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4K Kubrick

The Warner Bros. 4K Blu-ray release of Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining* (Dec 19) is the most stunning example we have come across of the superior value that the 4K format brings to a viewing experience. What we realized was that it is not just massive, effects laden action films that gain an impact from the enlarged data delivery and subsequent improved playback, but that for a master film director, the format delivers more of the director's artistry, allowing a greater subliminal connection between the director's creativity and the viewer's emotional response to the work. With *The Shining*, Kubrick's intense precision governing each scene and each shot was so exactly articulated on the 4K BD that the experience of viewing the film gained an exponential fusion of visceral and intellectual excitement. It was a profound revelation in the power of cinema.

And that power has been sustained with the Warner and Criterion Collection three-platter 4K Blu-ray release of Kubrick's 1999 masterpiece, *Eyes Wide Shut* (UPC# 715515324717, \$50). Here, the film itself is concerned precisely with the subliminality that the 4K process speaks to, the hormonal disconnect that unhooks rational consideration. With discs, this elevates an appreciation of a film that has been rendered with the 4K process regardless of its artistic content. In life, it elevates the importance of fulfilling sexual desire regardless of potential consequences. Same thing, really.

Tom Cruise plays a Manhattan doctor and Nicole Kidman plays his wife. They have a daughter who has just begun school, and live in an impressive apartment on the bourgeois Upper West Side, although the place is a mess. Invited to a party at a much fancier address (and in an even larger and tidier apartment), they each have casual social interludes with members of the opposite sex so that when they get home, they feel frisky. Unfortunately, and again because rationality, aided by substance intake, is beginning to disconnect, the conversation subsides into bickering (jealousy functions in the film like a stage magician's distraction), and then the doctor is called away because a patient he has been caring for has died. The patient's widow is distraught and channels her unhinged emotions into making a pass at the doctor, although it is interrupted. Instead of going straight home, however, Cruise's character goes for a walk. It is after midnight, but the streets of Manhattan are still lively, and he strolls in a trance-like state until he meets a prostitute, who immediately recognizes that state and leads him to her apartment without difficulty. It is only the intrusion of his cellphone that pulls him momentarily out of his trance. He tips the prostitute as much as if he had had sex with her and leaves, moderately chastened. Not chastened enough to upset his nocturnal wandering, however, and through a series of logical occurrences and nighttown adventures, he secures a password, obtains a costume and takes a taxicab to a mansion on Long Island where, in the 159-minute film's centerpiece, others in masked costumes are participating in a ritualistic orgy. The masked party in the film is an absurd fantasy, of course (just exactly how are the figures in the orgy accomplishing oral sex if they are wearing masks?). The debauched parties of Jeffrey Epstein are the reality, but even as people attend an Epstein party, they imagine themselves to be at the party depicted in *Eyes Wide Shut*. That is how overpowering that disconnect can be (and the consequences of the accompanying paranoia are apparently the same). In any case, the film concludes in the aisles of a toy store (the film is also a genuine Christmas movie, not just taking place entirely during mid-December, but being about an errant father's self-redemption), with Kidman's character delivering a final line of dialog that is both exceedingly rational and a celebration of the irrational state, and can thus best be appreciated through the merger of the both, 4K.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1, slightly masked in comparison to the 1.78:1 aspect ratio on Warner's earlier Blu-ray release, titled *Kubrick's Eyes Wide Shut* (UPC#085391156871, \$20), but the differences so far as framing is concerned are negligible. The film begins with very grainy images as Cruise and Kidman's characters dress for the party, and there are innumerable references to seeing and sight in the dialog, the musical score and the images (Kidman's character has glasses, which she discards before leaving for the party). As the film advances, however, and particularly as the doctor's hormones take over, the sharpness and clarity of the image improves. On the standard Blu-ray platter included in the Criterion set, colors are over-saturated and the grain is more pervasive than it ought to be (Warner's previous standard BD is blander), but the 4K presentation is perfect. It is indeed grainy to begin with, but

colors have a stimulating and controlled accuracy so that the grain becomes emotive, and then, even on the streets at night, the grain is largely replaced by a smooth, slick image that looks correct and precise down to its smallest detail. The 4K presentation is an exact replication of how the film appeared on opening day in theaters, and thanks to the quality of the 4K process, the emotional impact of its unique exploration of the human psyche is also replicated with the same precision.

Sydney Pollack has third billing and a major role in the film, while future stars Alan Cumming and Leelee Sobieski can also be seen. The 5.1-channel DTS sound has an exquisite and resonant dimensionality and that is for the most part sustained on Criterion's standard BD, but not on the earlier 5.1 Dolby Digital track of the Warner BD, which is less lively. The Criterion release has optional English subtitles. The Warner BD has 20 subtitling options, including English, as well as alternate French, Spanish, Italian, German and Japanese subtitles, all of which must be activated manually, as there are no menu options for them.

No overview of *Eyes Wide Shut* can avoid addressing Kubrick's death just before the film's premiere, whether it was from the relaxation that comes after having completed an arduous task or the probable frantic reaction of Warner executives to the film's challenging marketability (he doesn't look especially healthy in the still photos taken of him during the shoot). In any case, the title's meaning stretched beyond an inability to accept the grace in one's romantic partner or the affect of sexual mesmerism to represent Kubrick's own unfortunate state at the film's unveiling, and his death permeates the second standard BD platter in the Criterion set, containing a variety of special features. Programs on that platter do not start up where they left off if playback is terminated.

The first entry is a 25-minute interview with cinematographer Larry Smith, who goes over his career, how he started working with Kubrick and the path that Kubrick was following in his lighting concepts for films, using less and less artificial enhancement (except with hue), and manipulating the processing to compensate for the reduced illumination. Hence, the film does have a lot of grain, however deliberate and captivating it may seem. Smith also shares anecdotes about the shoot, describes the shock of Kubrick's passing and discusses the effort he was called in to collaborate upon to upgrade the film's home video transfer to what Kubrick intended (although, technically, there will never be a definitive version).

Second unit director Lisa Leone, who also did a lot of other odd jobs on the set, including a small speaking role in the film, tells a wonderful story for 20 minutes of how she first got dragged into helping with the pre-production, and how her efficiency and skills led to one assignment after another over the lengthy course of the film's creation. She, too, shares the heartbreaking story of learning about Kubrick's demise, and of finishing the one shot in the film that had not been completed before he died.

Archivist Georgina Orgill spends 16 minutes describing the nature of the extensive Kubrick Archive in London, and then segueing into how the story of *Eyes Wide Shut* was developed over several decades from the 1926 Arthur Schnitzler Viennese novel, *Traumnovelle*. She shows a wide variety of photos and props that Kubrick had accumulated in regard to the project and suggests, because of the scope of its development presence across many years, that it is Kubrick's most personal film.

A 10-minute interview with Kubrick's daughter, Christiane, goes over her reactions to the Schnitzler story over the years and how, as she grew older, she began to appreciate it more. That is followed by a 9-minute collection of people, including Christiane again, talking specifically about their reaction to Kubrick's death.

Kubrick himself is heard in a marvelous 4-minute clip accepting a lifetime award from the Director's Guild of America in 1998, memorably suggesting that the moral to the story of Icarus is not about hubris but about recognizing the need to build sturdier wings.

Kidman and Cruise (who, incidentally, were married before they were cast in the film and while they made it) sit for a very rewarding 36-minute press conference, talking about their experiences on the shoot and what it was like working with Kubrick. "He said to me, 'I'm not interested in naturalism. I don't want to see a documentary. I want to see something slightly more heightened than that.'" "He felt that anyone could be real, but that he was looking for something that was interesting." Executive producer Jan Harlan is also in attendance ("Every grown up should see it, twice.").

Kubrick (Continued)

Orgill references a couple of film projects Kubrick began but did not finish, and there is a spellbinding 20-minute piece that investigates them more thoroughly, specifically, his efforts to create a movie about Napoleon Bonaparte and his efforts to make a film about the WWII Holocaust. The material is tantalizing, to say the least.

A fantastic 83-minute profile of the intense but jovial Kubrick, *Kubrick Remembered*, combines interviews with many of the people who worked with him over the years as it explores the productions of and reactions to most of his films, and describes both his personality and his methods of operation. Not only is the program insightful, it is a highly rewarding portrait of the human parameters of artistic creation, which were perhaps pushed to the very limit with *Eyes Wide Shut*.

Also featured are a marketing trailer, a standard trailer and nine TV commercials.

Warner's standard BD has the 20-minute piece on Kubrick's unfinished projects, the Director's Guild speech and the standard trailer. Two of the TV commercials have been included, and they are cleverly juxtaposed, since both contain the same image content but are presented with different musical scores. It is worth talking a look. There is also a terrific additional supplementary feature running 43 minutes (with 35 extra valuable minutes of outtakes and extended clips from the interviews), about Kubrick's career and the film, which include enough fresh material to be worthwhile despite the comprehensive coverage offered by the Criterion programs (including a much deeper dive into the preparation of *A.I. Artificial Intelligence* and Kidman, in particular, explaining her thought process in her performance—"It changed the way I view films, the way I view filmmaking. It gave me a belief in the purity of filmmaking, in the art form of making a film, and that however long it takes, whatever you have to go through, you're making a film. It's extraordinary, and wonderful.").

Kubrick's 1975 adaptation of the Eighteenth Century tale written by William Makepeace Thackeray, *Barry Lyndon*, is also available as a Warner and Criterion three-platter 4K Blu-ray (UPC#715515315517, \$50). Contrary to the governing concept of motion picture entertainment, including most of Kubrick's other movies, *Barry Lyndon* is not a film to be taken casually or watched on a lark. Foremost among one's considerations for settling in with the 185-minute movie is that its ultimate emotional vector concludes very much on a downward direction, punctuated by one of the most cynical closing text epilogues ever conceived. In contrast to where the narrative is headed, however, the story does have rises before its fall, and more importantly, every scene and every shot looks like it could have been lifted from an Eighteenth Century painting. Often lit simply by candles—it was the first major motion picture to attempt such a stunt—the image is at times soft and grainy unless there is abundant sunlight, but that, of course, is where the 4K playback becomes advantageous. Criterion previously released a two-platter standard Blu-ray (UPC#715515205412, \$40) also included in the 4K set, which actually has slightly brighter colors than the 4K presentation, but it has nowhere near the same solidity or detail that the 4K version delivers. Presented with an aspect ratio of about 1.66:1, any softness or grain on the 4K presentation is emotionally evocative, intended to manipulate a viewer's feelings in response to both the setting and the drama. The additional softness and grain that the standard BD takes on do not have that intention and undermine how carefully Kubrick is leading the viewer along.

