, a wonderful 13-minute appreciation of Belmondo's career that includes an awesome montage of stunt sequences from his films, a basic collection of promotional materials in still frame and a trailer.

There is also an excellent, thoroughly researched commentary by film expert Josh Nelson, who shares many great stories about the film's conception and production, details the backgrounds of the real underworld figures that the movie was based upon, goes over the often interconnected careers of Belmondo, Delon and Deray, shares the many critical opinions that have been issued about the film both positive and negative (there are an exceptional number of both opinions), suggests that not only The Sting, but even The Godfather was influenced by the film, and explains how Delon cultivated his own image as a gangster for the sake of publicizing his movies. Speaking of publicity, Belmondo was contracted to have top billing, but Delon also produced the film, so he arranged the first posters to read, "Alain Delon presents Jean-Paul Belmondo and Alain Delon in Borsalino." Needless to say, that annoyed Belmondo to no end and he sued. Yes, he won the suit, but more importantly, his legal actions brought even more awareness and heightened urgency to see the film when it finally opened. That's show business.

Bravo 4K

The original Blu-ray release of Rio Bravo (Nov 16) was in need of better source material than it had, and that has been rectified with the WB TCM Turner Classic Movies 4K UltraHD Blu-ray release (UPC#88392980-8366, \$34). The film's color scheme is deliberately subdued, but the transfer is meticulous and the 4K playback looks fantastic. Even the slower sequences in the 141-minute feature, such as the extended segment opening the third act where both Dean Martin and Ricky Nelson sing songs, with Walter Brennan joining in, are utterly captivating. The monophonic sound is so smooth that

you feel like you are in the recording studio with them, and it becomes a wonderfully worthy break from the action. The gunfire and explosions are also invigorating. Indeed, if you didn't notice it before, it seems very clear that Ennio Morricone was directly inspired by the plaintive brass that Dimitri Tiomkin employed for part of his musical score.

The 1959 film was the third for Martin to try his hand at a dramatic part, and the weakness of his performance probably sent him back to musicals and comedies for a while, but the 4K presentation enhances all of the performances. Not only are you aware of every pause and utterance coming from the film's star, John Wayne, but in the same way that the format magnifies Martin's shortcomings, it magnifies Wayne's perfection. His scenes with Ward Bond are worthy of an acting class, and he handles the interruptions and line overlaps in his scenes with Angie Dickinson as deftly as any actor director Howard Hawks tried it with. The classic western, about lawmen preventing a siege on a jail to free a prisoner, already has enough kinetic energy to bounce between the lively dialog exchanges and the suspenseful action scenes, but 4K amplifies a viewer's subliminal reaction to every moment. Preserved this well, the film will never grow old.

The cinematography does not have brown tones like today's 'western' cinematography does, but the film's color scheme is brown nevertheless, so that the image imparts a richness of true colors while the set designs and costumes generally emphasize different manifestations of wood and dirt coloring. Flesh tones are deep, and look lighter and pastier on the old BD. The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1. There are alternate French, Spanish, Italian and German audio tracks, eleven subtitling options including English, and the rewarding commentary track from film critic Richard Schickel and fan John Carpenter.

Enter the 4K Dragon

The Criterion Collection Blu-ray presentation of Enter the Dragon, part of their Bruce Lee's Greatest Hits boxed set (Aug 20), looked and sounded terrific, with bright, colorful hues and an awesome 5.1-channel stereo soundtrack, but the new WB SDS Studio Distribution Services WB100 4K UltraHD Blu-ray release (UPC#883929793723, \$34), looks and sounds even better. While the colors on the Criterion release are brighter, the more subdued colors on the 4K presentation not only look more solid and better detailed, but they feel more accurate, as if the saturation on the Criterion image had been pushed a bit to make the film feel more playful. Criterion's presentation is still a lot of fun, but the WB presentation feels definitive. As for the sound, the bass in Lalo Schifrin's musical score was terrific on the Criterion version (which was, in turn, stronger than the great DVDs that came before it), but the 4K's Dolby Atmos processing has even more power, and the sound in general is richer and better detailed. The 1973 film, blending the trappings of a James Bond movie with the action of a martial arts feature, which would have enabled Lee to have an even greater international career than the posthumous one facilitated by his untimely death before the film was released, is an exhilarating entertainment that transcends its narrative flaws and staging idiosyncrasies through the joy of what it delivers to an eager fan. The 4K presentation amplifies that joy while diminishing the flaws.

Criterion only presented the theatrical version of the film, which runs 99 minutes, but the 4K disc also offers the preferred 102-minute Special Edition version, as well, incorporating a bit more of the Eastern mysticism that Lee himself wanted included in the film. The presentation is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1. There is an alternate monophonic English track, seven alternate language tracks including a Chinese track that is only available on the Special Edition, thirteen subtitling options including English, the 2-minute introduction to the Special Edition by Linda Lee Caldwell, and the DVD's sporadic but informative commentary track over the Special Edition from producer Paul Heller and screenwriter Michael Allin.

McQueen western

Perhaps Henry Hathaway's 1966 Paramount western, Nevada Smith, does not belong in the canon of important Twentieth Century motion pictures, but it certainly belongs in any reckoning of the great films of the Sixties. Made between The Cincinnati Kid and The Sand Pebbles, the film reinforced Steve McQueen's credentials as a boxoffice action star. Based upon a supporting character Harold Robbins had provided in a backstory for The Carpetbaggers (giving Alan Ladd a meaty part in 1964), the 130-minute film eventually supplied Paramount with an enduring, adult-ish marathon double bill that also served to remind audiences how close the past really was. By the Sixties, except for those living on ranches in Texas or the Mountain States, westerns were abstract entertainment, but following the same character from his western roots (it would be the last time McQueen played an actual teenager, not that you buy it for a second) in a revenge adventure thriller and then seeing him matured in the industrialized and cosmopolitan Los Angeles environs of The Carpetbaggers added a great credibility to the concept of the western as realistic entertainment. Nevada Smith is a highly enjoyable movie, but it is also a highly improbable one, with McQueen's character placing himself in one unbelievable situation after another. The double bill helped to obscure the implausible moments, while magnifying the lingering thrill of the action scenes and of McQueen's captivating command of the screen. Having spent scores of hours playing a cowboy on TV (and having learned that if he wanted to hold your attention he needed to do stuff with his hands), McQueen's presence in the film is masterful, and the movie thrives not on whether the story is believable, but on how engaging it is to follow his character's experiences.

Paramount and Kino Lorber Incorporated have released the film on Blu-ray as a *KL Studio Classics* title (UPC#738329263447, \$25). When the parents of McQueen's character are murdered by three roving bandits (indelibly embodied by Martin Landau, Arthur Kennedy and Karl Malden), he sets out single-mindedly for vengeance, learning what it means to be an adult in the process (until the very last shot of his very last film, McQueen, whatever his age, imparted the spirit of the eternal adolescent). Brian Keith, Suzanne Pleshette, Janet Margolin, Pat Hingle, Howard Da Silva, Raf Vallone and Paul Fix costar—most of them appearing in short sequences aiding or otherwise interacting with the hero as he traverses the country on his quest (including a stay in a Louisiana penal colony in the film's middle—if there was one thing other than handling a gun and being 'cool' that McQueen was famous for, it was 'escaping'). Hathaway makes terrific use of the widescreen framing, which is aptly transferred to the Blu-ray with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1, not just to place the characters in evocative western landscapes, but to put them at very opposite ends of the screen, often enhancing the tension between them as a result. With a rich and unspoiled color transfer that sharpens every detail, the story almost takes a secondary importance to the diversion of the images and the emotions those images convey. That is the pull of the film and why it remains such a compelling Sixties feature, presenting a display of the Hollywood traditions that were soon to become outmoded, but illuminating them with the glow of impetuous youth that, thanks to the movies and home video, will never diminish.

The monophonic sound is reasonably strong and worthy of the nice Alfred Newman musical score. Along with optional English subtitles, four TV commercials, a radio commercial and a trailer, there is a commentary track featuring movie authorities C. Courtney Joyner, Mark Jordan and Henry Parke, who are thrilled to be talking about the film. They spend a lot of time discussing Hathaway and McQueen, sharing stories about their behavior on the set, and as each supporting star appears, they eagerly talk about each one's contributions to the movies in general and this one in particular. While the talk is not overly informative, and once in a while, they are plain wrong (they miss a plot point explaining why McQueen's character keeps Kennedy's character alive for so long, and they claim that the TV series, Mission Impossible, was, "In full swing," when in fact the series would not debut for another three months when the film first hit theaters—like many typecast bad guys before him, Landau had to transition to TV to become a screen hero), and they overlook some connections, such as never acknowledging Malden's similar role in One-Eyed Jacks. Nevertheless, they do have a lot of Hollywood lore to share, and their enthusiasm for the film outweighs the lightness of the talk. As they explain, McQueen had a feud with Malden over rivalries on Broadway that took him a very long time to get over, but made for some wonderful cinema. In one confrontation scene, the commentators can't contain themselves. "This scene is fantastic! The sense of competition here is just absolutely palatable."

Frankenheimer's Pick-Up

John Frankenheimer's career tended to go in spurts, often following a couple of good movies with a couple of bad ones, and then coming up with a couple more good ones. In this regard, he often seemed to be at the mercy of his screenwriters. When he had a good script, he could do wonders with it, but when he had a bad script, he would just soldier through and move on to the next project. His 1986 Cannon Group feature, from a story and screenplay by Elmore Leonard, 52 Pick-Up, caught him at an upswing. While not perfect—logic gets stretched here and there, especially toward the end—the film under Frankenheimer's hand has such a firm control of attitude and atmosphere that a viewer's impulse is just to sit back, go with it and enjoy the show. It helps immeasurably that the cast is so appealing, with Roy Scheider and Ann-Margret as a wealthy married L.A. couple whose relationship is tested when Scheider's character is blackmailed (over an illicit affair) by a trio of lowlifes, played with marvelous flair by John Glover, Robert Trebor and the wonderful Clarence Williams III. Vanity, Kelly Preston and Doug McClure are also featured. Scheider's character turns the tables on them immediately, which causes more trouble, and he eventually plays them against one another. Running 110 minutes, the film derives its strength, however, from Ann-Margret's steely performance as the pissed-off wife, as Frankenheimer smartly allots a good deal of screen time to follow the ripping and healing of the marriage. It is the emotional investment created by that choice that allows the viewer not only to root for Scheider's character to get the best of the bad guys, but even overlook some of the narrative cheats that were needed to put everything together. The action scenes are invigorating, and since it is the Eighties, there is nudity galore.

