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BLU-RAY BAY: Volume 25

by Peter Oberth

Some of you have asked what kind of system I am testing these DVDs on so I thought I would make you privy to that. I have a Samsung LNT5265F 52" 1080p LCD HDTV, a Samsung BD-P1000 Blu-Ray Disc Player connected with Audioquest HDMI-1/PVC 15.0M Digital Audio/Video Cable and a Bose Lifestyle 48 Series II Surround Sound System...

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Planet of the Apes: 40-Year Evolution (Fox Home Entertainment)



A lot of blu-ray box sets have been relatively disappointing. Usually consisting of a bunch of DVD cases stuffed in a cardboard box and sold as a "new" set even though the individual DVDs are no different than the breakaway releases that they hold. The Planet of the Apes: 40-Year Evolution has finally broken the mold and exceeded expectations for what a blu-ray set can be.

QUALITY:

Fantastic. Even the 40+ year old original shines pretty brightly in high definition picture and lossless sound.

BONUS FEATURES:

Commentary, Featurettes, Isolated Score, Extended, Unrated and Theatrical versions, documentaries, Trailers, Behind-The-Scenes, Galleries and a 200-page hardcover book.

Featuring *Planet of the Apes*, *Beneath the Planet of the Apes*, *Escape From the Planet of the Apes*, *Conquest of the Planet of the Apes* and *Battle for the Planet of the Apes*, great transfers, numerous bonus features, an in-0depth and well made book, the only thing missing from this set is the TV series and the Tim Burton remake and this would be absolutely perfect. Either way, it's an incredible set chronicling an amazing collection of movies.. **A+ (4.45)**

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Star Wars: The Clone Wars (Warner Bros. Home Entertainment)



I have found that whether or not you will like this movie is usually based on three things; 1) you are a huge fan of the originals and balk at the thought of anything swaying from the original means that you will hate it or 2) you never really got the original movies but you like kid's action cartoons or 3) you are a fan of the original and anything that has the Star Wars name on it is good enough for you.

QUALITY:

Outstanding. The picture is crisp and clear and the sound is flawless.

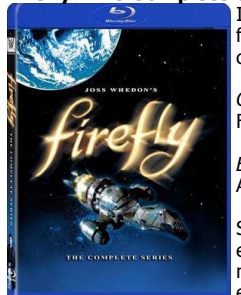
BONUS FEATURES:

Commentary, featurettes, deleted scenes, a game, trailers and a score feature.

The movie isn't really that good but it will appeal to the younger crowd which, judging by the launch of the Cartoon Network series, is what they were shooting for. The picture and sound quality are great, bumping the grade up considerably and the bonus features are, well, a bit boring. **B (3.25)**

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Firefly: The Complete Series (Fox Home Entertainment)



I am not a huge Sci Fi nut, nor am I a Western nut. But, somehow, mixing together futuristic sci fi with Western outlaw and six-shooters works in a weird way. Taking a cue from the popular anime Cowboy Bebop, Firefly is firing from all barrels.

QUALITY:

Fantastic. The picture and sound are mindblowing.

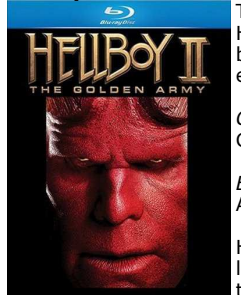
BONUS FEATURES:

A new roundtable with the cast, commentary, featurettes, deleted scenes, gag reel.

Summer Glau is disappointingly absent from the new roundtable but overall it's entertaining. The show is incredible and it is one I never got into when it aired (like most people since it was cancelled after 11 episodes) but I sought it out after enjoying the big screen adaptation, Serenity. Embraced like it should be, this blu-ray set is just as incredible as the show itself. **A (4.00)**

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Hellboy II: The Golden Army (Universal Home Entertainment)



The genius of Guillermo del Toro shined brightly in Pan's Labyrinth and the original Hellboy because of their relatively low budget. Hellboy II was given such a high budget that del Tor's mind was able to go a little too far, adding in so much that it ended up a bit cluttered.

QUALITY:

Good. The picture gets a little grainy at times but the sound doesn't waver.

BONUS FEATURES:

A Digital copy of the film, Featurettes, image galleries, commentary, deleted scenes.

Hellboy was a hell of a find a few years ago and the sequel was something I was looking forward to. I guess because of the shock of the first one being good, it put too much hope in this one because I was a bit disappointed. The picture is ok and the sound is great but the special features are a little useless. The digital copy gets some bonus points though. **B+ (3.65)**

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Futurama: Bender's Game (Fox Home Entertainment)



When Family Guy came back, I was ecstatic. When Futurama announced their come back...ehhh. Not really needed. Family Guy's plot allows for timeless humor and growth. Futurama, on the otherhand, is kind of the same joke over and over and that joke expired years ago.

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