Ryan O'Neal stars as a young member of the Irish gentry, who runs afoul of his girlfriend's family when her attentions turn to a wealthier prospect. Forced to leave his home, he ends up in the British army, fighting in Europe, and after a number of adventures and key liaisons, he marries into the British aristocracy and starts a family of his own. Unfortunately, he offended too many individuals along the way to hold onto his gains. Marisa Berenson, Patrick Magee, Leon Vitali (who went on to work for Kubrick in a production capacity on a number of films), Hardy Krüger, Leonard Rossiter, Marie Kean and Godfrey Quigley are among the supporting players and there is an effective voiceover narration by Michael Hordern. The film may have the manner of a costume romance and can in some respects be compared to *Tom Jones*, but with a pace and emotional payoff more reminiscent of *The Draughtsman's Contract*. It is better appreciated as a coffee table book than as a novel, and it is best approached with the understanding that it is a work of art conceived and executed on an unprecedented scale of motion picture production for its intentions. Time and again, Kubrick would trick film companies into underwriting what appeared to be assured genre features and then use their investments to create personal art films instead, but those are the films of his that have endured the longest. There are many scenes in *Barry Lyndon* that are never forgotten after a single viewing, and many more that linger in a viewer's consciousness after multiple viewings. The emotions of the story give way to the emotions of image, light, people and history (the film's period dressing is meticulous, although there is one flagrant anachronism—the maps hanging in the tutor room have coastlines that are too accurate for the era), and in 4K, those emotions run deeper than the emotions shared by the characters, becoming a profound merger of the limitations of human experience and the unlimited potential of cinema.

The film defaults to its original monophonic track, but there is an excellent 5.1-channel DTS track that brings a subtle dimensionality to each setting and also helps to embellish environmental sounds (some of the period music used for the score is also a cheat, but only by a decade or two). There are optional English subtitles.

Unlike *Eyes Wide Shut*, the supplementary programs on the second standard Blu-ray platter do start up where they left off if playback is terminated. Included are a good 38-minute retrospective production piece that goes over the meticulous research and execution that went into the movie's period setting, as well as the experiences the actors had; an excellent 16-minute piece specifically on the cinematography (every point in a zoom is a picture in itself) and adapting the cinematography to the available candlelight and the problems it caused (the ceilings in the locations had to be continually cleaned, and

yes, there is some 'ambient' background filler); an equally informative 14-minute piece about the massive effort needed to edit the film; a nice 14-minute piece about the film's production design and an extensive secondhand profile of designer Ken Adam (it also turns out that one weekend, Kubrick helped Adam set up the lighting for *The Spy Who Loved Me* submarine dock); a terrific 10-minute piece with Vitali about the film's sound recording that includes many examples comparing the original mono track with the remastered 5.1 track and is worth watching with your full sound system engaged; a nice 5-minute interview with costume designer Ulla-Britt Söderlund from 1976; a passable 17-minute analysis of Kubrick's themes throughout his career and how they are reflected in *Barry Lyndon*; an enjoyable 15-minute comparison of Eighteenth Century paintings to the scenes Kubrick staged in the film and an astute analysis of how the images in both represented society of the day; and two trailers.

And the Oscars go to...

Brilliantly cast, superbly directed and wonderfully performed, the 1975 Best Picture Oscar winner, *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, dove into a topic that many viewers would anticipate as being discomforting, life in a mental institution, to present a surprisingly entertaining and enduring drama about free spirits. It helped that while the source of the film was the Ken Kesey novel, it was specifically based upon a stageplay, so that the basic structure and story dynamics had already been worked out. The director, Milos Forman, was a Czech expatriate with several small but highly respected films under his belt, although that was no assurance that his talent could translate to the American marketplace. But he did everything right, overseen by producers Michael Douglas and Saul Zaentz, with the aid of the confident cinematography of Haskell Wexler, Bill Butler and William Fraker and the flawless editing from Richard Chew, Lynzee Klingman and Sheldon Kahn.

Jack Nicholson, of course, stars as the uninhibited wastrel who has been sent from the penal system to the mental facility—a combination of voluntary admissions and mandatory admissions—to be assessed. His outgoing manner and impulsiveness plays upon established aspects of his screen personality and exaggerates them for the character—like the sandwich scene in *Five Easy Pieces* is his baseline, and he advances from there. In diametric opposition to his performance is Louise Fletcher as the head nurse running the floor where Nicholson's character is assigned, who essentially does a movie-long slow burn. She is always smiling, even when she is clearly boiling inside, and her close-ups are tantalizing. She is genuinely pretty, and the film actually proceeds as a romance between the two characters, except that what happens within the template turns out to be the antithesis of romance, right down to the camera angles Forman chooses when Nicholson tackles her. And then, added to this mix, are a pack of budding performers who would use this film as a springboard to become the go-to character actors of the Eighties and Nineties, including Brad Dourif, an unrecognizable Danny DeVito, Christopher Lloyd, Vincent Schiavelli, Sydney Lassick, Michael Berryman and William Duell. Will Sampson, William Redfield and Scatman Crothers are also featured. Honed by the feedback the stageplay received from audiences, and then opened up not just by the outdoor basketball court and an amusing jaunt the characters take on a fishing boat, but by the utilization of the actual facilities that inspired the novel instead of soundstage sets, the 133-minute film is a steady blend of humor and conflict that keeps viewers engaged as it explores the parameters of acceptable social behavior and humanizes those who have been judged incapable of functioning within the norm.

The film may have been entertaining, but for years it languished as a typical low budget 1975 production, with hazy, grainy cinematography. Warner Bros. Home Entertainment released a beguiling two-platter *Immersive Collector's Set* DVD (UPC# 883929061334) that came with some lovely photos, a hardcover book and a pack of playing cards (no, not the porn deck that Nicholson's character has, but one that has images of the stars on the face cards—the jokers, unfortunately, are just large 'J's'). The disc's alienating picture, however, letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1, doesn't look much better than a VHS copy, and this becomes especially evident when the presentation is compared to the outstanding single-platter Warner and SDS Studio Distribution Services *4K UltraHD* Blu-ray (UPC#883929833283, \$30). While the image is evocatively soft at times, it is never, ever flawed. Fleshtones are exact, and the complexions of the characters are finely detailed. The sharpness and authority conveyed by the image enhances a viewer's engagement with every scene in the film. There is less of a barrier between the characters and the observer, and thanks to the consistently marvelous performances, you understand and feel comfortable with each one. There is no hesitation whatsoever about being in a room with them, despite their personality quirks, and no problem at all spending the full 2 hours in their company.

The 5.1-channel DTS sound, which brings a suitable dimensionality to the Jack Nietzsche musical score and is otherwise mostly centered, is also stronger on the 4K BD than on the DVD, although the differences between the two are not as distinctive as the differences in image quality. The DVD has an alternate French audio track and optional English, French and Spanish subtitles. In addition to those, the BD has an Italian audio track and Italian, Dutch, Czech, Polish and Chinese subtitling.

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The second DVD platter contains an excellent 86-minute retrospective documentary from 1997, *Completely Cuckoo*, that includes interviews with all of the major cast members and some of the workers and patients from the hospital where the film was shot (who also appeared in the film), as well as Foreman, Douglas and even Kesey, and goes extensively into the story's roots and how the production finally came to pass, as well as the logistics of shooting everything on site and the various challenges and good times that occurred with the cast during the shoot. Also featured is a rewarding 31-minute piece about hospitals for the mentally ill, which is heavily tied into the film but still goes into the ambiguities of how such hospitals are utilized, exploring both their advantages and the problems that have arisen with their use, and articulating what barriers remain in regard to treating those with emotional challenges. Along with two trailers, 13 minutes of marvelous deleted scenes are included, often containing wonderful improvised moments (although much of the footage is also included in the retrospective piece).

The DVD also features a very good commentary track with intercut reactions to the film from Forman, Douglas and Zaentz, delving even further into the details of the film's creation. Forman, having come from a communist country, understood the film inside out. "This is a movie about a society I just lived and dealt with all of my life. It's about everything I know, and I know how these people feel. We create institutions to help us live. We even pay them with our own money to help us live, right? And we always end up being owned and dictated by these institutions."

The 86-minute documentary is carried over on the 4K release on the same platter as the film, along with 9 minutes of the deleted scenes (but not the commentary). An additional 24 minutes of fresh and delightful retrospective conversations between the elderly Douglas, Lloyd, Dourif and DeVito are also included.

A musical that won the Oscar for Best Picture in 2021, *CODA*, has been released as an Apple Video Programming 4K UltraHD Blu-ray (UPC#840418321607, \$30). Directed by Siân Heder, the film it most immediately calls to mind is *Mr. Holland's Opus* (Sep 96), and it has the same pattern of constant sublimities that can have you emptying an entire box of Kleenex with each viewing. Emilia Jones is a senior in high school who joins the school chorus because a boy she likes is in it, and learns that she has a natural talent. The film is set in Gloucester and her family operates a fishing boat, but her father, mother and older brother are deaf, and they depend upon her for, as she puts it, a "free interpreter service." Hence, the emotional high that each song creates is multiplied exponentially by the dynamics of the relationships with her family, which turns an amplified focus back onto the nature and meaning of the music. At the same time, the interplay between the characters, whether they are collaborating or arguing, is sweet, amusing and real. Running 111 minutes, the film is a lovely, joyful experience, and in 4K, every image sharpens and enhances a viewer's involvement with the heroine and her world. Letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1, the picture is vivid and the Dolby Atmos sound is pure.

The extensive use of sign language is supported by default optional subtitling. There is an audio track that describes the action and repeats the signing subtitling, an alternate Spanish audio track, a Spanish audio track that describes the action and the sign language, optional English subtitling for the spoken dialog and the signing, and the same two subtitling options in Spanish.

A sweet, unpretentious road movie based upon a true story about an outgoing Italian-American nightclub bouncer played by Viggo Mortensen who lands a job as a chauffeur for an introverted black pianist performing in the South in the early Sixties played by Mahershala Ali, the 2018 *The Green Book* clearly had no aspirations to win the Best Picture Oscar that it won. Directed by Peter Farrelly of all people, the relaxed but highly entertaining film gets by entirely on its character development and period decoration, with scenes consisting primarily of Mortensen's character conversing with Ali's character as they zigzag across the South. Mortensen's character is exposed to culture and Ali's character is exposed to life. Here and there they run into difficulties, but fewer than what one might anticipate. The 130-minute film's climaxes are subtle but fulfilling. There is no splashy fight with southern bigots or anything like that, just a rousing musical performance when Ali's character leaves his comfort zone and, spoiler, the final scene, when the film turns into a tearful Christmas movie. Like any good act, the movie concludes on a very high note.