MGM and Kino Lorber Incorporated have released the film on Blu-ray (UPC#738329263416, \$25), letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1. Wash not just in the Eighties, but in the tacky, Cannon Group representation of the Eighties, the musical score, by Gary Chang, is overbearingly electronic, amplified further by the aggressive Ultra-Stereo surround mix, which is delivered in all of its glory on the DTS audio track. The quality of Jost Vacano's cinematography is also compromised somewhat by the grainy softness and garish hues that pervaded Cannon's films in the day, but the transfer is precise—fleshtones are not only exact, but superbly detailed—and the image never succumbs to the flaws that could easily take it over in a less robust medium. There are optional English subtitles, two TV commercials and a trailer.

Another audio track has a 38-minute interview with Chang, who talks about how he got started (it was his second score and he went on to work with Frankenheimer a number of times, which is something of a seal of approval), the complexities of the recording business (he likes the anonymity of the soundtrack business because he is Asian and that does not discourage his audience from purchasing his scores), what his initial strategies for the film were and how those plans got altered (as did Frankenheimer's significantly longer cut, which was fully scored) when Cannon asked for marketing alterations. "The movie went from this kind of intelligent, cerebral puzzle into a much harder-hitting kind of action movie, so suddenly the score and the use of electronics, it became different. It's too bad, because I really liked what I had done, but it is what it is." That talk is followed by a 32-minute uninterrupted selection of the score, at which point the track reverts to the film's audio.

An excellent full commentary is also included featuring film experts Steve Mitchell and Edwin Samuelson, who not only go into detail about the locations, the camerawork, and the backgrounds of the cast, the crew and Cannon, but why the contributions of each artist from Leonard and Frankenheimer on down added to the quality of the whole. "One of the nice takeaways is that you sort of wonder about the story that happened before the movie started. Good movies take stuff that precedes the story and sort of layer it in, which makes you think about it, perhaps, on the ride home or when you're having a cup of coffee after seeing a movie, or whatever. That's one of the things that movies used to do a lot, that the story you're seeing, the 'present' of the story is not the entire story, that these characters preceded and hopefully, in the case of [Scheider's and Ann-Margaret's characters], will have a life after the nightmare that is 52 Pick-Up."

Disintegrating marriage

Peter Hall was primarily a renowned British stage director but he did make several esoterically significant movies, most of which had something of a stage drama format to them. His excellent 1969 Universal Pictures feature, Three into Two Won't Go, a Universal Kino Lorber Incorporated *KL Studio Classics* Blu-ray (UPC#738329263775, \$25), with movie star couple Rod Steiger and Claire Bloom, along with Judy Geeson and Peggy Ashcroft, is based upon a novel by Andrea Newman but has a very play-like structure. Steiger is a salesman who picks up a teen hitchhiker played by Geeson and has a fling with her. Bloom plays his wife and Ashcroft is the mother of Bloom's character. Steiger is just as creepy looking as he always is, and so his stint with Geeson's character makes your flesh crawl, but that is just one of the film's many exquisite dramatic details. The husband and wife have no children, with the biological clock for all intents and purposes having expired. Perhaps to compensate, they have purchased a new suburban house in a new development (it is never stated, but per the sound mix, it is too close to a noisy airport), which looks uncomfortably American, except that the architecture has just a touch too much British recidivism to its designs and materials. Bloom's character even quit or took a sabbatical from her job as a teacher to fix up the house while Steiger's character carried on with his job to pay for the hefty mortgage. Saying any more about the plot would spoil its surprises, but running 93 minutes and set in just a handful of locations, the film is a superbly executed drama that takes the Free Love Sixties and exposes the desperation and frustration behind the presumptions of the day. Hall guides the actors through a delicate balance that enables them to convey their star appeal while at the same time presenting characters that are fully human in their flaws, vulnerabilities and intellectual limitations. It is the depth—or, more accurately, the width—of the emotional detail that Hall achieves which gives the film an enduring power that readily supersedes the era in which it takes place.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1. The colors are very fresh and fleshtones are accurate, so that due to the value of having the movie available, the fairly constant presence of minor speckling can be excused. The monophonic sound is adequate, although Francis Lai's musical score is terribly constrained by the audio limitations, to the point where one might actually interpret its distortion as deliberately symbolic of what is about to happen to the characters. There are optional English subtitles and a trailer.

Our Thirty-ninth Anniversary!

Welcome to our *Thirty-ninth Anniversary Issue* and the beginning of our fortieth year of publication! Our deepest thanks to all of our readers for their continued support and favor. Additionally, thank you to the many people in the home video industry who have gone out of their way to support our efforts. Your faith in us is greatly appreciated. Thank you also to everyone at GMPC for always printing the Newsletter in a timely and efficient fashion. As you might be aware, we compile all of our DVD and BD reviews into a single source book, which is now up to its hundred-fifty-fifth iteration and is available on CD-ROM or as a pdf file that can be downloaded from the Internet. Feel free to contact us for more details.

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Universal developed a habit, particularly in the Seventies, of shooting additional footage for movies without the involvement of the original artists to embellish the films for television broadcast. Although there is no mention of it on the jacket cover, that version has also been included, in a squared full screen format (cropping off the sides and adding nothing to the top and bottom of the image) and running 100 minutes. Taken from a video source of some sort, it is best to watch the presentation on a small screen. While the colors are as good as the real movie, the image is less solid and softer. The monophonic sound is also a little weaker, and there is no captioning. Essentially, however, unless you are super curious, there isn't much reason to watch the TV version at all. Two sets of scenes have been added with the actors left uncredited, one involving the mother of Geeson's character and a social worker, and the other featuring two male supervisors talking about Steiger's character and seeming to know everything there is to know about his marriage and love life. The segments are tolerably acted, but take away the emotional weight that is achieved by sticking with the three main characters for the whole film. There is a bit of added footage involving the three stars that is more welcome, including a lovely little exchange where Steiger and Bloom's characters talk about a stain on the floor of their new house (perhaps it was dropped because the metaphor was too on the nose), but those moments are few and far between. All of the sex scenes and a lot of the scenes leading up to them, of course, have been dropped.

Sixties film enthusiasts Troy Howarth and Nathaniel Thompson supply a reasonably decent commentary track over the original feature, going over the history of the film and how Universal would change movies for television broadcast, as well as the careers of the cast and crew, delving a bit more elaborately into Steiger's work (and digressing into a comparison with Laurence Olivier regarding their erratic performances in movies), while also finding time to talk about how there was a general trend in films at the time exploring troubled marriages. They also point out that Steiger and Bloom's own relationship was soon to fall apart. "Knowing these two were going through their own difficulties at this time, it kind of makes you wonder, you know, was this a little bit of sort of marriage therapy for them doing some of these scenes?"

Neighborhood life

Shot in Oakland, the beginning of the 1998 independent feature, **Dry-longso**, released on Blu-ray by The Criterion Collection (UPC#715515286312, \$40), is awkwardly staged and poorly acted. But that must have also been the first day of shooting or something, because as the 81-minute feature directed by Cauleen Smith progresses, not only do the performances and the technical components of the film improve, but the story becomes so involving that you quickly forget any shortcomings the film might have, anyway. Toby Smith stars as a college student who is trying to complete a project for her photography class using a Polaroid camera. Notwithstanding the probability that she has spent way more on Polaroid film packs than she ever would have needed to spend on a 35mm camera, it is established that she wants to do everything her own way and take her own sweet time about it. She meets the daughter of a singer one night, played by April Barnett (whose character is trying to avoid an abusive boyfriend), and they become friends, while her project gradually starts to take shape, documenting life in her inner city community. At the same time, a serial killer is stalking young people at night, but the film is so good, the added suspense comes across almost as an afterthought. Although that aspect of the plot really isn't necessary, it ends up demonstrating what a wealth of ideas and appealing personalities Smith has gathered together. It is a coherently executed film, with an abundance of insight and vitality, exploring how life and hope can be found in every neighborhood, regardless of the tragedies that abound. It even has a happy ending.

The picture is presented in a squared full screen format. The color transfer is clearly excellent, and hues are consistently fresh, although the cinematography is naturally grainy at times. This is another low budget independent movie with such great obscure songs you wish they had put out a soundtrack album. Other than the music, the audio is generally centered, but the mix is terrific, with many background sounds telling stories of their own. There are optional English subtitles, a trailer and an illuminating 25-minute interview with Cauleen Smith talking about how she blended her own experiences (including the serial killer component) into her screenplay, the filmmakers and others who influenced her work, and the meaning of the film's title.

An array of short films by Smith have also been included, prefaced by a 12-minute introduction from Smith that covers each film. The 6-minute *Chronicles of a Lying Spirit* from 1992 is a vague collage of voices and images regarding the experiences of different people during the Twentieth Century. The first part of it is repeated a second time (which makes it a bit easier to follow) and is then embellished for its conclusion. Without production notes, however, one would be hard pressed to assess its value. A miniature **Koyaanisqatsi**, the 11-minute *Songs for Earth and Folk* from 2013 is a witty and stimulating montage of found footage depicting man-made and natural objects and occurrences set to an electronic score. Running 4 minutes and silent, the sweet 2016 *Lessons in Semaphore* depicts a woman practicing semaphore in an empty urban lot and discovering someone who wants to communicate back to her. The 5-minute *Egungun* from 2017 depicts a figure dressed in rags and shells walking around a semi-tropical setting, as well as by a swimming pool and in a surf, with some of the footage repeated and tropical sounds emitted from the audio track. The piece can also be played as a continuous loop, presumably more for the audio track than the images. An 8-minute instrumental music video from 2021 Smith made for Jeff Parker, *Suffolk*, depicts nicely dressed African-American models mostly standing around Joshua Tree in California, although there are also shots of Watts Towers, since it was the Towers' creator, Simon Rodia, who had relocated to the Joshua Tree site. The music is relaxing and the images are captivating.

Finally, the more pointless, esoteric short films you have suffered through in your lifetime, the more delight and joy you will take in Smith's 2011 *Remote Viewing*, which runs 15 minutes. It is a one-joke movie, with the joke occurring at about the halfway point, but we don't want to say much more than that, because the surprise is worth the wait. A mechanical ditch digger and a bulldozer dig a large hole, drop something into it, and then cover the hole up

again. The film is cleverer than it first appears, but that is an essential part of its brilliant wit. Shot on digital video, the vividness of the image is also a refreshing splash after the less advanced quality of the images not just on the other shorts (except the music video), but on the feature, and the stereo sound is also terrific.

