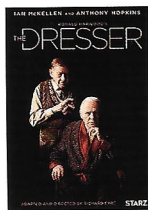


Avery (Kevin Willmott, who wrote and directed), his beautiful astronomer daughter Beneatha (Danielle Cooper), and cocky pilot Captain Race Johnson (Tosin Morohunfola) take off for the Red Planet, they wind up passing through a wormhole and land in today's urban America. Naturally, the trio are alarmed by some odd sights (young black guys with sagging pants are obviously starving; earbuds must be how slaves are being programmed by their masters). But the time travelers also struggle with more serious inconsistencies, such as why an African-American woman can get a faculty position at an integrated, major university, yet still fear for her life during a traffic stop by a white cop. *Destination: Planet Negro!* is a very funny film that doesn't stray too far from old sci-fi tropes and character clichés, but it also carries a sharp satirical bite that resonates deeply today. Highly recommended. (T. Keogh)

The Dresser ★★★

Anchor Bay, 109 min., not rated, DVD: \$24.98, Blu-ray: \$29.99



Ronald Harwood's 1980 play *The Dresser*, a backstage drama centered on a small traveling theater company working in England's provinces during WWII, is built on two strong roles for mature actors: Sir, a veteran Shakespearean thespian who runs the troupe, and his longtime dresser Norman. It was made into a celebrated 1983 film, in which Albert Finney and Tom Courtenay both earned Oscar nominations for their performances. This 2015 BBC production faithfully sticks to the original play, which takes place entirely backstage during the span of an evening's performance (the 1983 film added scenes outside the theater). Anthony Hopkins plays Sir, who is slipping into senility, while Ian McKellen is Norman, who prompts Sir's lines and prepares him for the evening performance of *King Lear* (fittingly about a grand old character with signs of dementia). Norman is protective and doting, like a son or even a wife, and Sir relies on Norman without really acknowledging him. Director Richard Eyre, a veteran of stage and screen, creates an intimate film, drawing fine performances from the entire cast, especially the two leads: Hopkins, who begins as a befogged, doddering old man and comes to a self-aware clarity of his own fragile health, and McKellen, who is chatty, cajoling, and sometimes catty as the working-class chap among the veteran cast and crew who are resigned to this second-rate company and living under the shadow of Sir's commanding performances. Emily Watson costars as Sir's miserable wife in this actors' showcase that also serves as a bittersweet tribute to the theater. Recommended. (S. Axmaker)

Electra Woman and Dyna Girl ★★

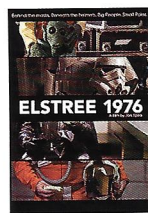
Sony, 81 min., not rated, DVD: \$14.99



YouTube comedy stars Grace Helbig and Hannah Hart head up the cast of this tongue-in-cheek feature-length revival/spoof of the superhero series produced for Saturday morning TV by Sid and Marty Krofft in the 1970s. Our heroes are childhood best friends with homemade costumes who keep their hometown of Akron, OH, safe between trips to the convenience store. When YouTube footage of their take-down of a couple of robbers goes viral, the top agent of Creative Masked Management invites them out to Los Angeles. In a world where supervillains have all been vanquished, it's now all about endorsement deals, so the tale becomes a classic story of success breaking up the band: Electra Woman (Helbig) is elevated to star status and grows addicted to celebrity, while Dyna Girl (Hart) resists the lure to sell out—until the arrival of a new supervillain reminds them of why they became heroes in the first place. Inexpensively produced, this looks and plays like an ambitious YouTube skit with a bigger budget and longer running time. The conventional tale serves as a framework on which to hang commentary on comic book superhero clichés and web celebrity, delivered with a mix of campy situations and dry, deadpan delivery. Unfortunately, there is not enough narrative momentum here to sustain a full movie, although there may be interest from fans of the YouTube celebrities. Optional. (S. Axmaker)

Elstree 1976 ★★★

MVD, 101 min., not rated, DVD: \$19.95, Blu-ray: \$37.99

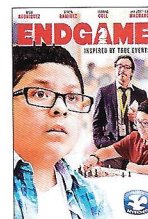


Not your typical *Star Wars* documentary made for adoring fans, *Elstree 1976* is a more earthbound story about the numerous bit players and heavily-costumed supporting actors who appeared in George Lucas's franchise-launching *Star Wars*. A parade of grey-haired, sometimes frail individuals—who were part of the film's alien bar scene, or among the Empire's army of Stormtroopers—share their sometimes mixed feelings about appearing in the beloved classic. Actor David Prowse stuffed his massive frame into Darth Vader's costume and walked with persuasive command throughout the original trilogy (a stuntman handled the fighting). Prowse says that he didn't know his voice would be eliminated and replaced by that of James Earl Jones. In the decades since, grasping for his proper place in the *Star Wars* firmament, Prowse has shared his ill feelings with producing company Lucasfilm, and is not invited to official conventions. Jeremy Bulloch, who had a few moments in the trilogy as bounty hunter

Boba Fett, is more sanguine about his legacy, seeing it as a brief but memorable chapter in a respected acting career lasting 50 years. And then there's Angus MacInnes, still facially recognizable as X-Wing fighter Gold Leader, who is a bit miffed that he comes lower in the *Star Wars* cast member pecking order, after some whose faces were hidden behind layers of rubber. But most of the film focuses on those who briefly register on camera as the back of a head or a Stormtrooper with a line or two. Oddly, some of them feel a little guilty about participating in conventions and getting paid to satisfy *Star Wars* completists. Filmmaker Jon Spira creates here a solid portrait of a group of people who had no idea in 1976 that they would become semi-celebrities—and are somewhat uncomfortable with it. Recommended. (T. Keogh)

Endgame ★★★

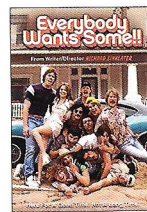
Shout! Factory, 90 min., not rated, DVD: \$14.98, Blu-ray: \$22.98



Filmmaker Carmen Maron's family-friendly *Endgame* takes inspiration from the Brownsville, TX, chess team that took their state by storm, centering on bright 12-year-old Jose (Rico Rodriguez), who inherited a passion for chess from his late grandfather, a Mexican champion. Jose and his abuelita (Ivonne Coll) play matches regularly, and she also keeps him supplied with taquitos and other treats. Jose's teacher, Mr. Alvarado (Efren Ramirez)—a fellow enthusiast—forms a chess team in order to give his disadvantaged students coping skills. Jose and his best friend, Dani (Alina Herrera), an undocumented immigrant, join the team, but Jose's single mother, Karla (Justina Machado), would rather cheer on his soccer player brother, Miguel (Xavier Gonzalez). When tragedy strikes, Karla spends more time mourning Miguel than looking after Jose. But with the encouragement of his abuelita and his principal (Jon Gries), Jose gives his all during the chess tournaments, culminating in the state finals in Dallas against more experienced competitors. A fine film about Latino youth pushing past barriers, both academic and psychological, this is recommended. (K. Fennessy)

Everybody Wants Some!! ★★★

Paramount, 116 min., R, DVD: \$29.99, Blu-ray/DVD Combo: \$39.99



Writer-director Richard Linklater follows up his masterful *Boyhood* with a gleeful throwback to his early hit *Dazed and Confused*, the cult classic about a bunch of kids celebrating their last day of high school in 1976. Here, a bunch of college guys—the baseball team on a fictional Texas campus—enjoy themselves just before the start of the