Released on DVD by DreamWorks and Universal Pictures Home Entertainment (UPC#191329087206, \$10), the picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2:1. The color transfer is excellent, with crisp, solid hues, even in darkly lit scenes. A logo on the end credits indicates that film had a 7.1-channel audio mix, but the disc's sound is just 5.1-channel Dolby Digital, which is adequately presented. There is an audio track that describes the action ("Later, Tony eats fried chicken as he drives."), an alternate French audio track, optional English and French subtitles, and 14 minutes of informative promotional featurettes.

Indeed it is

Even MGM's Leo the Lion logo that opens their 1952 Mervyn LeRoy musical, *Lovely to Look At*, is stunningly colored on the Turner Entertainment Co. Warner Bros. *Warner WB Archive Collection* Blu-ray (UPC#840418335116, \$25). The Technicolor image is bright, sharp and abundantly colorful from that very first frame, and it never lets up. Presented in a squared full screen format, the film is a color remake of *Roberta*, a let's-put-on-a-show-to-save-a-Paris-fashion-house tale, starring Kathryn Grayson, Marge Champion and Ann Miller. Yeah, Howard Keel, Gower Champion and Red Skelton are also in it, because the ladies need someone to dance with and sing their praises, but from the BD's perspective, the film is entirely about the actresses and their gowns, complexions and jewelry, with a side of set décor and blue business suits. The excitement rises to a fever pitch when the actresses appear in various two-shots, each wearing a different, splendidly colored garment. The mixing and matching of the pairs is eye popping. Zsa Zsa Gabor and Kurt Kaszner are also featured. Many of the songs are

familiar, but even those that are not are fully enchanting because of the hues decorating their illustrations. There is also some terrific dancing, thanks in particular to the Champions, who may not equal the charm of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, but have the same thrilling discipline when it comes to moving with the music. Skelton is a little tiresome early on, but gets into a better groove as the movie advances, and has one extended skit with a piano that has Gower Champion and everyone else in the shot genuinely cracking up. Miller gives the best performance of all, selling her character's emotional quandaries and arresting the camera every moment it frames her. Running 103 minutes, the narrative pretty much gives way to the musical numbers and the incredible climactic fashion show once the couples sort themselves out, but it is such an overdose of amazing chromatic splendor that the temptation to just leave it running on the TV all day long is difficult to resist.

The monophonic sound is in decent condition and there are optional English subtitles. Also featured is a trailer (its poor quality reinforcing what an incredible job was done on the film's transfer), a 10-minute black-and-white MGM Pete Smith *Specialty* from 1952, the initial *Have You Ever Wondered?* short, staging comedy skits about a variety of topics such as 'bad' female drivers, foods that don't taste good together, how a man's toupee stays on his head (except around children with fishing rods), and so on, and an 8-minute MGM color Tom and Jerry cartoon from 1952, *Dog Trouble*, in which both the cat and the mouse are terrorized by a mean dog.

Murder in the woods

People like to categorize films, and one category is the 'What did I just see???' movie. A perfect example of such a film is Alain Guiraudie's 2024 feature released on Blu-ray by Janus films, Sideshow and The Criterion Channel, *Misericordia* (UPC#715515320016, \$30). It begins with a youngish former employee of a baker, played by Félix Kysyl, returning to his hometown for the baker's funeral. The bakery is shut down. The baker had one son, played by Jean-Baptiste Durand, who is married and has a family of his own. The baker's wife, played by Catherine Frot, is middle aged and invites Kysyl's character to stay with her while he is in town, allowing him to stay in the son's childhood room and dangling the possibility of reopening the bakery. While he is there, Kysyl's character uses the visit to explore old haunts and reconnect with old acquaintances, and the film begins leisurely, soaking up the atmosphere and landscape. It is autumn, and the shots of the forests surrounding the hillside village are gorgeous, especially since the picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.4:1 and the transfer is impeccable. Although they were formerly friends, Durand's character is irritated to no end by Kysyl's presence, and they have several fights, including one in the woods that ends in a deliberate murder. A priest played by Jacques Develay, who has seen Kysyl's character strolling in the woods while hunting for mushrooms, begins inserting himself into the lives of the characters after it is established that the murder victim is missing. All of that is fairly normal when it comes to crime films, underscored by the fairly blatant symbolism associated with both baker's wives and mushrooms, but how the 103-minute film plays out is not, and the cut to black at the end will leave you absolutely wondering, yes, 'What the hell did I just see???'.

The film has substantial and explicit male nudity. The 5.1-channel DTS sound has a pleasing surround presence, particularly when it rains, and the film is in French with optional English subtitles. Along with a trailer, there is an 18-minute talk by Guiraudie, explaining that he constructed the film from a much longer novel that he wrote, going over the themes he was exploring and describing his filmmaking process.

Children of the damned

The smartly constructed and highly satisfying 2025 New Line Cinema horror thriller, *Weapons*, has been released as a 4K UltraHD Blu-ray by Warner Bros. and SDS Studio Distribution Services (UPC#883929839070, \$33). The film begins with a well publicized premise, that more than a dozen children from the same elementary school classroom walk out of their homes one night and disappear, with the 129-minute film jumping back and forth in time as it follows the stories of different adult characters and gradually reveals what is going on. Directed by Zach Cregger (who is also listed as playing one of the instruments on the lightly engaging musical score he composed with Ryan and Hays Holladay), the film has plenty of creepy and unnerving moments, a spectacularly bloody finale and appealing characters whose lives are worth revisiting even after you know what is going on. Julia Garner stars as the kids' teacher, Josh Brolin is a desperate parent, and Alden Ehrenreich, Austin Abrams, Benedict Wong and the nicely matured Amy Madigan are also featured.

Letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1, the 4K image sharpens a viewer's concentration and cuts deeper with its fears. The image is smooth and hues are finely differentiated. Some sequences take place in near total darkness, but you can make out the figures just enough to be frightened by them as Gregger intended. The Dolby Atmos audio track is also greatly rewarding, with crisp directional tones that place you in the center of each environment, adding to the chills. There is an audio track that describes the action ("Standing in a clearing, he shifts his gaze to the left and scans the forest, thick with trees and undergrowth. In a palette of browns and greens, a splash of color appears in the form of the redhead, who waves at James from a small distance. His mouth hanging open, James tilts his head as the greenery behind him appears to recede."), alternate French and Spanish audio tracks, optional English, French and Spanish subtitles, and 22 minutes of decent promotional featurettes ("It makes it much scarier for it to be in a world that you recognize as your own and that things happening to people that you kind of recognize as your own.")

Barbara Stanwyck + Henry Fonda = movie magic

The 1941 pairing of Barbara Stanwyck and Henry Fonda in Preston Sturges's *The Lady Eve* (Feb 02) created one of the best romantic comedies ever made, but there was precedent that demonstrated what a wonderful chemistry the two superstars had together, and that was the 1938 RKO Radio Pictures production, *The Mad Miss Manton*, directed by Leigh Jason, which has been released by Warner Bros. as a *Warner WB Archive Collection* Blu-ray (UPC#840418337424, \$25). Stanwyck is a wealthy heiress who has a reputation of pranks when she enters an empty building one night and discovers a dead body. By the time she persuades the police that she is on the level with her claim, however, the body has disappeared. Fonda is a newspaper editor who writes a story condemning her devil-may-care hijinks. She confronts him, he becomes totally smitten with her, and then faster than you can sing, 'First there is a dead body, then there is no body, then there is,' the corpse reappears. Jason was a 'B picture' and eventually television director who never rose to prominence, but *The Mad Miss Manton* is superbly directed. Stanwyck's character has a 'crew,' of seven rich spoiled girls like her, and as they set about investigating the murder together, Jason deftly makes sure that each one has a personality and they don't bump into one another when they are squeezed into the squared full screen black-and-white image. In counter to that, Sam Levene is the central detective working on the case, but he is never by himself since a similar gathering of beat cops and detectives swarming over every crime scene and every interrogation. Again, Jason stuffs the screen with them, without losing focus on the story or the central characters. Stanwyck is young and gorgeous, and able to turn her emotions on a dime without it feeling like a put on, while Fonda's absurd infatuation—which he essentially repeated in *Lady Eve* to a more mature and savvy Stanwyck—is comedic gold and underscores his remarkable range as an actor. The murder mystery has enough twists to keep the film going with great satisfaction for 81 minutes—Hattie McDaniel brings her exquisite timing to a supporting part as the maid of Stanwyck's character, and Vickie Lester, Paul Guilfoyle and John Qualen are also featured—but the film is even more entertaining than all of that, because the Blu-ray transfer is sharp and spotless. The picture quality looks so good that not only is every shot of every star heavenly, but the jazzed up pace of the film is backed up by the flawless image so that your concentration never falters and you never step back from the film's artifice and mesmerizing activity. There are no distractions, just one joyful moment after another.

The monophonic sound is strong and clear, and there are optional English subtitles, along with a trailer and two 8-minute 1938 Warner cartoons, the *Merrie Melodies* *The Penguin Parade* (a musical depiction of anamorphic denizens of arctic environments performing in a nightclub run and habituated primarily by penguins) and the impressive black-and-white *Looney Tunes* *Porky the Gob* (the pig is one of the anamorphic barnyard sailors aboard a battleship, who saves the ship from a submarine pirate attack).

Speaking of *The Lady Eve*, Universal and The Criterion Collection have upgraded their DVD release of the Paramount production to Blu-ray (UPC#1551524-9010, \$40). If you are already attuned to Fonda's deadpan performance because of *Mad Miss Manton*, then the opening scene is hysterical, because he doesn't miss a beat, playing a wealthy playboy who earnestly studies snakes and is on a jungle safari to collect them. The humor is then immediately doubled with the appearance of William Demarest, as Fonda's butler, saying goodbye to his native girlfriend. Returning on a cruise liner, they meet a father and daughter con artist team played by Charles Coburn and Stanwyck, and she sets her sights on hustling him.