Silent dance

It is amazing how so many silent films have terrific dance sequences. Naturally, there are a couple in the 1923 **The Spanish Dancer**, which has been released by Milestone Film & Video and Kino Lorber as a *The Milestone Cinematheque* Blu-ray (UPC#738329263300, \$30). Featuring a terrific modern jazz score by Bill Ware that is (unlike some scores) sensitive to every shift in movement and tone the film presents, not only are the dance scenes invigorating and dazzling, but they contribute directly to the plot and character development as they play out. Set in Seventeenth Century Spain, Pola Negri is the title character, a gypsy performer who catches the eye of a disgraced aristocrat, played by Antonio Moreno, and also—during the most compelling dance sequence—the eye of the king, played by Wallace Beery. Adolphe Menjou, who was having a great year in 1923 with his breakout role in *A Woman of Paris*, costars as Beery's confidant, who tries to eliminate Moreno's character so the king can have his way (Beery and Menjou's performances together are wonderful). The film's action scenes are unremarkable, but otherwise, running 106 minutes, the show is very impressive. In addition to the dance sequences, there are massive crowd scenes that have the fervor of a *Where's Waldo?* page in the variety of activities that are happening concurrently as your eyes flit back and forth across the screen. Most importantly, the film's last act is wonderfully plotted, so that once all of the pieces come together, the entertainment becomes irresistible.

The full screen black-and-white picture, which is tinted in places, has a fairly battered look at times, and even shifts in and out of focus, coming through as blurry one moment, and then crisp the next. When everything is sharp and free of significant wear, the image is finely detailed. A 2-minute restoration featurette is included that demonstrates the effort that was made to get the quality of the presentation this far (utilizing several different sources). The quality of the music's delivery is sharp, with a strong dimensionality. A good 22-minute interview with Ware is included in which he explains his compositional process and reflects upon the qualities of the film. Scott Eyman, a film historian who was involved with the restoration, speaks over the first 59 minutes of the film. He begins by discussing the restoration, but eventually settles into going over the biographies of the primary cast and crew members, especially Negri and director Herbert Brenon. A couple of times during the talk he restarts what he is saying, flubs that were left in rather than being edited out. What he has to say is informative, and his insights on the differences between silent films and sound films—not the obvious differences, but the more subtle changes that occurred with the type of players who became stars and the pacing in story construction—are genuinely enlightening. When his talk finishes, dance historian Naima Prevost speaks for the film's remaining 47 minutes, going over the complete biography of choreographer Ernest Belcher (Marge Campion's father), examining his collaboration with Negri and summarizing his work on other movies in detail.

Volume 3

A title card at the very end says there is more to come, but the highly amusing and engaging fantasy science-fiction series achieves some reasonable resolutions in **Guardians of the Galaxy Volume 3**, a Marvel Studios release (UPC#786936897715, \$30). Like so many multiple-superhero movies, the 2023 production owes a debt of gratitude to **The Seven Samurai** (indeed, the entire history of motion pictures would be different were it not for that film...) and earnestly explores the emotional overlap that everyone strives for in the phrase, 'family and friends.' As with the two previous films, Chris Pratt plays the central character, a space pilot originally from Earth who has adventures with a band of talented misfits, including a tree that walks and talks (albeit with a limited vocabulary), a muscular alien who thinks every problem can be solved with force, an alien with extra sensory mental powers, an alien whose arm becomes a variety of weapons, and others. When another member of their band, a highly intelligent talking raccoon, is abducted, they immediately set out to rescue him, as the raccoon's background is revealed through flashbacks. Zoe Saldana plays a generally belligerent green alien, who was separated from the group in the previous film. Dave Bautista, Karen Gillan and Pom Klementieff are also featured, with Vin Diesel and Bradley Cooper providing voices for other characters, while Sylvester Stallone has a bit part. While the 150-minute film naturally builds up its action so that the most elaborate battle is at its climax, that climax is thankfully not overwhelming in the way that some superhero films tiresomely become at their end. Expertly directed by James Gunn, the film's blend of character, expertly paced comedy and peripatetic imagination is bright and energetic, and if not by the end of the first movie then most definitely by the end of this third one, you feel like you are a member of the hero's band and fully vested in every idiosyncratic challenge they face.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1 and an accommodation for enhanced 16:9 playback. The color transfer is very good and the special effects are consistently impossible to differentiate from the live action. The 5.1-channel Dolby Digital sound has a full dimensionality and some decent separation effects. The series takes pride in using pop hits from the Eighties as part of its musical score, and the choices expand in more esoteric ways for **Volume 3**. There is an audio track that describes the action ("They fly over a suburban neighborhood made up of nearly identical houses with impeccably maintained lawns. Below, a woman wearing a headscarf pushes a stroller. She turns to look up at the ship, revealing a snout and tiny warthog-like tusks. In the stroller, her baby has the same features, and holds a stuffed animal resembling the High Evolutionary. A humanoid panda bear looks up from mowing the lawn as The Bowie sets down. A woman with huge vampire bat-like ears and facial features stands from her garden with a worried look. Along with her other humanoid animal neighbors, she heads into the street toward the ship. In slow motion, the Guardians disembark."), alternate French and Spanish audio tracks, and optional English, French and Spanish subtitles.

Argento in 4K

The 4K format has been a terrific upgrade for many movies, even if the improvements aren't immediately apparent, but the added quality of presentation has had the most impact upon films in which the director is as obsessed with style as with substance. The first time we saw Dario Argento's 1982 murder thriller, **Tenebrae**, it was the film's integration of cinematic stylism and an exceptionally clever, twisting plot, peppered with eroticism and unrestrained gore, and featuring a movie and television star we had adored since childhood (anybody else remember *Valentine's Day*?) that turned what had been a passing enthusiasm for Argento's best known films into an obsession over everything he has ever directed. And with each subsequent home video format, we enjoyed **Tenebrae** even more (although its many plot turns no longer surprise us), because each improvement in the delivery quality heightens the film's stylistic achievements and the dazzle of its designs. We reviewed Synapse Film's Blu-ray release in Dec 16. It was a terrific disc, but now Synapse has put out a two-platter 4K UltraHD presentation (UPC#654930324097, \$50), and it is even better.

The second platter contains a standard Blu-ray that looks identical in quality to the BD Synapse released previously. Amazingly, the fantastic colors on the standard BD are somewhat hazy or grainy next to the precisely defined colors on the 4K presentation, and they even disappear in the darker portions of the screen. With every detail made sharper, it is not just the knives, razors and axes that are more threatening. The luxurious décor in the houses and apartments of Rome where the film takes place look more inviting, and thus present a greater dynamic between desire and horror. Unlike many of Argento's features, the film's original monophonic audio track has never been remastered in stereo, but even in mono, the DTS track on the 4K rendition is crisper and has a stronger punch than the DTS track on the standard BD.

Tony Franciosa is a horror writer who is in Rome to promote a new book when a serial killer begins taunting him, matching the victims to passages he has written. John Saxon plays his agent, Argento's partner during his most creative period, Daria Nicolodi, plays his secretary and Giuliano Gemma is the police detective investigating the murders. Running 101 minutes, the film's plot is both clever and relatively logical, inviting one to revisit its thrills again and again. Since the improvements to the picture and the sound sharpen an appreciation for the film's visceral thrills as well as its stylistic achievements, the 4K presentation amplifies every one of the film's strengths. There is an English track, with Franciosa and Saxon providing their own voices, and an Italian track, with optional English subtitles.

The two platters contain the same special features. Included are an enjoyable 16-minute interview with costar John Steiner, talking about his extensive career as an English actor who became a star in Italian films; a great 17-minute collection of retrospective interviews with Argento, Nicolodi, cinematographer Luciano Tovoli and others; an additional 16-minute retrospective interview with Nicolodi, in which she shares a lot more about her life at the time, her experiences on the film and how she achieved her ultimate scream queen shriek of terror that brilliantly closes the feature; another 15-minute interview with Argento; a 10-minute interview with composer Claudio Simonetti describing the sources of the Goblin-based musical score; a decent 12-minute analysis of the film and its creation; an extensive collection of promotional materials from all around the world in still frame; two trailers; an alternate opening credit sequence running 2 minutes; a 2-minute alternate closing credit sequence with a song; and a quick 13-second introduction to the film by Nicolodi.

Synapse's earlier BD had a commentary from Argento biographer Maitland McDonagh and an excellent 89-minute history of the 'giallo' Italian thrillers, and these features have been carried over. Additionally, one of our favorite commentary teams, Alan Jones and Kim Newman, provide another rewarding talk—Jones worked on the initial British release of the film and would later work directly with Argento on other productions. They share plenty of behind the scenes insights and agree that it was Argento's last great masterpiece. They also bring their wry humor to point out inconsistencies in the narrative and brilliance in the filmmaking. During the movie's incredibly groundbreaking crane shot poking in and out of the upper floor windows of an ultra-modern house as the murderer is about to dispatch two bickering lesbian roommates, they chirp, "It is meaninglessly brilliant." They also remark on how Franciosa's character is bicycling in New York to the airport in the film's opening, but they fail to mention the unlikelihood that anybody could actually bicycle like that on the Belt Parkway and survive.

On a third commentary, Argento film expert Thomas Rostock supplies an excellent technical track, deconstructing the film's intricate and carefully chosen designs, and explaining how its various bravura sequences were accomplished. "For their cinematic purposes, Tovoli and Argento used the Kodak film stock, 5247, which at the time was 125 ASA Tungsten for the daylight scenes, and the just brand new 5293 250 ASA Tungsten for the nighttime shooting. Tovoli rated both film stocks at 300 ASA for the entire shoot. That meant that carefully controlled, overexposing of the negative during the shooting, and likewise under developing in the lab, with less grain loss as benefit. As a result of this approach, the film's images appear crystal clear, and night has become awashed with a futuristic light. Tovoli pulls off a look that could so easily have turned out flat and uninspired in lesser hands, but **Tenebrae**'s brilliant photography shows him as a true master of blue light."

If we were a 14-year old girl, Argento's **Phenomena** would give us nightmares, like, forever. The 1985 film, which sort of marked the end of Argento's first career phase, has been released in an excellent two-platter 4K UltraHD Blu-ray by Synapse (UPC#654930323793, \$50). A mishmash of giallo and supernatural horror elements, the film is set in Switzerland, where the young teen daughter of a wealthy celebrity, played by Jennifer Connelly, has been sent to an all-girls boarding school, while a serial killer who is especially fond of slicing and dicing young teenage girls is on a local rampage. Not only is Connelly's character naturally vulnerable, as many teen girls would relate to, but she has a

nascent maternal instinct that is so overpowering she forms psychic connections with insects. Hence, the film jumps back and forth between gore, goo and icky bugs, but from a wonderful female perspective—plenty is seen, but way more is implied—that is expertly corralled by what turns out to be a tightly conceived and logical giallo murder mystery plot.

The film has always been a good deal of fun, but in 4K format, preying on every viewer's subconscious desires and fears, every button it pushes erupts with a visceral thrill. Letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.66:1, the cinematography has an inherent softness, but the slightly subdued hues are precisely detailed, conveying the full impact of the film's chromatic schemes that guide a viewer's emotions. Flestones are palpable and the stars—Donald Pleasence is a bug scientist, and Nicolodi is a school official—have a vivid presence, especially in close-ups.

