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Nick's Pics

Nick Nicholson
 Film & Home Entertainment Critic

This column expresses the personal opinions/views of the writer. If you would like to express your opinions/views regarding the column, write a SIGNED letter to the editor. Name can be withheld by request with a valid day time phone number.

MOVIE REVIEWS

DESPICABLE ME

In a happy suburban neighborhood surrounded by white picket fences with flowering rose bushes, sits a black house with a dead lawn. Unbeknownst to the neighbors, hidden deep beneath this home is a vast secret hideout. Surrounded by an army of tireless, little yellow minions, we discover Gru (Steve Carell) planning the biggest heist in the history of the world. He is going to steal the moon in Universal's new 3-D CGI feature, Despicable Me. Gru delights in all things wicked. Armed with his arsenal of shrink rays, freeze rays and battle-ready vehicles for land and air, he vanquishes all who stand in his way. Until the day he encounters the immense will of three little orphaned girls who look at him and see something that no one else has ever seen: a potential Dad.



There is no better cliché to use that represents this film than opposites attract. Strong willed orphans with the fortitude to tell it like it is versus a megalomaniac super villain that loves to tease, yet has feelings that are easy to bruise. Who would have figured? In this film, the super villain is Gru (Carell) is really wishy-washy and lacks the substance with which to consistently wield his bad side. As a business owner, he is bankrupt before he leaves the bank. This drives Gru nuts and sends the film into overdrive.

Steve Carell is brilliant in everything he does and was an excellent choice for the enigmatic Gru. He clearly carries the film from beginning to end. What really is special about his performance is that he provides the soul of the character - more so than many other animated film performances I have seen. Other performances by Miranda Cosgrove, Jason Siegel and the brilliant Russell Brand provide a solid foundation for a wonderful animated film that is sure to please the entire family. The story arcs will both create and maintain the interest of the audience, regardless of the age. Lessons will be learned by all in this wonderful animated feature.

Despicable Me

Starring: Steve Carell, Jason Siegel & Russell Brand
 Director: Chris Renaud & Pierre Coffin
 Company: Universal

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DVD Reviews

FREE DVD GIVEAWAY

We are doing a Free DVD Giveaway! If you are interested in a chance at winning a free copy of The Real McCoys: Season Four, Rem Kolhaas: A Kind of Architect, Bass Ackwards, or Red vs. Blue: The Blood Gulch Chronicles, it is really easy! All you have to do is send me an email at Filmlords@gmail.com. The subject line of the email should read DVD GIVEAWAY. In the body of the email, be sure to put your name, full mailing address and which DVD or Blu-ray you would like. Winners will be selected by random drawing. Best of luck!

THIRST - First Look

A sexy photo shoot in the desert, two young couples and fun in the sun - all the makings of a great weekend, right? Not so fast my friends. This well intended photo shoot turns into a predictable disaster after their car crashes into a ravine. Who forgot the water? Dehydrated and lost, one by one the well meaning photogs fall victim to the relentless elements. Who will survive? Somewhat in the vein of those 1970's disaster films, Thirst provides a closer and more intimate look into the we are doomed and going to die scenario.

THE BACKYARDIGANS: Operation Elephant Drop - Nickelodeon

Catch the Backyardigans as you've never seen them before in "Operation Elephant Drop"! Join the adventure as Pablo, Tyrone and Tasha go on their very own secret operation to save the elephants. The Backyardigans are perfect for kids of all ages and this program provides life lessons for kids!

SNL COLLECTION: The Best of Will Ferrell - Lionsgate

From 1995 to 2002 Will Ferrell dominated "Saturday Night Live" with characters as different as Craig the Cheerleader and President George W. Bush. See the best of Celebrity Jeopardy and Bobbi and Marty Culp, along with plenty of yelling, near-nudity, and more cowbell. "The Best of Will Ferrell" features over 30 minutes of all new special features, including dress rehearsals, sketches and Weekend Update features.

SNL COLLECTION: The Best of Tracy Morgan - Lionsgate

Born and raised in New York City, Tracy Morgan epitomized the bold and defiant attitude essential to being an SNL star. Bringing a sense of fearlessness to the stage, Tracy was sure to make hilarious moments come alive each and every week...just as long as you brought him a soda. Now you can watch the best of Brian Fellow, Astronaut Jones, Dominican Lou, Woodrow, and many others. "The Best of Tracy Morgan" features 25 minutes of all new special features, including Tracy's monologue, Weekend Update features, and additional sketches.

SESAME STREET: 20 Years and Still Counting - Lionsgate

Experience this captivating special that marked the 20th anniversary of the groundbreaking children's series that taught us our ABCs, 123s, and so much more! Hosted by Bill Cosby, Sesame Street: 20 Years and Still Counting includes appearances by favorite "Sesame Street" residents like Big Bird, Grover, Bob and Maria. It also features timeless clips from past episodes; performances by Ray Charles and famed tenor Plácido

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Domingo; and in-depth interviews with the series' creators. Sweep the clouds away and rediscover the carefree days of childhood with this delightful special! "Sesame Street" is produced by the nonprofit educational organization, Sesame Workshop.