Sadly, after the vivid perfection of the *Mad Miss Manton* transfer, the squared full screen black-and-white picture, though technically an improvement over the DVD, is still soft and grainy. While there is no longer any overt wear, and the second half of the film is reasonably smooth, there is still a general sense that the source material has been through a safari as well, and it never achieves the slick sharpness that *Mad Miss Manton* has. Fortunately, on the other hand, Sturges was at the top of his game, and to our mind, this is his best film of all. The witty dialog, marvelous character actors (OMG, the film has Eric Blore and Eugene Pallette, along with Demarest, and that's just the start) and comedic plot turns kick off at a speedy clip and never slow down, or slow down only enough that the romance can take hold (the first intimate conversation between Stanwyck and Fonda is incredibly sexy). To give just one slapstick example of how brilliantly the film is staged and acted, Stanwyck and Fonda's characters go horse riding, and then stop at an idyllic spot to dismount and speak romantically to one another. Stanwyck's character is focused and pressing her flirtatiousness, while Fonda's character is both earnest and distracted, confounded by her presence. Neither actor, for even a split second, breaks character or flubs one of Sturges' witty lines, yet not for just a moment but for the entire, relatively lengthy scene, one of the horses intrudes upon the two shot, continuously pushing in between them or otherwise nudging Fonda in the head and the face. When you think about it, it is remarkable.

But don't think about it. The film is too much glorious fun to analyze (there is a shot of the two as honeymooners on a train that goes through a tunnel, but the tunnel represents not romantic impulses but the darkening of their relationship). Many, many romantic comedies of the day featured wealthy characters, but rarely was wealth lampooned as thoroughly and cleverly as Sturges lampoons it. Yes, the story is so good, the dialog is so brilliantly witty and the film, ultimately, fills you so full of the joys of love that in all likelihood any two performers could have pulled it off, but not to the stellar perfection and cinematic delight that Stanwyck and Fonda achieve. Physically, aurally and emotionally, their skills are unsurpassable.

The monophonic sound is fine, and there are optional English subtitles. The special features carried over from the DVD include a Marian Keane commentary, an 8-minute introduction from Peter Bogdanovich, a trailer, a 6-minute montage of Edith

Head's costume sketches and the resulting costumes, captioned with quotations from Head's notes and other background information; and a 45-minute *Lux Radio Theater* adaptation from 1942 with Stanwyck and Ray Milland. Criterion has added a very interesting 5-minute audio-only opening number for a stage musical adaptation of the tale; a decent 21-minute overview and appreciation of the film that also itemizes its many wonderful supporting character parts; and a 42-minute group internet conversation hosted by Sturges's son, Tom, with Bogdanovich, Leonard Maltin, James L. Brooks, Susan King and Ron Shelton, that undergoes a few glitches but provides an engaging overview of Sturges's talent and the film's dynamics ("We think this is a very funny film, that's why we look forward to it again, but part of the reason it lasts and it's so effective is that there's an enormous amount of genuine emotion in it").

Fonda is not in William Wellman cute 1943 *Lady of Burlesque*, but Stanwyck is and she shows plenty of flesh, along with other talents you never thought she had. Running 91 minutes, the entire film takes place backstage at a New York burlesque house, where Stanwyck's character is a headliner, much to the irritation of two of the former headliners, both of whom end up dead in rather short order. The film is pretty amazing even though it plays like it was made a decade earlier. For one thing, the camera does not shy away from the dames. Yes, technically, they are clothed, but there are lots and lots of thighs, midriffs and beyond bare shoulders. Michael O'Shea plays a stage comedian. Stanwyck's character does skits with him as well as a couple of numbers of her own, and she is more believable than the slicker actresses normally employed for musical films, realistically singing and dancing, and even doing the splits at one point (the camera stays on her, so you know it isn't a double), while delivering her lines, and more, as the oomph girl in several different classic vaudeville routines. Wellman's direction is terrific, using the film's limited resources in his favor. For several lengthy scenes where the cops interrogate everyone working in the theater, they are all crammed into a tiny dressing room, enhancing both the comedy and the energy of each sequence.

Iris Adrian, Pinky Lee, Gloria Dickson, Victoria Faust and Stephanie Bachelor costar (but how we longed for Gloria Stuart and Joan Blondell—alas, their time had passed). The black-and-white film, based upon a novel by Gypsy Rose Lee, was produced by Hunt Stromberg for United Artists and has been released by Film Masters as an *Archive Collection* Blu-ray (UPC#840418310113, \$27). The quality of the image and the passable monophonic sound add to the entertainment by suppressing the distractions from what appears to be uneven source material. Presented in a squared full screen format, there are a couple of stray markings and a few hidden splices, but overall the presentation looks terrific, with clear contrasts and a decent focus much of the time. There are optional English subtitles and a trailer. Film expert Karen Burroughs Hannsberry supplies a commentary track that is also supported by optional subtitling. She mainly focuses on the careers of every recognizable cast member and many members of the crew, but she also goes over the film's production history, the fights the creators had with the Legion of Decency, and some of the saucier moments that were toned down from Lee's bestseller.

Robert Hossein

A trio of black-and-white Gaumont films from diverse genres, but all directed, written or co-written and starring the same French filmmaker, have been collected by Radiance in the three-platter Blu-ray set, *Wicked Games: Three Films by Robert Hossein* (UPC#760137195283, \$70). All three movies are in French and have strong monophonic audio tracks, accompanied by optional English subtitles. Along with trailers, all three are accompanied by terrific commentary tracks from Euro cult film expert, Tim Lucas. On each talk, he supplies career profiles for the cast members and speaks more elaborately about Hossein's life (a different phase in each talk), filmmaking and thematic interests, while dissecting the narrative as it unfolds.

The best film in the set is the 1958 *Nude in a White Car (Toi...Le Venin)*, a mystery without a murder or, as the French might put it, a 'love mystery.' Hossein is poet strapped for cash who is taking a stroll outside of his beachfront hotel one night when a woman with long blond hair drives up and asks him directions. She is wearing a fur coat and he cannot see her face, but like any man so inclined, when she asks if he wants a lift, he takes her up on it, and when she pulls off in a secluded area and it turns out she is naked under the coat, he takes her up on her next offer as well. When they are done, however, she points a gun at him, orders him out of the car, and then drives off, almost hitting him. He never saw her face, but he did get her license plate, and with a little detective work he tracks the car down to a nice, well manicured house where it turns out there are two blonde sisters residing, played by Marina Vlady and Odile Versois. There is the briefest glimpse of topless nudity in that opening segment in the car, but even though there is no other scene with nudity in the film, those who are obsessed with such matters will immediately spot which actress fills out her chemise appropriately and which does not, as it were, match that quick earlier glimpse. In any case, Hossein's character can't figure it out and spends the rest of the 93-minute film trying to, while the sisters seem to take turns gaslighting one another and vying for his affection. One is in a wheelchair and has been paralyzed since she was a teenager with polio, while the other has spent the better part of her youth taking care of her. He is invited to stay in their house for a while, and there are odd things going on at night that suggest the stricken sister may actually be able to walk after all. The story twists keep coming and that, along with cultural pizzazz (the sisters are opening a record store in town, and the film has an appealing jazz score by Hossein's father under the pen name, André Gosselin) and the enjoyable performances is enough to keep a viewer entranced and second guessing the choices Hossein's character makes.

The picture has an aspect ratio of about 1.66:1. The image is bright and sharp, and is free of wear. As good a quick summary of film noir as you will ever see—this is the one to show your friends when they ask you what the term means—opens the first 5 minutes or so of a 17-minute comparison of *Nude in a White Car* to other French films involving crime and women. Also featured is a 9-minute interview with Vlady, talking about her marriage to Hossein, the film and the advantage of having her sister in real life, Versois, play her sister.

In his commentary, Lucas also explores the later stages of the relationship between Hossein and Vlady, provides a succinct overview of polio, and describes the extensive differences between the film and its source novel.

The first third of the 1955 *The Wicked Go to Hell* (*Les Salauds Vont en Enfer*) is set in a penitentiary, where word is passed that one of two cell mates is a snitch, but no one knows which it is. They fight, as well, each one thinking the other is guilty. In the second third, the two use their fighting as a bluff and escape together, going on the road and avoiding the authorities looking for them. In the final third, they arrive at a remote beach house, kill the artist who owns it, and take up an uneasy relationship with his lovely young model. The climax is overly melodramatic and arch, even though Hossein does his best to downplay it. Over all, each act in the 93-minute film is reasonably interesting, with conflicts, action and lively supporting characters (including a dog who protects his master at just the right moment), and the sexual tension that is brought into the final act is especially intriguing. Henri Vidal, Serge Reggiani and Vlady star, with Hossein taking a secondary part.

The squared full screen picture is in very good condition, with no evidence of wear and sharply defined details that add texture to every image, especially when they get to the beach and sand is all over the place. The film's sound design has a number of impressive effects that lurk in the background throughout the film. Although there are unnecessary digressions (we really didn't need to hear about how sexy Robert Mitchum is), a passable 27-minute piece looks over Hossein's entire film acting and filmmaking career, and analyzes his filmmaking style, with many terrific clips and stills. A 15-minute breakdown of the film's history and production is also included.

After explaining that it was derived from a stageplay, Lucas looks at the film's three-part layout on his commentary. "The structure is unusual, in that it unfolds in three proposed acts, indicative of the story's origin in theater, though they are not pronounced as such. If we take each act as its own short story, all of the imbalances in the individual chapters become more readily forgivable because then the chapter accounts only for itself and does not have to work with the other two parts of the scenario."

He also attempts to center the film within the history of French cinema at the time, noting that it comes closer to the Monogram Pictures productions that Jean-Luc Godard dedicated *Breathless* to than *Breathless* itself. And his extensive appreciation of Vlady, is wonderful. "Historically, the appearance of this swimsuit was a seismic moment in the pulse rate of international cinema. Even as such scenes took place in the play version, they wouldn't have invited ogling to the extent of this film. And there is no way that shots like this can be seen as anything other than iconic. They are possibly somewhat in the debt of Harriet Andersson's sun worshipping in Ingmar Bergman's *Summer with Monika*, which was released in France just one month before the filming commenced." He also describes at length the romance and marriage between Hossein and Vlady that was interwoven with the film's production (Hossein himself noted the similarities their relationship had to Roger Vadim and Brigitte Bardot).