The two platters contain three different versions of the film, which are all presented in 4K with the same quality image transfer. The first platter has the 116-minute *Italian* version, which can be played back in Italian with optional English subtitles, or in English with some passages in Italian with subtitled. This latter version is the intended primary version of the film, which was shot in English, even though parts of the English dialog were not retained when it was dubbed in Italian for the definitive release. Both Pleasence (doing a half-hearted Scottish accent) and Connelly's voices are on the English track and the sound mix is more detailed than the sound mix on the Italian track. The 5.1-channel DTS sound has many pleasing directional effects, a haunting environmental dimensionality, and a crispness that makes the Gremlin musical score and additional heavy metal pop songs more effective than they have been in the past. We reviewed a DVD in Sep 99 that was unable to achieve the same impact, either visually or aurally. Also featured on the first platter is a nifty Japanese pressbook in still frame, two trailers, a 4-minute Simonetti instrumental music video with Connelly, and a massive, comprehensive 120-minute retrospective documentary that explores almost every aspect of the film's creation (not only was the film's image conceptually soft, but the makeup deliberately enhanced the softness of Connelly's cheeks), working its way through with terrific interviews, behind-the-scenes clips and other great materials. Interestingly, in an interview Argento does on **Tenebrae**, he explains that, as a backstory, he set **Phenomena** in an alternate universe where Germany had won WWII, which none of the supplementary materials here mention, although it explains several of the oddest occurrences in the film.

The second platter has the 110-minute *International* version, and the 83-minute American version, known as *Creepers*. Dispensing with character development and extraneous atmosphere, *Creepers* does a reasonably good job at conveying the heart of the film's premise and thrills, to the point where it might actually be the version you'd want to share with a 14-year old. As for the *International* version, it has little to offer as a compromise between the other two. Both versions on the platter are in English only. *Creepers* is traditionally in mono, although there is an option that brings a mild dimensionality to the music while leaving the atmospheric effects centered. The *International* version has the same lively 5.1 DTS audio track that the *Italian* version has. There is also a dimensional audio track on the *International* version that does not have as much thrust, but uses different sound effects and music cues, an alternative pleasure that will definitely please die hard fans looking for some playback variety. Along with a trailer and two radio commercials for *Creepers* (which was originally released by New Line Cinema), the platter has an excellent 31-minute segment delineating exactly what the differences between each version of the film are and explaining the choices that had to be made in compiling the definitive English language *Italian* version.

You would think that with all of the supplements, there would not be much more to add, but film historian Troy Howarth provides an excellent commentary on the *International* version that does indeed fill in even more background information while providing a fresh and generally objective analysis of the film's artistry. He allows that the movie is not Argento's greatest creation as he also delineates how Argento's treatment of Nicolodi's character mirrors what was happening in their marriage at the time. But even he admits that with such a nice transfer and with the familiarities of repetition, the film can grow on you. "Sloppy plotting, arguably, but nevertheless it's the kind of thing you just have to kind of roll with the punches with in these movies. Again, Italian genre cinema in general is not always noted for its plot-driven logic, but very often things make a certain degree of emotional sense. I've often argued that these films are best appreciated as sort of variations on high opera in a certain way. They're very fever pitch and very melodramatic and very extreme, and it's that extreme quality that makes them very endearing, and also very off-putting if you're not sympathetic to these movies. And believe me, there are many critics and many viewers who just do not get these films at all."

Finally, film historian David Del Valle converses with Argento biographer Derek Botelho on a commentary over the *International* version. While they have less to add than Howarth, they do fill in a few details not found elsewhere about Argento and about the film, including a very interesting and valid theory behind the killing of one of the victims, who may have been mistaken for the heroine after she slipped on the heroine's stylish top to run out at night for an assignment.

The two versions of Argento's **Deep Red** have been issued as a two-platter 4K Blu-ray by Arrow Video (UPC#191329238448, \$50), each version presented in 4K format on a separate platter. The original 126-minute theatrical release comes with a wonderful, fully dimensional 5.1-channel DTS Italian audio track, along with the original mono Italian track and a mono English track—which utilizes star David Hemmings' voice—that shifts to Italian for the footage that didn't appear in the standard English language version. It is the 5.1 track that is the star of the 4K BD. The music, a mix of jacked up Goblin electronic melodies and calmer interludes—has a full

surround presence that pulls you through the circumspect murder mystery narrative with a force that prevents you from ever wanting to stop and ask how such things could occur. Some atmospheric noises are also dimensional, and there is a bit of directional dialog, but the primary advantage is to have the audio raised as high as it will go so the music can push and pull you through the film, while the carefully placed silences take on an enhanced impact for the same reason. We reviewed Arrow's Blu-ray in Jun 18, and found that while the picture quality was an improvement over Blue Underground's Blu-ray, the Blue Underground's 7.1-channel audio mix was more pleasing than Arrow's 5.1 effort. With the 4K playback, however, Arrow's more basic mix becomes more gripping and involving than what the Blue Underground BD can offer, particularly since the image is also an additional improvement over Arrow's BD. The colors are more detailed and precise, and the film's lighting effects are more complex and more mesmerizing.

Hemmings is a jazz teacher who witnesses a murder late at night and is egged on by Nicolodi, playing a female reporter, to find the murderer. We refer readers to our earlier review for more details. The scenes set after dark are composed so exquisitely that it hardly matters when they don't make complete sense because the picture is so smooth and glossy you can feel like you are standing right next to the hero, getting pounded by the music and in such constant peril that you might be the next victim.

Presented in mono, the 105-minute English language version on the second platter lacks the immersive effects that the 5.1 audio provides, dulling the impact of the Goblin tracks in particular. Not only is the dialog in English, but many of the text inserts are as well, including one that a victim has written in the steam on black tile. The lost footage includes a lot of the music sequences involving Hemmings, which is a shame, and the film is changed from an expressionistic murder thriller into a standard whodunit with a couple of good screams. The 4K presentation is no help with the audio, and because of the trims, it is less helpful with the picture quality, especially since, on a very minuscule level, it does not look as sharp as the longer version. It is an improvement over the standard BD, but that is about it.

The special features that appeared on the standard BD have been carried over, including a trailer and a commentary by Rostock on the longer version, and another trailer, a good 33-minute deconstruction of the film, a half-minute Simonetti introduction, a 14-minute promo for an Argento shop in Rome, a 12-minute interview with Argento, a 19-minute interview with Nicolodi, and a 15-minute introduction and interview with Simonetti on the shorter version.

A number of new special features, however, have been added to the platter containing the longer version of the film. Along with a terrific collection of memorabilia in still frame and a third trailer, there is an excellent and quite thorough 58-minute interview with Argento from 2018 about the film intercut with a few reminiscences from Nicolodi; a good 47-minute interview with production manager Angelo Iacono from 2018 in which he talks about several of the films he worked on with Argento but spends most of the segment speaking about **Deep Red** (he repeats some of the anecdotes that Argento also shares, but offers a different perspective on them); another 15-minute interview with Simonetti in which he talks about his entire career in film music and discusses some of the scoring process; a good 21-minute interview with co-star Macho Ménil from 2018 in which he describes in great detail shooting his stunt sequences; a pleasant 16-minute interview with co-star Gabriele Lavia from 2018 about her memories of the shoot; a nice 8-minute interview with a child actor, Jacopo Mariani, who was in both **Deep Red** and **Suspiria** (see below), sharing his memories of landing the parts and shooting his scenes in both films; and a 5-minute interview with Lino Capolicchio, who was supposed to have Hemmings' part but was in a bad car accident right before production began (his copy of the screenplay was soaked in blood!).

There is also a great commentary from Howarth and film enthusiast Nathaniel Thompson, both of whom seem to feel that **Deep Red** was Argento's best film and spell out the reasons why ("A self-consciously stylized film in all respects, but in the best possible sense of the term. We're going to see a lot of characters being posed in a very self-conscious way throughout the movie, in ways that are not necessarily natural, but they add a very kind of quirky and unusual and strange kind of quality to the film."). They bring a fresh perspective to the backgrounds of the cast and crew and, in particular, how the filmmakers worked with one another, and they also thoroughly deconstruct the film's artistry and its basic effectiveness. "If you ever get a chance to see this projected with an audience, or just show this with a bunch of friends, this is a great crowd movie."

We came for the colors but we stayed for the sound on the Synapse 4K Ultra HD two-platter Blu-ray release of Argento's 1977 **Suspiria** (UPC#65493021294, \$60). We reviewed Synapse's standard two-platter Blu-ray in Jun 18 and indeed, the second platter, a standard Blu-ray containing gobs of special features, is identical, having been carried over from that previous release. The first platter, however, is rather different.

Jessica Harper plays a student who arrives at a ballet school just as horrific murders have started to occur. After making several giallo thrillers that were purely murder mysteries, Argento began to blend supernatural factors into his narrative mix, often with surprising success, and the supernatural is an important element of the plot for **Suspiria**. To underscore its presence, Argento and Tovoli pushed the film's colors, and we can attest that the day the film opened in theaters in America, it played with deliberately over-saturated hues. Those hues are replicated carefully and expertly on the standard BD. On the 4K BD, however, they have been tamed. The 4K colors don't look bad, mind you. Fleshtones are accurate and the basic production designs are still quite colorful. But ultimately, those colors are slightly flat. They're 'safe.' In the film's very first shot, Harper is seen walking through an arrival gate at an airport. She is bathed in red light, but it is a stable, sensible red light on the 4K presentation. On the standard BD, it looks like Harper's character is entering Hell.

The standard BD had a terrific 4.0-channel DTS audio track with a wonderful surround mix. That track and the 5.1-channel Italian track, which was not quite as impressive, are carried over to the 4K version, but the 4K presentation also has an English language Dolby Atmos track, and it is fantastic. Not only are the separations clearer and more dimensional than they are on the other tracks, but in every direction the sound is stronger and more invigorating. Whether it is the Goblin musical score, the off screen voices, the thunderstorm, the shattering glass, the barking dog or what have you, the audio track raises the excitement of the 98-minute feature precipitously, to the point where any real fan of the film is going to want the 4K release while also holding onto the older release.

Two options are offered for the film's opening and closing credits, one in English and one in Italian. There are optional English subtitles and two rewarding commentary tracks, one featuring Howarth and the other with Del Valle and Botelho. The second platter has 84 minutes of great supplements, along with three trailers, three TV commercials and 5 radio commercials.

Vittorio Storaro's carefully composed cinematography is given a captivating precision on Arrow's 4K UHD Blu-ray release of Argento's **The Bird with the Crystal Plumage** (UPC#760137601197, \$60). Even if you've watched the movie so many times that you remember who the murderer is (and it takes a few times for that to happen), what you don't remember are the individual moments of suspense, all of which have an added kick thanks to the crispness of the image and the solidity of the sound. There were murder mysteries before **The Bird with the Crystal Plumage**, but none were ever as stylish as what Argento and Storaro achieved in 1970. The elegance and artistry is not pushy, as it would soon become when every Italian filmmaker with a camera tried to imitate it, but it is an element that benefits distinctly from the color detail and gradations of light that are employed in every frame. Tony Musante is an author who witnesses an attempted murder that has direct similarities to several other recent murders, and is kind of roped in by the investigating detective to research the case himself. Argento's filmmaking always has an unleashed tone that takes you barreling from one sequence to the next, and it is the suspense thrills that make the film so repeatedly engaging, with the 4K format sharpening every scare.