PSYCH: Season Four - Universal

This season of Psych has been great in terms of episode quality, although some plots are weaker than others. The acting by the main cast is nothing short of wonderful, and the writing, although often silly, is never overboard. The silliness give Psych much of its charm without making it annoying to watch. As far as over-arching stories go, Season Four has been great for character development, with many characters breaking new ground. We get more character back stories, especially for Juliet, which is rewarding for devoted fans.

THE ROLLING STONES 1969-1974: The Mick Taylor Years - MVD

The Rolling Stones golden age was arguably the time period in which Mick Taylor was a member of the group. The musical successes of the group were unparalleled at that time. The band experimented with a new sound and cultivated new ideas to take their group in a different direction - the usage of a jazz influence the group lacked both prior to and after Mick Taylor. This DVD takes an inner look through archival footage, interviews and photographs of the group from back in the day.

FINAL 24: Sid Vicious - MVD

Every episode of this compelling series takes a look into the final 24 hours of the subjects life. Each installment examines the often flawed tests or hidden facts that were ignored by the powers that be while constructing the "how it happened" theories. In this episode, the series takes a look into the life of Sid Vicious. Who he was and what he did. In February of 1979, Sid Vicious had just been released from Rikers prison in New York City. After an evening of celebration for his release, he is found dead of an overdose. Very entertaining, this series is for folks of all ages.

FINAL 24: David Koresh - MVD

The day was April 18, 1993. One of the most notorious religious leaders in the United States, David Koresh, and 83 of his followers have been trapped inside their Waco, Texas compound for over 50 days. Unwilling to surrender and surrounded by authorities, the siege is the longest modern-day standoff in American law enforcement history. In 24 hours, however, it will all be over... And Koresh and 73 others will be dead. Featuring archival footage, dramatic reenactments, and key interviews, we'll document the final moments of the infamous preacher's life.

FINAL 24: John Belushi - MVD

Final 24 investigates the root of Belushi's drug addiction and uncover the events that led to his final reckless act. Belushi has been battling his drug addiction for seven years. Throughout the night, he ingests the massive amount of drugs that finally get the better of him. In early March 1982, comic actor John Belushi is on a drug fueled binge in L.A. He's far from those that love him and protect him from his own excesses.

FINAL 24: Anna Nicole Smith - MVD

On February 8, 2007, the famous American sex goddess is in Fort Lauderdale to buy a boat but she's been so sick she hasn't been able to leave her hotel suite. Anna Nicole is running a fever and fighting flu symptoms. She's also taken an unpredictable cocktail of prescription drugs to help her deal with the recent tragedy of her twenty-year old

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son's death. When Anna Nicole can't be wakened from her sleep, her friends quickly realize something is seriously wrong. She is rushed to the hospital, where she is pronounced dead. Through exclusive interviews with her closest companions, combined with archive and dramatic reenactments, her final hours are pieced together, and the dramatic events that led to her surprising death by accidental drug overdose are revisited.

THROUGH A DOG'S EYES - PBS

Through a Dog's Eyes is a very moving examination into the human and dog relationship. Whether as a medical necessity as a seeing eye dog or simply as member of the family, this DVD program will provide a number of different perspectives that will push you to re-examine both the relationship you have with your pet as well as how you view pets in general.

THE GREATEST - NEM

The Greatest is a heartfelt drama about the most real human emotions--love, grief, and hope--and its cast brings so much heart and depth to the story that it immediately becomes relatable. The star power is considerable, especially for a first-time writer-director. While Susan Sarandon gives her usual professional, layered performance, it's really Pierce Brosnan as her husband who is the true revelation here; this may be the best dramatic performance of Brosnan's career. Sarandon and Brosnan play a happily married couple (Grace and Allen) whose lives are shattered when their beloved teenage son, Bennett (Aaron Johnson), is suddenly killed in a car accident. As the stricken parents try to grasp the tragedy, they meet the young teenager, Rose (Carey Mulligan), who is carrying Bennett's baby. As the three strangers--who share something so deep and powerful it crosses all barriers--slowly get to know each other, the new relationships, suspicions, and new kinds of grief threaten to take them all down.

SESAME STREET: ABC's With Elmo - Warner

Professor Grover is the teacher in preschool and Elmo is his helper for today's alphabet lesson! But before Professor Grover can start, he wants to find one thing that starts with each letter, in his own silly and lovable way. Will he succeed? Will Elmo and the class ever be able to sing the alphabet song? Featuring alphabet-themed stories and songs, kids will find it easy as ABC to join in the fun with furry friends Grover and Elmo in a real preschool. After all, preschool is cool!

SQUIDBILLIES: Volume Three - Adult Swim

Squidbillies is one of my favorite shows of all time. The classic stereotypes of rednecks are represented with such outlandish, and bizarre stories about life in the outback woods of Georgia. The characters consist of Early (the main squid), Grandma (the purple squid), Rusty (the light green squid), and Lil (Early's sister). This show makes fun of drugs, big companies, blue collar employees and just anything else that is weird. I absolutely love this show!

SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS: Triton's Revenge - Nickelodeon

Great for kids that are a little older, Spongebob is back with another installment. In the date & date TV Special Clash of the Triton, King Neptune is celebrating his birthday at the Krusty Krab, and SpongeBob wants to make sure all his friends and family are there, including his son, Triton. But Neptune and Triton don't get a long, so when SpongeBob brings Triton to the party, sparks begin to fly!

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