Revolutionaries ambush a train and grab the daughter of their country's president in a pre-Spaghetti Euro western, the 1961 *The Taste of Violence* (*Le Goût de la Violence*). Opening titles claim the film is set in Central America, but the topography and place names suggest Mexico. The dialog is in French, but the songs on the musical score, which sound traditional but are original compositions (by Hossein's father again, who finally changed his surname name in the credits to Hossein) are in Spanish. Running 86 minutes, the film plays very much like an episode from a good TV western, at least until the final act, which becomes a little more cinematic. Three men are assigned to transport the daughter to the leader of the revolution, so he can hold her for a prisoner swap, and as they cross the landscape the pressure from the government troops searching for them increases. Mario Adorf and Hans Neubert costar, with Giovanna Ralli. In the final third of the film, it is just Hossein and Ralli, and the dynamic of their growing affection for one another is contrasted with the increased devastation being caused by the troops. Ultimately, the film lacks the energy that raised later Euro westerns such as *A Bullet for the General* (Mar 03) and *Compañeros* (Mar 03) to a higher political and moral level, but as one of the earliest seeds to sprout in that same forest, it is a well made and entertaining feature.

Despite the black-and-white cinematography, the widescreen landscapes are impressive and the picture is adequately detailed, with no evidence of wear. The image is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1. Also featured is a 7-minute appreciation by Alex Cox and a 26-minute piece on the subgenre of westerns involving Mexico's various revolutions, known as 'Zapata Westerns.'

In his commentary, Lucas mentions at the end of his talk that Hossein had more than a passing camaraderie with Sergio Leone and that their filmmaking paths often crossed at the same locations. While Cox claims the film was shot in Montenegro, Lucas suggests that it was shot in Corsica, which feels more likely from the look of the locations. He points out that each of the three films in the set has, at one point, a dramatic conflict involving two members of one gender and one member of the other gender. And he notices every detail, from the footprints in the sand that indicated the cast did multiple takes of a scene, to the sounds of the individual instruments in the score. "Throughout this segment, the loping sound of a double bass enters. Notice how well it is recorded, giving each plucked note its proper roundness of tone. The playful bars of the double bass have the interesting effect of taking a dramatic suspenseful moment and making it more anecdotal. It's not really evocative of pending bloodshed, it's more like an ironic, 'Oh boy, what now?'"

Hossein is also part of the ensemble in Jules Dassin's breakthrough 1955 Gaumont heist film, *Riffifi* (*Du Riffifi Chez les Hommes*), available on a two-platter DVD & Blu-ray from Gaumont and The Criterion Collection (UPC#71551511317, \$40). He plays the drug addicted brother of the primary villain, helping to spoil the otherwise perfect jewelry store burglary that the heroes, played by Jean Servais, Carl Möhner, Robert Manuel and Dominique Morin pull off in a memorable and lengthy scene staged with minor sound effects and no dialog. The other two villainous brothers are played by Pierre Grasset and Marcel Lupovici, and Janine Darcey and Marie Sabouret are also featured. Running 118 minutes, the film is fully engrossing, and while the preparation for the robbery may be a little confusing at first, the robbery itself is what folks like to refer to as 'pure cinema,' and is utterly riveting in its execution. The film is set during the wintertime in Paris and conveys a wonderfully cozy 'Paris when it drizzles' atmosphere. It would also make a terrific double bill with Jean-Pierre Melville's *Bob le flambeur* (Jul 02). As for Hossein, his character's flaws are the dynamic opposite of his dreamboat looks, so that while his character is a secondary figure in the film, it greatly enhanced the boxoffice appeal that helped him to secure financing for his other features.

The squared full screen black-and-white picture looks sharp and spotless on the Blu-ray, adding to the film's engrossing atmosphere, and the details of the film's monophonic sound mix are equally pleasing. There is a Georges Auric musical score that comes on a little strong at times, but otherwise, the effects are exquisitely applied. The film is in French with optional English subtitles, but there is an English dubbed audio track as well, that isn't bad. The picture and the sound on the DVD included in the set are not as strong. The image quality is okay, since it basically matches the BD, but the BD's picture is crisper and more solid if you switch back and forth between the two.

The film is in French with optional English subtitles, and both platters have the same special features—a trailer, a collection of promotional photos and set design sketches in still frame, and a 29-minute interview with Dassin from 2000 talking about his early career, his problems with the Blacklist (which extended into Europe through secondhand marketing threats) and making *Riffifi*.

4K Planet

The best Mars movie so far has been *The Martian* (Feb 16). Most of the others have been a great deal of fun, but varying levels of silly, including John Carpenter's *Ghosts of Mars* (Jan 02), *Total Recall* (Dec 01) and the sublime *John Carter* (Aug 12). The 2000 Warner Bros. production directed by Antony Hoffman, *Red Planet*, leans more toward the realism of *The Martian* than those other films do. Its science is, for the most part, justifiable, and the film is only far-fetched when it cuts corners to fit its narrative into its 106-minute running time. We reviewed a Warner DVD in Apr 01 and now Warner and Arrow Video have released the film as a 4K Blu-ray (UPC#760137189831, \$50). Carrie Ann Moss is the captain of a crew that has been sent to the planet to investigate the apparent failure of a remotely conducted terraforming project. Because of an accident on their approach, Moss's character is required to stay aboard the ship while the rest of them, including Val Kilmer, Tom Sizemore, Benjamin Bratt, Simon Baker and the not-on-screen-long-enough-to-suit-us Terence Stamp, drop to the surface. They are the first humans to land on the planet, but it is a bumpy landing and they discover they have no immediate way to return to their ship. They also discover that the terraforming project was not entirely a failure, after all. Needless to say, exciting things happen, so the film, which was partly shot in the Australian and Jordanian deserts, is both an intelligent, stimulating adventure and a rousing thriller, with special effects that are good enough to sell the fantasy, especially when those special effects are presented in 4K format. The DVD looked terrific, but the 4K presentation, letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1, has a sharper and more precise image that never wavers, selling both the glowing spaceship interiors and the reddish Martian surface. The crispness of the picture adds to each of the film's pleasures. The 5.1-channel DTS sound is also stronger and sharper than the sound on the DVD. While the mix is not elaborate and Graeme Revell's musical score is a bit cringe inducing at times, when there is a big action scene the noises bombard you from all of the appropriate directions. There are optional English subtitles.

Along with a trailer, there are 18 minutes of interesting deleted scenes, half of which contain great moments with Stamp that were obviously deemed unneeded for plot advancement, as well as a better take on why one character murders another character (madness from oxygen deprivation); a superficial 19-minute analysis of the film, including a discussion of the surge in Mars movies (such as the really awful Brian De Palma movie, *Mission to Mars*, that we reviewed in Nov 00, which came out the same year—there is, however, no mention of *The Martian* or of the very first Mars adventure not to be hokey, *Robinson Crusoe on Mars*), a summary of the major cast and crew members, and an appreciation of what is good about the film (particularly Peter Suschitzky's cinematography, which is especially well served in 4K) and what is strong and what is weak in the narrative (although the inexplicable murder scene is never discussed); an 11-minute interview with spacesuit designer Steve Johnson, who talks about his career (mostly doing makeup) and how he got pulled in to help the costume designer with the suits, also describing all of the cool doodads he made for them and how excited he is about the potential that AI brings to his art; and a marvelous 22-minute interview with effects man Jeffrey Okun, who was called in to clean up some big messes and gaps left by his predecessors and shares all sorts of gossip (Kilmer and Sizemore did not get along at all, even though they had to do a lengthy segment grasping one another as they walked—Sizemore was difficult, but Kilmer was a total pain) while going over his career and then describing the specific effects that he managed to provide (some of which, such as a zero-gravity fire, are very impressive).

4K House

Arriving late in the cycle, Pupi Avati's 1976 giallo thriller, **The House with Laughing Windows** (*La Casa Dalle Finestre Che Ridono*), appears to have been substantially influenced by the 1973 **Don't Look Now**. Lino Capolicchio is an art expert invited to a small, isolated town, situated in an estuary in the Po valley, to restore a painting in a church of a St. Sebastian-like martyr being stabbed multiple times. Normally, restoration is for paintings from the Renaissance and such, but in this case, the painting was done just a few decades earlier, during the lifetimes of some of the characters, and has been partially covered over. Once he begins, however, odd things start to happen. He is evicted from his hotel room for a bogus reason and must take up residence as a tenant in an old mansion owned by an elderly bedridden woman (who appears to have no aides taking care of her) living on an upper floor. A friend tells him that there are secrets he should know, but dies from a questionable fall before those secrets can be shared. And so on. The film has been released as a lovely 4K Blu-ray by Arrow Video (UPC#760137186915, \$60), and Pasquale Rachini's cinematography seems to purposefully imitate various styles of painting, from hazy views of the marshes to isolated still lifes lit amid deep shadows. Francesca Marcia costars as a schoolteacher Capolicchio's character takes up with, affording Avati the opportunity to push in for some delectable close-ups. The 4K image is continually riveting and thereby achieves the full effect that Avati is striving for, to create a threatening atmosphere and sustain it with complex and intriguing plot strokes for its 111-minute running time. The story has plenty of unlikelyhoods (later, when there is another murder, by the time the hero returns with the police the site is sparkling clean) and a disturbingly ambiguous conclusion, but carries through with enough internal logic to deliver a satisfying number of viable and engaging excitements, and a captivating atmosphere of paranoia.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1. The film's monophonic sound mix is equal in design and artistry to its images, and the disc's delivery is similarly accomplished, capturing and relaying every slight noise. We reviewed an Image Entertainment DVD in Jun 03, which had a 5.1-channel remix track that we didn't care for all that much, preferring the mono track. The picture quality on the DVD is reasonably good, although it cannot compare to the sharpness and carefully defined hues on the 4K BD. Arrow has also released a standard Blu-ray (UPC#760137186922, \$50) that improves upon the DVD as well, but not with the precision the 4K provides. The film is in Italian with optional English subtitles.

Also featured on Arrow's releases is an excellent 94-minute retrospective documentary entitled *Painted Screams* that chronicles the film's creation (there was an earthquake during the shoot) and supplies a comprehensive understanding of how it came together, giving the viewer a terrific feeling for the personalities of the people who made the film—not just the ones being interviewed, but the people the interviewees recollect, usually with great fondness (apparently all of Avati's sets are very happy sets, in contrast to some of his very dark films); a good 15-minute analysis of the film's symbols and meanings, and its relationship to folk horror (*The Wicker Man* is cited as a comparison), among other things; a less elegant but reasonably comprehensive (the only supplement to mention **Don't Look Now**) 19-minute appreciation of the movie's artistry ("It's an ugly film, but the beauty of this chilling mystery is that it is a dizzying work of expert cinematic paranoia. It's an almost purposeful rejection of the shiny surfaces and sexy eye candy of other gialli."); and a trailer.