We reviewed Arrow's standard Blu-ray release in Jun 18, which exhibited noticeable improvements in comparison to the previously issued Blue Underground BD (Dec 09). While not as obvious, the upgrade the 4K presentation provides over Arrow's standard BD is essentially what we detailed. The colors have more intricacies, and the thrills are more visceral. Unfortunately, the monophonic sound has the same shortcoming that Arrow's **Cat O' Nine Tails** (see below) has. It is crisp and precise, but Blue Underground sprang for a remastered stereo mix and Ennio Morricone's music is just too captivating not to benefit from the dimensionality the mix creates.

Like the standard BD, the 4K release comes with an alternate Italian track, optional English subtitles, three trailers, a decent still collection of memorabilia, a Howarth commentary, an 11-minute interview with actress Eva Renzi, a 22-minute interview with actor Guido Di Marco, a 21-minute overview of Argento's films, a 32-minute deconstruction of the film with Kat Ellinger, and a 31-minute interview with Argento from 2017.

The murderer in Argento's 1971 giallo thriller, **The Cat O' Nine Tails**, is not so much the least likely suspect as the murderer is the least interesting suspect. When the murderer is revealed, it is an 'eh' moment, because the murderer is the one character that hasn't been given a distinctive personality or any sort of activity that is memorable. If you watch the film a couple of times in quick succession, you spot the character and follow the character's movements, but it is not a particularly clever revelation. That is, however, about the only shortcoming the film has. As it unfolds, and especially on Arrow's 4K Blu-ray release (UPC#76013762-9993, \$60), it is a delightful mystery story in which two heroes, a blind puzzle creator played by Karl Malden and a newspaper reporter played by James Franciscus, go their separate ways to follow leads, reunite to share information and then go separately again as the murders begin to stack up and both men are placed in danger. While Argento's style is not as aggressively innovative as it is in his other films, it is still an intoxicating blend of fashion, décor, compelling movement and stimulating editing, and the 4K enhances each component.

We reviewed Arrow's standard Blu-ray, as well as Blue Underground's Blu-ray release, in Jun 18, and our assessment remains the same with the addition of the 4K formatting. We still like the sound on the Blue Underground disc better. The picture quality on Arrow's release is preferable, as the Blue Underground image, although pleasing, looks slightly washed out in a direct comparison. Indeed, the 4K picture is even better than Arrow's standard BD, as it is sharper and better detailed, pulling you into the movie all the more. But Blue Underground's BD has a 2-channel stereo track while Arrow's releases stick to the film's original mono tracks, and the stereo not only enhances Morricone's musical score, but it also brings a greater dimensional atmosphere to the suspense sequences. Again, the 4K's audio has slightly better definitions than Arrow's regular BD, but Blue Underground's audio is way more fun.

Otherwise, the special features on Arrow's 4K release are identical to Arrow's standard BD, including a very good commentary track by Newman and Jones, a 3-minute reconstructed alternate ending, a 16-minute interview with Argento, a 15-minute interview with Iacono, a 35-minute interview with screenwriter Dardano Sacchetti, a nice memorabilia collection in still frame and three trailers.

There is one more improvement on the 4K release, however. Arrow's standard Blu-ray had a programming flaw that prevented the viewer from accessing an 11-minute interview with former child actress Cinzia De Carolis (the Sacchetti interview came up a second time, instead). The interview is accessible on the 4K presentation however, and it is very sweet as she shares her memories of making the film, talks about a couple of the other movies she was in as a child, and explains how she drifted into theater and dubbing when the calls for feature work dried up.

Lang dramas

Fritz Lang's 1954 Columbia Pictures remake of the Jean Renoir's *La Bête Humaine*, based upon an Emile Zola story, **Human Desire**, has been released by Columbia and Kino Lorber Incorporated as a *KL Studio Classics* Blu-ray (UPC#738329263379, \$25). Straight-jacketed by Hollywood standards of the day, the film was not one of Lang's more successful efforts, but that said, it is 1) unabashedly adult in attitude and content, and 2) a darn good movie, despite its shortcomings. Glenn Ford is a Korea veteran (hence, an unspoken reason as to why he is not spoken for) starting up at his old job again as a railroad engineer, and Broderick Crawford is a coworker who kills someone in a jealous rage over his wife, played by Gloria Grahame. Ford's character witnesses enough of the crime to surmise what might have gone down, but feels protective of Grahame's character, turning him into something of an accomplice. Edgar Buchanan costars. Not only are the performances terrific, but the modern diesel train setting is riveting. While there is some studio work, Lang also shot a lot of the film in genuine rail yards and real train cabs, with the force and power of the locomotives constantly underscoring the intensity of the drama. While purists will bemoan the film's conveniently scrubbed up ending, Lang goes out of his way to stage it in an eccentric manner, and it is a valid conclusion to the tale. Running 91 minutes, the film is gripping at its start, fascinating and licentious as it goes along, and suspenseful as it builds to its finale, supported at all times by Lang's masterful sense of images and setting, and the genuine humanity the stars bring to their parts.

The black-and-white picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1. The image looks terrific, adding not only to the intensity of the drama but to the realism of the locomotive settings. The monophonic sound is clear and there are optional English subtitles. Along with a trailer, there is a decent 10-minute appreciation of the film.

Lang's excellent 1952 adaptation of the Clifford Odets play about a troubled marriage, **Clash by Night**, has been released on Blu-ray by Warner Bros. and Turner Entertainment Co. as a *WB Warner Archive Collection* title (UPC#883929808359, \$22). Proof, not that is needed, that Lang was an excellent director regardless of the genre he was tackling, the RKO Radio Pictures film has a few moments of violence, but it is not a crime movie at all. Rather, it is an adult drama about a woman who marries apprehensively, is uneasy in that marriage and then tests its boundaries, only to find heartache. Set in Monterey, Barbara Stanwyck stars, with Paul Douglas as a good-hearted fishing boat owner who falls for her, and Robert Ryan as an unanchored movie theater projectionist who barges into their relationship. Marilyn Monroe has an exquisite supporting role. Running 105 minutes, the film is superbly acted, but it is Lang's direction—his guidance of the actors, his blocking, his choices of design and lighting, and his pacing—that not only makes the drama so captivating, but brings a genuine humanity to every character.

We reviewed Warner's DVD release in Jan 15. The full screen black-and-white picture quality on the DVD was perfectly adequate, but the picture on the Blu-ray is consistent, precise and gorgeous from beginning to end. The image is very crisp, and contrasts are meticulously defined. The monophonic sound is also strong. There are optional English subtitles in yellow, a trailer, and a commentary track by Peter Bogdanovich that includes excerpts of interviews he had with Lang. The commentary is worthwhile, but lazy at times.

Tales from the apocalypse

Civilization is an illusion. It's a pretty good one, and has lasted for several thousand years, primarily to protect people who have stuff from people who don't have stuff by making the people who don't have stuff think that there are organized rules you have to follow to get stuff. The people who have stuff know better, of course, but as long as they pretend otherwise, it all seems to work. The illusion is eventually going to crack, however, and this is becoming clearer and clearer every day, because one of the ways people get stuff is by pillaging natural resources, and after those several thousands of years, the pillaging is finally beginning to take its toll. Indeed, there appears to be no way now to stop it.

Science-fiction writers knew all about this, of course, and have been entertaining us for a long time with tales of civilization cracking apart or otherwise disintegrating. The stories are fun, because the heroes are freed from the rules that were holding them back—they can take stuff, kill people, jaywalk and otherwise do things they would be restrained from doing in a civilized world without losing our sympathy. Indeed, we can dream about how we would emulate them (and for some viewers, that is not an if but a when).

HBO has released an excellent apocalyptic adventure that is based upon what some might argue is a primary training tool for an apocalyptic event, a computer game, dramatizing its premise as **The Last of Us The Complete First Season**, a nine-episode series issued on a four-platter *4K UltraHD* Blu-ray by HBO, WB Home Entertainment and SDS Studio Distribution Services (UPC#883929810376, \$50). Running 517 minutes, the premise is sobering and probably fanciful, although the results of the apocalyptic event are entirely believable, even if the fantasy is a stretch. Like athlete's foot, but a lot worse, a fungus enabled by a rise in global temperatures infests people and turns them into hungry zombies, who then transmit the fungal infection by biting other people. Set a couple of decades after the infestation began, but with flashbacks to fill in pertinent backgrounds, Bella Ramsey is a teenage girl who appears to be immune from the bites, and Pedro Pascal is the mercenary hired to transport her across America to a medical center where doctors can analyze her and hopefully develop a general cure (both actors are **Game of Thrones** alumni). For the most part, America

(the last of U.S.?) and the world are in anarchy, but there are organized groups of uninfected humans in cities, and roving 'bandit' groups in the countryside who have also avoided infection.

Each episode has a very distinct tone and often a very different setting from the previous episode. Indeed, there is a point where an episode opens with the title card, 'Three Months Later,' and it would have been so easy for the creators to pad the show out with a couple of additional episodes showing what happened during that interim. The fact that they don't demonstrates how focused the program is on its themes and characters. The two heroes bond, naturally, during the course of their travels, but they also witness what is essentially a cross-section of what life without civilization will be like, in urban areas, suburban areas, rural areas and in the wilderness. The third episode is far and away the best, as it is a lovely short story about a couple who manage to build and sustain their own little paradise, free from the intrusions of the rest of the world—that is part of the fantasy, that civilization is actually a drag; just leave us your stuff and be gone. In any case, the program has a great deal of humor, primarily in the witty, sassy dialog that Ramsey gets to toss about. It also has a lot of excitement with fighting zombies and fighting other humans, and fantastic images of American cities in decay. Unlike **The Walking Dead** programs, a couple of the episodes have no zombies at all, or very few, and that speaks to the quality of the drama and its deeper exposition, seeking to hold a viewer not with thrills or flagrant moral quandaries (a loved one has turned and must be terminated), which are still there, of course, but with the deeper and more complex explorations of relationships, power structures and whether or not civilization is worth rescuing at all.

Each of the platters has a 'Play All' option, and the chapter encoding takes you reliably past the opening credits. On the other hand, the encoding on the platter is quite annoying, in that if playback is terminated in the middle of an episode, the show does not start up where it left off, but if playback is terminated during the opening or closing credits of an episode, it does come back to that point when reactivated. This is utterly ridiculous. If you're at the beginning or ending of an episode, then you easily remember where you left off and access to that point is simple. It is quite specifically when you are in the middle of an episode that you need to be able to pick up again without having to fast forward or memorize a time code or otherwise search through the show to find where you stopped watching it.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1. Thanks to the 4K formatting, the image quality is consistently inviting, whether it is a dark and frightening hallway, an amazingly decayed cityscape or a gorgeous snowbound trail. The show was mostly shot in Canadian locations, but except for a misguided attempt early on to pass something off as Massachusetts woodlands, it is usually convincing. In any case, the 4K image adds to the strength of the drama and the transportive nature of its setting. The Dolby Atmos sound is also super, with many directional and atmospheric surround effects, all vividly conveyed. There are alternate French, Spanish, Italian, German, and Czech audio tracks, fifteen subtitled tracks including English, and 154 minutes of good promotional featurettes (bizarrely, some of the featurettes will start up where they left off when playback is terminated, while others do not) that concentrate mostly on the cast but include many comparisons to the original game (a number of the game's cast members have parts in the show, and one was even carried over in the same role) and other background on the production. As can be seen by the comparisons, the show follows the game so closely that it makes a very effective crossover promotion, but that also facilitates the show's weakest component. The zombie monsters are too beholden to their game designs and feel overly latexed—a minor quibble in what is otherwise an outstanding fantasy horror drama.

Something touched deep inside

Ivan Pavlov dictated that while many people claim emotional ownership of a hit song, the true emotional ownership of that song belongs to those who were experiencing their very first romantic encounters as the song played constantly on the radio. And this is especially true if that song is 8 minutes long.

MTV Entertainment and BFD have released the terrific Paramount+ 2023 retrospective documentary about one such song, **The Day the Music Died – The Story of Don McLean's American Pie** on Blu-ray (UPC#8193-76047645, \$20) and on DVD (UPC#819376047638, \$18). The program is built in part around a concert celebrating the song's fiftieth anniversary, which was staged at the dance hall where the three musicians, whose death in a plane crash the same night inspired the song, played their final concert. The film not only goes back to deconstruct McLean's life and career, and how he put the song together, but also examines the impact that those three musicians—Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and The Big Bopper—had during their brief but celestially influential musical careers. Thus, running 94 minutes, the film itself builds the same sort of tapestry that the song builds, seeming to diverge onto different topics and people, only to discover that they all link back to its center. There is a marvelous, offhand interview, for example, with a Philadelphia tour guide who shows people the locations that were intrinsic to the founding of America. It turns out he also attended McLean's very first performance of the song on stage, even before it was recorded in a studio; and there is incredible footage from that event, as well. There is, in fact, a lot of incredible footage. While there is never so much as an inkling as to who the cameraperson is, there are home movies of McLean as he was composing the song, and as he was in the studio not just recording the song's components, but arguing with the producer in the hallway.

The original recording is never played in full, but there is a wonderful montage recording of the original mixed with different covers and with McLean performing it during different points in his career, and there are more elaborate explorations of those various covers (although Madonna is noticeably absent). The song played an enormous part in the career of Garth Brooks, as Brooks so eagerly recounts. Artists should never be made to explain their work, but McLean, along with a spine-tingling description of how the different passages of the lyrics and the song's melodic changes came to him, does break down the gist of what the song means, as much to debunk what some of the phrases are not referencing (he is emphatic that 'the king' does not refer to Elvis Presley and 'the jester' is not Bob Dylan) as much as anything. Still, in the same way that you learn absolutely nothing about his adult life outside of his music, he allows obvious allusions such as 'helter skelter' and 'lost in space' to pass without comment, as if they had manifested from thin air.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1. The image is vivid and colors on the older footage are fresh whenever possible. The 5.1-channel DTS sound is strong and pure, and there are optional English subtitles. The difference in quality between the DVD and Blu-ray is like the difference between AM and FM. Also featured are three full-length music videos, excerpted in the film, that present different versions of the song, running a total of 18 minutes, including a studio performance by Jade Bird, a Hispanic cover of the song by Maffio and Jenn Carlos with McLean's collaboration in English, and an a cappella performance by McLean and the male singing group, Home Free.

Much is made within the film about the song's length, although they act like it was more unique than it actually was. Lengthy, poetically dense (i.e., not you, *In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida*) songs were not entirely uncommon in the Top Ten at that time, from *Hey Jude* to *Layla, Stairway to Heaven* and *Riders on the Storm* (the latter three appearing in the marketplace almost concurrently with *American Pie*). All of them ran more than 7 minutes, although none quite reached the 8 minutes and 32 seconds of *American Pie*. Dylan's *Sad Eyed Lady of the Lowlands* clocked in at 11 minutes, but it was never a pop hit. The song not only permeated American culture (forever encouraging people to mispronounce 'February'), it spread throughout the world, and has continued to imbed itself in subsequent generations of fans, as the many interviews and cover versions presented in the film attest. But still, that original pop hit airplay was most profoundly significant for those living through it, particularly when they were vulnerable to the Pavlovian effects of its repetition. The song is meta-nostalgic, itself mourning a loss a decade earlier (it was the tenth anniversary of the plane crash that got McLean going, and he references that decade time spread within the song), but phrased as if loss is ever present and ever happening, which is something one is acutely aware of as one transitions from the loss of childhood to the deathly wonders of adulthood. This was the transition from the Sixties to the Seventies, as well, and it was, as the song so clearly emphasizes, a transition undergone by America itself, so that it brought back to those hearing it on American radio for the first time (but ad infinitum) an elegiac lamentation of unpreventable change and, through music, an emotional pathway to grasp what was changing and never let go.

4K Hugo

We reviewed a terrific two-platter 3D presentation of Martin Scorsese's 2011 Paramount feature, **Hugo**, from Paramount and Arrow Video, last month. Paramount and Arrow have also bundled that release into an even more terrific three-platter 4K UltraHD release (UPC#760137127246, \$50). The initial two platters are what we reviewed previously, a 3D presentation of the film and a 2D presentation of the film on one platter, both versions accompanied by an informative commentary track, with optional English subtitles and a trailer. The second platter had 256 minutes of rewarding special features about the film and its subject, Georges Méliès. The additional 4K platter presents the 2D version of the film, with the optional subtitles, the commentary and the trailer. As we stated in our previous review, the 2D presentation is not without merit, although Scorsese's heart was clearly in the 3D staging and execution. Yet, on 4K, the 2D presentation is indeed stunning and a worthy rival of the 3D version. There is a scene early on where Ben Kingsley, playing Méliès, is seen in the train station where most of the film takes place, at the counter of his toyshop with dust floating in the air around him. The dust was deliberately illuminated and on 3D it forms a dimensional presence around him. Well, in 4K, you can see the dust in the establishing shot, while he is still far in the distance. The station's blue and brown color motif is made more vivid by the meticulousness of its variations and how they have been defined by the 4K replication, and every edge, every piece of clutter and every facial nuance is vividly delivered. The 7.1-channel sound is also more strongly detailed, from every angle. The more often we see the 126-minute film, the more we come to love the history of movies it wishes to impart and the charm and comedy it employs in order to do so, and with the perfection that the 4K delivery enables, the film is as captivating in 2D as it is in 3D. Our one quibble: At one point, a bookseller played by Christopher Lee, gives the young hero, played by Asa Butterfield, a book about Robin Hood, because the film is set in Paris and Scorsese wanted a 'French' book that would still have a recognizable title. Nevertheless, it would have been far more chilling and delightful if Scorsese had used Jules Verne's *De la Terre à la Lune* instead.

DVD news

CRITERION CORNER: The wait is over! The Criterion Collection is releasing Terence Malick's **Days of Heaven** in 4K format. It will come with a commentary featuring editor Billy Weber, art director Jack Fisk, costume designer Patricia Norris, and casting director Dianne Crittenden; an audio interview with Richard Gere; and interviews with camera operator John Bailey, cinematographer Haskell Wexler, and Sam Shepard. Claude Chabrol's **La Cérémonie** will feature a selected-scene commentary with Chabrol; an introduction by Bong Joon Ho; a making-of program; archival interviews with Chabrol, Sandrine Bonnaire, and cowriter Caroline Eliacheff;

and an episode of the Criterion Channel series *Observations on Film Art* about the use of off-screen sound. **Jackie Chan: Emergence of a Superstar** will present **Spiritual Kung Fu**, **The Fearless Hyena**, **Fearless Hyena II**, **The Young Master**, **My Lucky Stars** and **Half a Loaf of Kung Fu**, along with commentaries for **The Fearless Hyena** and **The Young Master** featuring Hong Kong cinema expert and producer Frank Djeng; an interview with author Grady Hendrix (*These Fists Break Bricks*) about Chan; archival interviews with Chan, actor-director Sammo Hung, actors Michiko Nishiaki and Hwang In-shik, and more; **The Young Master** promo reel from the 1980 Cannes Film Festival and deleted scenes from the film; an interview from 2005 with Hong Kong cinema critic Paul Fonoroff about producer-director Lo We; and unusable shots from **The Young Master** and **My Lucky Stars**. Peter Bogdanovich's **The Last Picture Show** is being issued in 4K format and will be accompanied by two versions of his sequel, **Texasville**, the standard version and Bogdanovich's black-and-white alternate cut version. **Last Picture Show** will also have two commentaries, featuring Bogdanovich, Cybill Shepherd, Randy Quaid, Cloris Leachman, and Frank Marshall; three documentaries about the making of the film; a Q&A with Bogdanovich from 2009; screen tests and location footage; an introduction to **Texasville** featuring Bogdanovich, Shepherd, and Jeff Bridges; and excerpts from a 1972 television interview with François Truffaut about the New Hollywood. Martin Scorsese's **Mean Streets** will also be in 4K and will include an excerpted conversation between Scorsese and Richard Linklater from a 2011 Directors Guild of America event; selected-scene commentary featuring Scorsese and Amy Robinson; a video essay by Imogen Sara Smith about the film's physicality and portrayal of brotherhood; an interview with director of photography Kent Wakeford; an excerpt from the documentary **Mardik: Baghdad to Hollywood** (2008) featuring **Mean Streets** cowriter Mardik Martin as well as Scorsese, journalist Peter Biskind, and filmmaker Amy Heckerling; and **Martin Scorsese: Back on the Block** (1973), a promotional video featuring Scorsese on the streets of New York City's Little Italy neighborhood.