Film experts Alexandra Heller-Nicholas and Josh Nelson supply one of the commentary tracks, doing a reasonably good job placing the film in the context of Italian cinema at the time of its creation, diving deeply into Avati's biography to draw parallels with the narrative, making note of the film's specific artistry ("It's actually really, really hard to film a mirror because you have to make sure that the lights and the cameras and everything are out of the way of the reflection. It's an enormous effort. You don't 'accidentally' film a mirror. Mirrors are never in films by accident, ever, because they're just so damned tricky to shoot."), and exploring the symbolic aspects of the film itself ("Sex and contamination and death are all interwoven throughout this film in different ways."), including a nice treatise on St. Sebastian ("He became a really, really popular subject in Medieval art because when he was tied to the tree and he's being shot with arrows, he's naked, and if there's anything Renaissance artists loved, it was an opportunity to paint nudes while still appearing devout. They loved naked, hot bodies, but also like to have their souls not damned, so naked religious figures was their answer to that kind of problem.").

Film enthusiast Troy Howarth joins Italian film expert Eugenio Ercolani on the second commentary, going deeper into the film's production history, its period setting (shortly after World War II), its home video history and to providing extensive discussions about the cast and the crew. They also place the film in the context of the market at the time (they point out that it is a rare 'rural giallo,' but also embraced a trope involving the killer that was fairly popular at the time), talk about the movie's locations ("If anybody out there is wondering, unfortunately, the actual house with the laughing windows is not with us any more. It was demolished not too long ago, actually, but yeah, it's not standing.") and analyze why it is considered one of the best entries in the genre: "In terms of just sheer skin-crawling, nightmare effectiveness, I don't know that there's a better finale in all of giallo cinema than this one." "It's definitely up there among the best endings to any giallo ever. There's definitely a crescendo throughout the film as the mystery starts surrounding the protagonist, but at the same time, it's not artificial."

Give a girl a gun and watch what happens

A director who has more strikeouts than scores, Abel Ferrara hit a home run with his cult hit, the 1980 **Ms. 45**, although it almost seems like an accident. Zoë Tamerlis is a New York City Garment District worker who is raped in an alley one night on her way home, and then raped again by a burglar once she gets into her apartment. The burglar has a gun, however, and drops it, so she manages to bonk him on the head and then shoot him. Either inspired or knocked off her rocker by the experience, she begins prowling the streets

and shooting any man who comes onto her, and it only really goes down hill when she starts shooting any man regardless of his attitude or actions. Perhaps the smartest choice Ferrara made was to have Tamerlis's character be a mute, communicating at work and with her landlord by handwritten notes. Otherwise, she is silent, and one of the film's first amusements is that the men trying to pick her up and eventually getting shot for their troubles never notice that she isn't speaking. One of the other things that happen, then, is there is no flaw in Tamerlis's performance, because she is not reciting dialog. The others around her may be struggling New York stage actors or amateurs, but however flamboyant or erratic their performances are, it does not matter, because her presence always anchors the screen. The 81-minute film is rather blatantly a feminist clarion call, or a lampoon of one, but the basic pleasure of seeing New York creeps getting shot with a reliable regularity is more than enough to carry a viewer along with unending satisfaction.

The film revels in its independently financed urban vibe, capturing the tone of the messier streets of New York in the Eighties with perfection, and it has always looked a little rough around the edges, so it comes as quite a surprise that the Arrow Video 4K Blu-ray release (UPC#760137185567, \$60) looks so clean and slick. Even when the lighting is weak, the image is still smooth and sharp. Fleshtones are accurate and hues are precise. Letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1, we saw one fleeting vertical line, but the picture is basically spotless. The monophonic sound is solidly delivered, and there are optional English subtitles. Arrow has also released a standard Blu-ray (UPC#760137185574, \$50), which essentially looks and sounds as nice as the 4K presentation, although the sharpness of the 4K format adds a subliminally visceral response to the viewing experience.

Both presentations come with a bland 19-minute poetic appreciation of the film and its themes, which is followed by a light years better 16-minute poetic appreciation of the film that begins by analyzing how New York City became iconic for street life violence in Seventies films, thoroughly explores the narrative and its meanings, and contains all sort of great clips; an 8-minute talk by Ferrara about his history with Tamerlis, her remarkable talents and her early burnout; a 10-minute interview with composer Joe Delia, talking about his early relationship with Ferrara ("One of Abel's great talents was to get funding for films. He started in that way, and I think that was great. That's why he's still making films today. People are funding them.") and how he came to score the film; an 11-minute interview with Ferrara's friend, Jack MacIntyre, who did a lot of jobs on the film (including appearing as a bum who discovers a hand in the trash), talking about the shoot, Ferrara and Tamerlis; a sweet little 6-minute piece about Tamerlis by her husband, Robert Lund, sharing photos and reminiscing about her ("About 2 or 3 weeks after Zoë's death, [her mother] scattered her ashes on the Seine under the Pont Arts, the Pont Des Arts, which crosses the Seine right in front of the Louvre. So in September '99 when I went over to Paris, I went to visit this spot beneath the Pont Des Arts, right on the Seine. It was late at night, 11:30-midnight, there were a few tourists walking behind me, but as I went down just to look at the water and crouched down, I swear it, a little rat came up and stopped right nearby me, and I just, it just touched my heart to think that the moment I went to look at the spot where her ashes had been scattered, a little rat came up almost as though he was greeting me. She would have been touched."); a terrific 6-minute 2011 piece by Tamerlis's mother, sculptor Barbara Lekberg, about Tamerlis's childhood, including fantastic flash cuts of excerpts from her journals and papers that are well worth freezing and stepping through, along with brief but tantalizing home movie clips with sound; a trailer; and a small collection of memorabilia in still frame.

An expert in rape revenge films and a huge Ferrara fan, Alexandra Heller-Nicholas, supplies a worthwhile commentary track, going over the full biographies of Ferrara and Tamerlis, providing an elaborate history of the film's production and discussing the philosophical intricacies of rape films and the feminist movement. "Obviously the question of muteness is pretty symbolically clear, here. It's a fairly undisguised way of communicating the defenseless, the broad kind of cultural and social refusal to listen to women speak about their experiences of sexual violence. The idea of being unheard is fairly straightforward here."

A holiday stocking stuffer

Can't figure out which Christmas movie to watch this year? Well, here's a way to watch all of them at once, or at least, all of the good ones. MVDVisual has released an *MVD Rewind Collection* Blu-ray, **Best Christmas Movies Ever!** (UPC#76013719016, \$30), a 93-minute 2024 telefilm documentary, first broadcast on The CW (but expanded for the Blu-ray), about Christmas movies, from the earliest silent film appearances of Santa Claus right up to **The Holdovers**. The clips are plentiful and gorgeously transferred, and the narration, by various minor celebrities—Brent Spiner, Denise Crosby, Barry Bostwick, and Mick Foley, among many others—talk about what the films and TV shows mean to them and how those films express the Christmas spirit. There is even a persuasive argument about **Die Hard**. Along with supplying joyful, key clips from all of the most beloved classics (try keeping a dry eye during the clip from **It's a Wonderful Life**), the film may also introduce you to intriguing movies you might not be entirely aware of (how did we ever miss *Violent Night*?) and reinforce the credentials of films you may have dismissed in the past (the segment on *Love Actually* is hefty). The director of **Jingle All the Way**, Brian Levant, talks about how the film was a flop, but that gradually, more and more people started contacting him to autograph used VHS copies of it, and he realized it had become a true cult film, while the director of **National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation**, Jeremiah Chechik, tells about how he took his granddaughter to see a revival screening of the film and she told the ticket taker he had directed it, so at the end of the film word had gotten out and the whole audience came over to congratulate him. There is a marvelous segment where the film specifically compares different versions of **A Christmas Carol** across the generations, and there are explorations of the different subgenres,

from romcoms to slasher films (gosh, we knew he directed the films, but we never put together the true significance of Bob Clark having made both **Black Christmas** and **A Christmas Story**). The one glaring omission is **The Shop around the Corner**. The bottom line, however, is no matter who you are, unless you grew up on Mars, we guarantee there will be a moment or a bunch of moments within the documentary that will touch the memory centers of your heart, and while from its title on down the film, directed by Mark A. Altman, may be a blatant attempt to cash in on becoming a holiday tradition in its own right, it deserves every penny it that gets tossed into its bucket.

The interviews are letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1 and the consistently slick film clips are in their original aspect ratios. Not only does the program have a nice 5.1-channel DTS audio track with a suitable, general dimensionality, but when the films in the clips are stereophonic, that, too, has been preserved. There are optional English subtitles. Along with a trailer, there is a marvelous 29-minute collection of deleted scenes that touches on a few more eccentric Christmas films (**Brazil**, anyone?) but is mostly clips of the presenters sharing their own memories of Christmas and the Christmas presents they received in their youths; and a 41-minute promotional event for the film at a convention with Altman summarizing the film's themes, showing several clips from the movie and then taking questions and suggestions for Christmas movies from the audience.

Altman and producer Scott Mantz supply a jolly commentary track, talking about the films, the contributors and their own Christmas memories, while also discussing the whole Christmas movie phenomenon (which began, of course, with families sitting around the television) and their love for movies in general. "We're so well versed in movies, and obviously Christmas movies is part of that, but you talk to people and you expect them to know as much as you do, at least about Christmas movies, and what surprises me is you realize that people are like, 'I think I saw that once.' And it's like, 'What?' You expect them to have these committed to memory, you know, like *The Bible*. It's surprising that for some people these movies don't mean as much as they do to a lot of us."

November Special Edition: Cheh Chang & Warner

Our Nov 25 Special Edition featured a collection of Cheh Chang films and a number of Warner *Archive Collection* movie star collections, and is available for free as a PDF file for download, which can be requested by writing Special Edition at DVDLaser@rocketmail.com. You can also sign up to get each month's Special Editions as a PDF file if you have a regular snail mail subscription, by writing the same email address. Those who already have an email subscription receive them automatically. If you have no access to a computer and want a hard copy, we unfortunately have to charge \$10 to cover our expenses for each individual Edition (\$15 outside of the U.S.). Please write to Special Edition %The DVD-Laser Disc Newsletter, PO Box 382, Glen Cove NY 11542, and include a check or credit card details.

The reviews featured include Arrow Video's five-platter Blu-ray collection, **Furious Swords And Fantastic Warriors: The Heroic Cinema Of Chang Cheh** (UPC#760137189527, \$105); Warner Bros. **Warner WB Archive Collection** Blu-ray collections **6-Film Collection: Errol Flynn**, also identified as **Errol Flynn Collection** (UPC#883929841615, \$60), **4-Film Collection: Elizabeth Taylor**, also known as **Elizabeth Taylor Collection** (UPC#883929840533, \$40), **6-Film Collection: Judy Garland**, also known as **Judy Garland Collection** (UPC#883929841202, \$60), **4-Film Collection: Gene Kelly**, also known as **Gene Kelly Collection** (UPC#883929841912, \$40), **4-Film Collection: Clark Gable**, also known as **Clark Gable Collection** (UPC#8839298450618, \$40), **4-Film Collection: Gary Cooper**, also known as **Gary Cooper Collection** (UPC#883929840779, \$40), **4-Film Collection: Joan Crawford**, also known as **John Crawford Collection** (UPC#883929841929, \$40), and **4-Film Collection: Greta Garbo**, also titled **Greta Garbo Collection** (UPC#883929841974, \$40), along with Warner's Blu-rays, **They Died with Their Boots On** (UPC#840418328637, \$25) and **The Master of Ballantrae** (UPC#840418337448, \$25); and Universal's release of **The Last of Robin Hood** on Blu-ray (UPC#840418335857, \$20) and on DVD (UPC#025192262241, \$15).

DVD News

CRITERION CORNER: The Criterion Collection has reissued their 4K release of **The Wiz** (Jul 25) with an additional 5.1-channel DTS track (UPC#71551532-4915, \$50), replicating the original audio track on the film's 70mm release, which is both sharper and more energized than the disc's Dolby Atmos Track. The same is true of the standard Blu-ray included in the release. Criterion will be releasing Delmer Daves's **3:10 to Yuma** in 4K format featuring interviews with Elmore Leonard and Glenn Ford's son and biographer, Peter Ford. Kiyoshi Kurosawa's **Cloud** will have an interview with Kurosawa. Sidney Lumet's **Network** will be in 4K and come with a Lumet commentary; **Paddy Chayefsky: Collector of Words** (2025), a feature-length documentary about the screenwriter by Matthew Miele; and **The Making of Network** (2006), a six-part documentary by Laurent Bouzereau. Jacques Tati's **PlayTime** will be in 4K and will include an introduction by Terry Jones; three selected-scene commentaries, by film historian Philip Kemp, theater director Jérôme Deschamps, and Jacques Tati expert Stéphane Goudet; **Like Home**, a visual essay by Goudet; **Tatville**, a 1967 television program featuring an interview with Tati from the set of **PlayTime**; **Beyond PlayTime**, a short documentary featuring behind-the-scenes footage from the production; an interview with script supervisor Sylvette Baudrot; an audio interview with Tati from the U.S. debut of **PlayTime** at the 1972 San Francisco International Film Festival; **Tati Story**, a short film by Goudet on the life and career of Tati; **Monsieur Hulot's Work**, a 1976 television program about Tati's beloved character; and **Cours du soir** (1967), a short film written by and starring Tati. Joel and Ethan Coen's **The Man Who Wasn't There** will be in 4K and will feature a commentary with the Coens and Billy Bob Thornton; a conversation between the Coens and author Megan Abbott; an archival interview with Roger Deakins; a short making-of documentary; and deleted scenes. The **Eclipse Series** release of **Lubitsch Musicals** (Nov 20), which has **The Love Parade**, **Monte Carlo**, **The Smiling Lieutenant** and **One Hour with You**, will be reissued as a Blu-ray set. John Cassavetes's **A Woman**

under the Influence is being given the 4K treatment and will be accompanied by a commentary by sound recordist and composer Bo Harwood and camera operator Michael Ferris; a conversation between Gena Rowlands and Peter Falk; and an audio interview with Cassavetes by film historians Michel Ciment and Michael Wilson.

NEW IN BLU: The following titles have recently been released on Blu-ray—Garbage Night 3, Glitch Ditch 66, Glitch Ditch 67, Glitch Ditch 68, Glitch Ditch 69, Glitch Ditch 70, Glitch Ditch 71, Glitch Ditch 72, Glitch Ditch 73, Glitch Ditch 74, Glitch Ditch 75, Glitch Ditch 76, Glitch Ditch 77, Of Dice and Men 2, Star Shark Squad (Acid Bath); True Crime Triple Ripper (AGFA); All the Moons, Moloch (AMD); CODA, The Morning Show (Apple); I'm Livin' It, Youth (Bayview); Super Bowl Champions The 2024 Philadelphia Eagles (BD4); Quantum Leap of Faith (Bill Zebub); Backyard Bloodbath (Bleeding Skull); Bone Lake, Spinal Tap II The End Continues (Bleeker Street); Red Surf, Xeno (Blue Fox); Some Like It Rare (Brainstorm); Freakier Friday, The Roses (Buena Vista); Coexistence, The Damned Lands, On the Day, Reputation (Burning Bulb); AJ Goes to the Dog Park (Cartuna); Café Flesh, Eva Man/The Return of Eva Man, The Man Who Could Cheat Death, Purana Mandir The Haunted Temple, Ruby, Skinheads, Sleepless (CAV); A Hyena in the Safe (Celluloid Dreams); Creepshow Complete Series (Cinedigm); Battle of the Bulge Wunderland, Bleeding, The Incarnation, Red Stone (Cineverse); Aesop's Fables The 1920s V.1 (Classifix); Lindsey Stirling Home for the Holidays (Concord); Abbas Kiarostami Early Shorts and Features, Burden of Dreams, El, Eyes Wide Shut, Hell's Angels (Criterion); Inflatable Sex Doll of the Wastelands, Lev Atamanov's The Snow Queen/The Scarlet Flower/The Key: Treasures Of Soviet Animation 2, Mutant Aliens, Sirius (Deaf Crocodile); Coyotes, Together (Decal); The Demon's Rook (Dekalog); TT Isle of Man 2025 Official Review (Duke); Skull World (ETR); Until the Light Takes Us (Factory 25); Kansas City Confidential, The Red House (Film Masters); Camilla, The Columnist, Lady Chatterley's Lover, Roh (Film Movement); Beau Geste (Film Preserve); Cutter's Club, Gingerdead Man vs. Evil Bong, Meridian, Subspecies 4 Bloodstorm (Full Moon); Over Maine Complete Collection (Gemini); Looking through Water (Good Deed); What We Hide (Gravitas); Jimmy and Stiggs (Horror Section); House on Eden (Image); Don't Answer, Seeds (Indican); Evil Unearthed, Lost Phoenix, Soon (Indie Rights); The Barbarians, Brute 1976, Creepy, French Noir Collection II, Grass/Chang, Nightmare, The Gracie Allen Murder Case, I'm George Lucas A Connor Ratliff Story, Mixed Blood, Monk in Pieces, No Wave The Underground Films of Beth B and Scott B, Riefenstahl, The Woman Chaser (Kino); Are We Just Friends?, The Blade Cuts Deeper, Dream Story, The Eye and the Wall, Unshattered (Leomark); The Long Walk (Lionsgate); No Hamburg No Beatles (Maverick); Berberian Sound Studio (MPI); Secret Mall Apartment (Music Box); The Boys Next Door, The Cat, Dead Sleep, Ed Kemper, Eleven Days Eleven Nights 2, Harley Flanagan Wired for Chaos, The Island Closest to Heaven, The Jester 2, Laurel & Hardy The Definitive Restorations V.2, The Ogre of Athens, Out of Season, Sisters, SS Experiment Love Camp, Wicked Games Three Films by Robert Hossein, Young Blondes Stalked and Murdered (MVD); Splitsville (Neon); Light of the World (Ocean Avenue); Universal Language (Oscilloscope); Ken Burns The American Revolution, The Naked Gun, Yellowstone Complete Series (Paramount); Lost at Christmas (Random); A mata Negra The Black Forest, Advent, Alien Goddess, The Amazing Adventures of the Living Corpse, Anna and the Dead, Apocalypse Love, Asian Persuasion, Asura Girl, Astaroth, The Attic, Bad Blood, Bakerman, Blue Family, Callas, The Cinema A Brief History of World Cinema, Cult of Shadow People, Dark Asylum, Dark Summer, Elsa's Land, Eyes of Dread, Face the Music Greyson Grey, Flesh of My Flesh, From Zero to I Love You, The Halloween Double Trouble Horror Show, Hideous Bog Monster, Hobo with a Trash Can, Johnny Z, Katemica, The Last Grind, 1944 The Longest Days, Nosferatu The Real Story, Nuremberg The Real Story, Paper Champions, Rumpelstiltskin, Scarlet Winter, 7 Boxes, Seventh Soldier, That Alien Sound, Underneath An Anthology of Terror, A Very British Christmas, Vinnie Plays Vegas, Wicked The Real Story, The World Is a Beautiful Place and I'm Not Afraid to Die, Yesterday (Rising Sun); The Killer Must Kill Again (Rustblade); Primitive War, Red Sonja (Samuel Goldwyn); Evilmaker Double Feature (Saturn's Core); Due Justice, House of Darkness, The James Dean Story, The Last Resort, Renegades, Ruthless, Shepherd (Shoreline); Caught Stealing, Eleanor the Great (Sony); The Gore Trilogy, The Great Buddha Arrival, Hoshi 35, Monster Seafood Wars, Shark's of the Corn, The Shroud, Space Monster Wangmagwi, The Tim Ritter Collection, Video Psycho (SRS); Irresistible (Umbrella); The Americas Complete Series, Anemone, Downton Abbey The Grand Finale, Gabby's Dollhouse The Movie, Happy's Place Season 1, Him, Mr. Right, Out of Africa, Thank You for Your Service, Walk of Shame, Werewolf The Beast Among Us (Universal); Pet Shop Days (Utopia); Black Creek, What Remains (Vantage); Marley's Revenge The Monster Movie (VHSHitfest); At the Circus, The Bride Came C.O.D., Chandi Chowk to China, The Conjuring Last Rites, I Love You Again, The Iron Mistress, It's Love I'm After, The Miracle, Rick & Morty Season 8, Silver River, 10, Two and a Half Men Complete Series (Warner); Christmas in Mistletoe, Compulsion, Daniela Forever, The Hyperions, The Old Woman with the Knife, Prisoner of War, Out of the Nest, The Royal Cat, We're Not Safe Here (Well Go); The Disco Exorcist (Wild Eye); Somnium (Yellow Eye)