NEW IN BLU: The following titles were recently issued on Blu-ray—Mark & Clark World Adventurers, *Sexy Time 6*, *Slice 2 (Acid Bath)*; Wakaliwood *Supa Action V.1 (AGFA)*; *From Black (AMD)*; Chameleon Street (Arbelos); Rimini (Big World); *Mad House (Bounty)*; *Guardians of the Galaxy V.3 (Buena Vista)*; *Frankenstein '80 (Cauldron)*; *The Broken Mirror/Unquiet Death*, *The Brokenwood Mysteries Season 9*, *Delirium*, *The Fear*, *The Hole in the Fence*, *Mind Melters 14*, *The Night of the Executioner*, *The Night of the Hunter*, *Piotr Szulkin's Apocalypse Tetralogy*, *Plan Sexenal*, *Psycho Girls*, *The Rape of the Vampire*, *Ravishing Dany*, *Uranium Dreams (CAV)*; *Assault on Hill 40*, *Coma*, *Little Nicky*, *Shaw Brothers Classics V.2 (Cinedigm)*; *Dos Estaciones (Cinema Guild)*; *Akira Kurosawa's Dreams*, *Bo Winderberg's New Swedish Cinema*, *Dim Sum A Little Bit of Heart*, *Drysolongo (Criterion)*; *Instinct to Kill (Dark Force)*; *The Pied Piper (Deaf Leopard)*; *The Heart Is Deceitful Above All Else (Dekanalog)*; *Dirty Money (Canadian)*; *The Outwaters (ETR)*; *Fake It So Real (Factory 25)*; *Laurel & Hardy Year One (Flicker Alley)*; *Primetime Panic 2 (Fun City)*; *Lioness How Football Came Home (Giant)*; *Brave Father Online Our Story of Final Fantasy XIV (Goldhil)*; *The Angry Black Girl and Her Monster (Image)*; *Once a Moth (Kani)*; *Audie Murphy Collection III*, *The Day and the Hour*, *The Doll/I Don't Want to Be a Man*, *Force of Evil*, *Hardcore*, *Is Paris Burning?*, *Malone*, *Outrage*, *Pretty Baby*, *Scarlet*, *The Spanish Dancer*, *Strangers in the House*, *Three into Two Won't Go (Kino)*; *About My Father*, *The Blackening*, *Confidential Informant*, *You Hurt My Feelings (Lionsgate)*; *Last and First Men (Metrograph)*; *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*, *The Caveman's Valentine*, *Connie and Carla*, *Madame Sousatzka*, *The Man Who Cried*, *Nefarious*, *River Wild*, *Shout (Mill Creek)*; *The Complete Story of Film*, *Full Time*, *Other People's Children (Music Box)*; *August Underground*, *Broken Mirrors*, *Cosa Nostra*, *El Gangster*, *The Inconfessable Orgies of Emmanuelle*, *Invaluable*, *Jack Armstrong*, *Journey into the Beyond*, *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, *La Soldadera*, *The Last House on the Left*, *A Moment of Romance*, *New Fist of Fury*, *The Only Way*, *Scheme Queens*, *The Sensual World of Black Emmanuelle*, *Taxi Hunter*, *The Thief Collector*, *Unman Wittering and Zigo*, *Wrong Reasons (MVD)*; *Ghostwatch (101)*; *Going All the Way (Oscilloscope)*; *1923 (Paramount)*; *Black Magic Rites*, *The Night of the Hunted*, *The Rape of the Vampire (Powerhouse)*; *Eyes of Dread*, *Tortured Part 2/Part 3*, *Undemeath An Anthology of Terror*, *Viral (Rising Sun)*; *Tortured Souls Trilogy (Saturn's Core)*; *Camera Obscura*, *Cartel 2045*, *Cold Moon*, *Five Fingers for Marseilles*, *Gehenna Where Death Lives*, *Monolith*, *Paydirt*, *Stand! (Shoreline)*; *American Pop*, *Hotel Transylvania Transformania*, *The Machine*, *No Hard Feelings (Sony)*; *Spirit Halloween The Movie (Strikeback)*; *Seeking Fire (Syndicado)*; *Junk Head (Synergetic)*; *Midnite Spares (Umbrella)*; *My Pet Dinosaur (Uncork'd)*; *Asteroid City*, *Fast X*, *Maggie Moore(s) (Universal)*; *Holy Spider (Utopia)*; *Adjust Your Tracking The Untold Story of the VHS Collector (VHSHitFest)*; *Babylon 5 The Road Home*, *The Big Knife*, *Crime and Punishment*, *Crime + Punishment in Suburbia*, *Crooked Hearts*, *Father's Little Dividend*, *The Flash*, *The Flash Season 9*, *Gay Purr-ee*, *Go Tell the Spartans*, *The Life of Emile Zola*, *Little Women*, *Metalocalypse Army of the Dinosaur*, *Mystery Date*, *Nobody's Fool*, *Play Dirty*, *Smiling Friends Season 1*, *Spinout*, *Wichita*, *The Wild Party (Warner)*; *Kill Shot*, *Night of the Assassin (Well Go)*; *The Harbinger (XYZ)*; *Falcon Lake (Yellow Veil)*

NEW IN 4K: The following titles have been released in 4K format—*Cinderella*, *Guardians of the Galaxy V.3*, *The Nightmare before Christmas (Buena Vista)*; *City of the Living Dead (Cauldron)*; *Gorgo*, *Showgirls*, *Terror at Tenkiller (CAV)*; *Bride of Chucky*, *Cult of Chucky*, *Curse of Chucky*, *Hackers*, *Nightbreed*, *Seed of Chucky (Cinedigm)*; *Infinity Pool (Decal)*; *Staying Alive*, *Three Days of the Condor (Kino)*; *The Blackening (Lionsgate)*; *Swamp Thing*, *Weird Science (MVD)*; *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, *Hustle & Flow*, *Roman Holiday (Paramount)*; *The Legend of Zorro (Sony)*; *Battlestar Galactica*, *Elisabeth*, *Fast X*, *Promising Young Woman*, *2 Guns (Universal)*; *Babylon 5 The Road Home*, *East of Eden*, *Enter the Dragon*, *The Flash*, *Rio Bravo (Warner)*

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DVDs
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Current Attractions

The following titles recently appeared for the first time:

About My Father (Lionsgate)
All Man (Giant)
Aloners (Film Movement)
Angels of the Sky (Vision)
The Angry Black Girl and Her Monster (Image)
Anjelah Johnson-Reyes Stand-Up Spotlight (Mill Creek)
Apocalypse Love (Rising Sun)*
Are You Afraid of the Dark? Ghost Island (Paramount)
Assault on Hill 400 (Cinedigm)
Asteroid City (Universal)*
Atomic Hope (Green Planet)
Avatars of the Astral Worlds Fortune-Telling (Wownow)
Back to Life Season 1 (Paramount)*
Back to Life Season 2 (Paramount)*
Balthazar Season 5 (AMD)
Bayou Ghost Story (Stream Go)*
The Beast Beneath (Wild Eye)
Beyond Fury (Rising Sun)*
Big Crow (Freestyle)
The Big Knife (Warner)*
BlackBerry (MPI)
The Blackening (Lionsgate)*
Blue Bloods Season 13 (Paramount)
Breaking Bounds (Vision)
Brightwood (Kino)
Broken Mirrors (MVD)
The Brokenwood Mysteries Season 9 (AMD)
Called to Duty (Vision)
Camera Obscura (Shoreline)
Cartel 2045 (Shoreline)
Chicago Fire Season 11 (Universal)
Chicago Med Season 8 (Universal)*
Chicago P.D. Season 10 (Universal)
Christmas in Evergreen Bells Are Ringing (Cinedigm)
Cisco Kid Western Movie Collection 13 Movies (MVD)
Cold Moon (Shoreline)
Collapse (Ytini)
Confidential Informant (Lionsgate)
Couples Therapy Season 3 (Paramount)*
Crime and Punishment (Warner)*
Crime + Punishment in Suburbia (Warner)*
Crime Science Season 1 (Dreamscape)
Crooked Hearts (Warner)
CSI Vegas Season 2 (Paramount)
Dead by Christmas (Stream Go)*
Dead Man's Hand (Lionsgate)
Devil's Prey (Stream Go)*
Dogs in the Wild (Paramount)
Don't Come Back Alive (Indican)*
Dos Estaciones (Cinema Guild)
Drysolongo (Criterion)
Eat Play Love (Cinedigm)*
El Camino (Stream Go)*
El Gangster (MVD)
Elemental Reimagine Wildfire (Go)
The Entity (Indican)*
Evil Building (Wild Eye)
Faces of Snuff (Wild Eye)
Facing Cancer (Stream Go)*
Fanny, Annie & Danny (Freestyle)*
Fast X (Universal)*
Father Brown Season 10 (Warner)
The Fighting Lady (DigiCom)*
Five Fingers for Marsellus (Shoreline)
The Flash (Warner)
The Flash Complete Series (Warner)
The Flash Season 9 (Warner)
14 Love Letters (Cinedigm)*
From Black (AMD)
Funny Little Cars 2 (Ytini)
Galatea (Indican)
Gary Owen Stand-Up Spotlight (Mill Creek)
Gehenna Where Death Lives (Shoreline)
Go Tell the Spartans (Warner)
Going All the Way (Oscilloscope)*
Gold (Synergetic)*
Guardians of the Galaxy V.3 (Buena Vista)
Guilty Prejudices (Stream Go)
Health Hacks Smart Myths about Your Health (Wownow)
Hidden Volcano Abyss (Paramount)
Hi-Death (Wild Eye)
History's Greatest of All Time with Peyton Manning (Lionsgate)
Holy Spider (Utopia)
Horror (Wownow)*
Horror of the Dolls (Ytini)
Hotel Camarillo (Stream Go)*
Hotel Transylvania Transformancia (Sony)
How to Catch a Killer (Dreamscape)
Human Footprint (Paramount)
In the Closet (Ytini)
In the Search of the Frog Boys (Dreamscape)
Infinite (Paramount)
Infante Sea (Buffalo 8)
Jack Warner The Last Mogul (Vision)
Jane Eyre (MVD)
Journey into the Beyond (MVD)
Kill Shot (Well Go)
Killin Smalitz (Dreamscape)
Kings of L.A. (Indican)
Kissinger (Dreamscape)
La Soldadera (MVD)
The Laplace's Demon (Stream Go)
Laurel & Hardy Year One (Flicker Alley)
Leave (AMD)
The Legend of Resurrection Mary (Bosko)
The Lesson (Decal)*
Lioness How Football Came Home (Giant)*
The Lost Number (Ytini)
The Love Destination Soothe Your Senses Guided Meditation (Dreamscape)
Lugosi The Curse of Dracula (Marshall)
Mac Daddy Vegas Adventure (Ytini)
The Machine (Sony)
Mad House (Bounty)
Madeleine Collins (Kino)
Maggie Moore(s) (Universal)
Magodo (Buffalo 8)
Malum (Film Movement)
Mark & Clark World Adventurers (Acid Bath)
Mavka The Forest Song (Cinedigm)
The Meddler The Real Nightcrawler of Guatemala City (Dreamscape)
The Melt Goes On Forever The Art & Times of David Hammons (Kino)
Metalocalypse Complete Series (Warner)

Mind Melters 14 (Acid Bath)
Mondo Shock (Wild Eye)
Monolith (Shoreline)
Monster High The Movie (Paramount)
Monsters Martians Mad Scientists (Marshall)
The Monsters Without (Indican)
Montreal Girls (Level 33)
The Muse (Ytini)
Mystery Date (Warner)
Mythical Monsters (Wownow)
NCIS Season 20 (Paramount)
Nefarious (Mill Creek)
Night of the Assassin (Well Go)
1923 Season 1 (Paramount)
97 Minutes (Vertical)
Nix (1091)
No Hard Feelings (Sony)
No Way Back The Reality of Gender-Affirming Care (Xenon)*
Nobly & Fool (Warner)*
Odd Hours, No Pay, Cool Hat (Subgenre)*
The Offering (Ytini)
The Other Thrill (MVD)
Other People's Children (Music Box)
Ouija Shark 2 (Wild Eye)
Outpost in Morocco (DigiCom)*
Pandemic Perspectives (Ideas)
Paradise Calling (MVD)
Party Heavy Kitty-Corn (Dreamscape)
Paw Patrol All Paws on Deck (Paramount)
PBS Kids Grandparents Are Great! (Paramount)
Peanuts Deluxe Collection (Warner)
Play Date (Warner)*
Poetic (Ytini)
Random 11 (Ytini)
Reel Nightmare (Stream Go)*
Reflections Samuel Eliot Morison (Gemini)
Rimini (Big World)
River Wild (Universal)
Robots (Decal)
Rock Rock Rock! (DigiCom)*
Sanctuary (Decal)
Scarlet (Kino)
Scheme Queens (MVD)
Second Chances (Buffalo 8)
Seeking Fire (Syndicado)
Sein (Film Movement)
Sense Sensibility & Snowmen (Cinedigm)
Sesame Street Abby & Elmo's Amazing Adventures (Cinedigm)
Sexy Time 6 (Acid Bath)
Shin Ultraman (Uncork'd)
Shokukumary (Wild Eye)
Silent Witness Season 26 (Warner)*
Slice 2 (Acid Bath)*
Smiling Friends Season 1 (Warner)
So Help Me Todd (Universal)*
The Soham Murders (Dreamscape)
Sorry about the Demon (AMD)
Spaced Out (Cheesy Flicks)
Stand! (Shoreline)
The Stay Awake (Cheesy Flicks)
Storage Locker (Freestyle)*
Summoning the Spirit (MPI)
Sun Moon (Sony)
Sun Sand & Romance (Cinedigm)*
Super Legend God Hikoza (SRS)
Terror at Red Wolf Inn (Cheesy Flicks)
The Thief Collector (MVD)
Time (Stream Go)*
Tony Robinson's VE Day Minute by Minute (Dreamscape)
Tortured Part 2/Part 3 (Rising Sun)*
Two Tickets to Greece (Kino)
Unfair Exchange (Buffalo 8)
Uranian Dreams (CAV)*
VPCO The Untold Story (Bayview)
Viral (Rising Sun)*
A Warehouse on Tchouptoulias (Stream Go)*
Wild America Special #1 The Predators (Stream Go)*
Wild America Special #2 Our Favorite Animals (Stream Go)*
Wild America Special #3 Great Escapes (Stream Go)*
Wild America Special #4 Spectacular Showdowns (Stream Go)*
Wild America Special #5 Dangerous Encounters (Stream Go)
Wild America Special #6 Fantastic Follies (Stream Go)*
Wild America Special #7 Wild Wings (Stream Go)*
Wild America Special #8 Wacky Babies (Stream Go)*
Wild America Special #9 Amazing Legends (Stream Go)*
Wild America Special #10 Tender Times (Stream Go)*
Wild America Special #11 Marty's World (Stream Go)*
Wild America Special #12 Deadly Beauty (Stream Go)*
The Wild Party (Warner)
Wake (SRS)
The World Is a Beautiful Place and I Am Not Afraid to Die (Rising Sun)*
The Wrath of Becky (Quiver)
Wrong Reasons (MVD)
WWF/E Money in the Bank 2023 (Cinedigm)
Yellowstone Redemption Rock (Parable)
You Hurt My Feelings (Lionsgate)
Your Brain (Paramount)
*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 appear unmarked within each division. Titles which did not appear on last month's list are marked with an arrow (→) and are added to the bottom of subdivisions so that the longest awaited titles appear at the top within each grouping:
From Acid Bath:
→ Acid Bath Productions V.9
→ Acid Bath Productions V.10
→ Mind Melters 15
→ Jack Pepper Banshee Hunter
→ Slice 1 and Slice 2
→ Boge Boy Set
From Amcomri:
→ Left Behind World at War
→ Left Behind II Tribulation Force
From AMD:
Black Snow
The Walking Dead Dead City Season 1
Cannes Confidential
→ Interview with the

Vampire Season 1
→ Mayfair Witches Season 1
→ Quicksand
→ London Kills Season 4
→ Dark Winds Season 2
→ Murdoch Mysteries Season 16
From Ariztical:
→ Horror Underground Extreme Horror Cinema
→ VHS Godfather The VPCO Story
From Blue Water:
→ River Blue
From Bridgestone:
→ Role Model
→ My Beautiful Stutter
→ Ug Wug
From Buena Vista:
The Little Mermaid
→ Elemental
→ Prey
From Capital:
→ The Pantani Affair
From CAV:
→ The Last Island
From Cheesy Flicks:
→ White Pongo
→ UFO Target Earth (Stream Go)*
→ Wof of Devil's Island
→ Unknown World
→ Throw out the Anchor
→ Treasure of Tayopa
→ Country Blue
→ Boot Hill
From Cheng Cheng:
→ Seven Days in Heaven
From Cinedigm:
WWE SummerSlam 2023
What's Love Got to Do with it?
Linoleum
→ The Way Home Season 1
→ Ride Season 1
→ Darrow and Darrow Complete Collection
→ The Wedding Veil Trilogy 2
→ WWE Payback 2023
→ Sesame Street Elmo's Holiday Spectacular The Nutcracker and Other Tales
→ ALL Complete Series (24 platters)
→ Sri Ash The Warrior
→ A Magical Christmas Village
From Cinema Libre:
→ Method Sampling How to Build the Future Together
From Cinematainment:
→ The River You Step In
From ClassicFix:
→ World of Giants Complete Series
From Criterion:
EO
No Bears
The Innocent
Godland
Tori and Lokita
The Eight Mountains
Freaks/The Unknown/The Mystic: Tod
Browning's Sideshow Shockers
Nanny
→ La Cérémonie
From Decal:
God Is a Bullet
→ Jules
→ Decal
From Devilworks:
→ Evie
From Drafthouse:
→ The Youtube Effect
From Dreamscape:
→ Andy Wahol
→ Fluorescent
→ The Bible Collection Genesis
→ The Bible Collection Jesus
→ The Bible Collection Saint Paul

The Bible Collection
Apocalypse
→ The Bible Collection Esther
→ The Bible Collection Jeremiah
→ The Bible Collection Solomon
→ The Big House and the Little House
→ Bitcoin The End of Money As We Know It
→ Code Breaker Spy Hunter
→ A Desperate Road
→ Earth Mother
→ Fireside Reading The Call of the Wild
→ French for Kids by Whistlertiz
→ The Girl behind the Door
→ Grandma's Tipi
→ How Do Kid's Make Money
→ I Dare I Can I Will
→ I, Matter
→ In a Jar
→ Less Than
→ The Love Destinations Body Scan Meditations
→ The Love Destinations Meditations for Anxiety
→ Dealing with Big Emotions
→ The Love Destinations Meditations
→ The Matter of Life
→ My Powerful Hair
→ The Negotiators Season 1
→ Ows
→ The Poem Forest
→ Shy Willow
→ Spanish for Kids by Whistlertiz
→ A Spell on You
→ Summertime Sleepers
→ Through the North Pole Snow
→ Tigers and Tattoos
→ Time Sleeper
→ Tizzy the Dizzy Dreidel
→ The Unseen Realm
→ Viva Elvis
→ Whales
→ You Are Alive
→ Zelensky
From Film Masters:
The Giant Gila Monster
Beast from Haunted Cove (w/Ski Troop Attack)
The Scarlet Letter
From Film Movement:
Passion
Personal and Political
The Films of Natalia Alameda
→ Early Short Films of the French New Wave
→ Cadejo Blanco
From 4Digital:
A Sunday Horse
→ Malicious
From Freestyle:
→ Call Sign Romeo
→ The Cherry Bushido
→ The Pilot
→ The Other Kids
From Full Moon:
→ Evil Bong 888 Infinity High
From Grasshopper:
Dry Ground Burning
→ Rewind and Play
From Gravitas:
→ Padre Pio
From Image:
→ Sympathy for the Devil
→ Color out of Space
→ Arizona
→ The Dive
From Indican:
→ The Kennedy Incident
From Indie Rights:
→ Women in the Front Seat
→ Silent As the Grave

→ Io Sto Bene I Am Fine
From Indiplex:
→ The Merger
From Kino:
Rowdy
Desperate Souls Dark City and the Legend of Midnight Cowboy
The Elephant 6 Recording Co.
The Latest Image Joyce Carol Oates Final Cut
Between Two Worlds White Building Single Out Season 1
→ Picadilly
→ Sisters with Transistors
→ Cinema's First Nasty Women
→ The Beasts
→ Edison The Invention of the Movies
→ Neither Confirm Nor Deny
→ The Goldsmith
→ The Storms of Jeremy Thomas
→ The Big Country
→ Your Friend, Memphis
→ Speed Is Expensive
→ Philip Vincent and the Million Dollar Motorcycle
→ Nona and Her Daughters Season 1
→ Stonewalling
→ Robert Irwin A Desert of Pure Feeling
→ The Life and Times of Allen Ginsberg
→ Emanuele's Revenge
From Leomark:
→ Cathy Coppola
→ Frights and Fears V.1
From Level 33:
→ Belle
→ Night Explorers
From Lionsgate:
Cannibal Cabin
Corner Office
→ Cobweb
→ Joy Ride
→ Past Lives
→ Mob Land
→ The Walking Dead Complete Collection (54 platters)
From Magnolia:
Dalland
Blue Jean
→ Master Gardener
→ The League
→ Night Creek:
God's Country Song
→ Neil and the Masters of the Universe Complete Series (3 platters)
From MPI:
Broadway
The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet V.13
The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet V.14
The Abode
→ King on Screen
→ Megalomanic
→ Eismayer
→ Saturn Bowling
→ 8 Found Dead
From Music Box:
L'Immensità
→ The Unknown Country
From MVD:
Ghoulies
Ghoulies II
→ The Year of the Dog
→ Suburra
→ Franky and His Pals
→ The Man at the Door
→ Rosenshontz The Teddy Bears' Jambores
→ August Underground
→ Mordum
→ Sanctified
→ Jailhouse Wardress
→ Heaven Can Wait (Tony Franciosa)
→ Four Bullets for Joe