NEW IN 4K: The following titles have recently been released in 4K format—CODA (Apple); Spinal Tap II The End Continues (Bleeker Street); Cheech & Chong's Last Movie (Busnell); Café Flesh, The Man Who Could Cheat Death, Ruby, Sleepless (CAV); The Beastmaster, A Better Tomorrow Trilogy, Snowden, Spotlight (Cinedigm); The Breakfast Club, Burden of Dreams, El, Eyes Wide Shut, Hell's Angels (Criterion); Together (Decal); Jimmy and Stiggs (Horror Section); Abbott and Costello Meet Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein, Abbott and Costello Meet the Invisible Man, Abbott and Costello Meet the Mummy, Airport The Complete 4-Film Collection, Alec Guinness Masterpiece Collection, Howards End, Issa Harem Keeper of the Oil Sheiks, Mixed Blood (Kino); Ultraman 4K Discovery (Mill Creek); Depraved (MPI); The Boys Next Door, Eleven Days Eleven Nights 2, The Mask, Outland, Red Planet, Sisters, SS Experiment Love Camp, Tromeo & Juliet (MVD); The Naked Gun, The Naked Gun (Paramount); The Count of Monte Cristo, Primitive War (Samuel Goldwyn); Caught Stealing, The Luc Besson Collection, Rent (Sony); The Americas, Anemone, Downton Abbey The Grand Finale, Him, Pride & Prejudice, U-571 (Universal); The Conjuring 4 Last Rites, One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest (Warner)

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Current Attractions

The following titles recently appeared for the first time:

Advent (Rising Sun)
The Adventures of Secret Mailman (BMG)
Aesop's Fables The 1520s V.1 (Classical)
All I Want for Christmas Is You (Vision)
All's Fair in Love and Advertising (Cinegrid)
Alpha Male (Rising Sun)
The Amazing Adventures of the Living Corpse (Rising Sun)
American Moments The American Rocker (Wondscape)
Amongst the Wolves (Brainstorm)
An Aspen Christmas Conspiracy (BMG)
Anemone (Universal)
Anna and the Dead (Rising Sun)
Anomalies 2 Kill a Prophet (Deskpop)
Anomalies 3 Killer Tapes (Deskpop)
Anomalies 3 Killer Tapes (Deskpop)
Anomalies Death Island (Deskpop)
Are We Still Friends? (Leomark)
Argh: The Quest for the Golden Dragon Skull (Leomark)
Asian Persuasion (Rising Sun)
Asteroid Vixens (Frolic)
Bad Blood (Rising Sun)
Bad Men Must Bleed (Vantage)
Be My Valentine (Cinegrid)
Beneath the Light (Vision)
The Bible Collection Esther (Vision)
The Bible Collection Genesis (Vision)
The Bible Collection Jeremiah (Vision)
The Bible Collection Jesus (Vision)
The Bible Collection Solomon (Vision)
Big Kill (Cineverse)
Black Creek (Vantage)
Black Panthers of WWII (Kino)
The Blade Cuts Deeper (Leomark)
Blue Carbon Nature's Hidden Power (Green Planet)
Blue Family (Rising Sun)
Bone Lake (Bleaker Street)
Breaking 10 (Buffalo 8)
Bullets and Blueberries (Kino)
Burden of Dreams (Criterion)
Calas (Rising Sun)
The Caller (Unicorn)
Caught Stealing (Sony)
The Caller (Leomark)
Crestal Seasons 1 & 2 (Kino)
Chasing Waterfalls (Cinegrid)
Christmas in Conway / Just in Time for Christmas (Cinegrid)
Christmas in Mistletoe (Well Go)

A Christmas Romance (Dreamscape)
The Cinema A Brief History of World Cinema (Rising Sun)
Close Encounters Squad Area 51 (BMG)
CODA (Apple)
Cold Road (V4)
Come and Get Me (V4)
Compulsion (Well Go)
The Conjuring Last Rights (Warner)
Countdown to Christmas 6-Movie Collection (Cinegrid)
Coyotes (Decal)
The Creeps (Socal)
The Creeps II (Socal)
Cult of the Shadow People (Rising Sun)
Cyber Heist (Wownow)
The Damned Lands (Burning Bulb)
Daniela Forever (Well Go)
Dark Asylum (Rising Sun)
Dark Summer (Rising Sun)
Dater's Handbook / When Sparks Fly (Cinegrid)
Deep Roots The Art and Music of Bill Steiner and Friends (MUG Shot)
Devil's Wasteland (Rising Sun)
The Dick Tracy Show The Crime Stopper (Universal)
The Disinfect (MPI)
Don't Answer (Indican)
Downtown Abbey The Grand Finale (Universal)
Dream Story (Leomark)
Due Justice (Shoreline)
East of Wall (Sony)
The Ed Sullivan Show A Classic Christmas (Sofa)
Eden (Veritas)
Eleanor the Great (Sony)
Elsa's Land (Rising Sun)
The Eye and the Wall (Leomark)
Face the Music Greyson Grey (Rising Sun)
The Fight Inside (Deskpop)
The Final Wish (Cineverse)
The Finnish Line / 'Tis the Season to Be Irish / My Sweet Austrian Holiday (Cinegrid)
Five Pillars (YinYin)
Flesh of My Flesh (Rising Sun)
Forgiveness Girl (BMG)
The Forgotten Carols (BMG)
Freakier Friday (Buena Vista)
From Zero to I Love You (Rising Sun)
Gabby's Dollhouse The Movie (Universal)
Garbage Night 3 The Ghost of Chibusa (Enoki)
Ghost Project (Unicorn)
Girls Town (Film Movement)
Glitch Ditch 66 (Acid Bath)
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Go for Broke (International)
The Good Witch's Family (Cineverse)
Go on of the Lagoon (Disrupt)
A Gunfighter's Deal (BMG)
Halloween Double Trouble Horror Show (Rising Sun)
Hank's Christmas Wish 3 Elvis Lives (BMG)
Happy's Place Season 1 (Universal)
Harley Flanagan Wred for Chaos (MVD)
Harry Chapin Cat's in the Cradle The Song That Changed Our Lives (MVD)
Hidesog Bog Monster (Rising Sun)
Him (Universal)
Hobo with a Trash Can (Rising Sun)
The Holiday Circle (V4)
Home Sweet Hell (International)
Hope's Hollywood Christmas (Deskpop)
House of Darkness (Shoreline)
How Do They Make It? Season 1 (Dreamscape)
The Hypnotists (Well Go)
I'll Be There (Buffalo 8)
In the Hour of Victory (YinYin)
In the Starlight (Dreamscape)
Incol (SRS)
The Island Closest to Heaven (MVD)
It's All about Love (Universal)
Jim vs. The Future (BMG)
Jingle Bell Run / My Christmas Family Tree (Cinegrid)
Johnny Z (Rising Sun)
Just the Way You Are (Cinegrid)
Ken Burns The American Revolution (Paramount)
The Killer Must Kill Again (Rustblade)
Kryk Losing Control (Freestyle)
The Last Glory of Troy (Sinister)
The Last Grind (Rising Sun)
The Last Resort (Shoreline)
Li Santa (Dreamscape)
Light of the World (Ocean Avenue)
Lookdown Lovers (Dreamscape)
The Long Walk (Lonsgate)
Looking Through Water (Good Deed)
Lost Phoenix (Indie Rights)
Love at Christmas (Random)
Love in Store (Cinegrid)

Love in the Sun (Cinegrid)
Love, Brooklyn (Kino)
Love, Take Two (Cinegrid)
Lucky Christmas (Cinegrid)
Maigret (Paramount)
Making It Big Dreams on a Small Budget (Wild Eye)
Maybe Baby (Universal)
Meddling Mom (Cinegrid)
Men of War (Decal)
Merry Little Baby (Maverick)
A Midnight Kiss (Cinegrid)
Miracle on 34 Street The Made-for-TV Versions (Gemini)
Miss South Pacific (Cinegrid)
Beauty and the Sea (YinYin)
Mix up in the Mediterranean (Cinegrid)
Mk Ultra (Cineverse)
Monk in Pieces (Kino)
The Moon Is in Aquarius (Deskpop)
The Morning Show Seasons 1 & 2 (Apple)
Mr. Buzzkill (Deskpop)
Music City Mistletoe (BMG)
My Daddy Is in Heaven (Cineverse)
The Naked Gun (Paramount)
Sex Diva (Breaking Glass)
Shelby American The Carol Shelby Story (Alan Ferguson)
Shepherd (Shoreline)
Signed, Sealed and Delivered Truth Be Told (Cinegrid)
Simple Simon (International)
Sle Usen An Emma Fielding Mystery (Cinegrid)
1944 The Longest Days (Rising Sun)
Nightmare Radio The Night Stalker (Rising Sun)
No Chains No Masters (Film Movement)
No Hamburg No Beatles (Maverick)
Nosferatu The Real Story (Rising Sun)
The O. Henry Playhouse Complete Series (Classixtv)
Of Dice and Men 2 (Rustblade)
On the Day (Burning Bulb)
The One That Got Away (AMID)
Out of Season (MVD)
Out of the Nest (Well Go)
Out of Time (Freestyle)
Painkiller (Cineverse)
Paper Champions (Rising Sun)
The Partisan (Brainstorm)
Polycarp (Vision)
Pretty Young Thing (International)
Primitive War (Samuel Goldwyn)
Princess for a Day (BMG)
Prisoner of War (Well Go)

Rag Tale (Giant)
Red Sonja (Samuel Goldwyn)
Red Stone (Cineverse)
Real Encounters (X4)
A Remarkable Place to Die (AMID)
Remy & Arletta (Synergetic)
Renegades (Shoreline)
Reputation (Burning Bulb)
Rick and Morty Season 8 (Warner)
Rienfenthal (Kino)
The Roses (Buena Vista)
Roux the Day A Gourmet Detective Mystery (Cinegrid)
The Royal Cat (Well Go)
Rumpelstiltskin (Rising Sun)
The Russell Girl (Cinegrid)
Ruthless (Shoreline)
Ruthless Bastards (MPI)
Samurai Fur (Well Go)
Sardar Winter (Rising Sun)
Secret Wall Apartment (Music Box)
Secrets of Great British Castles (Paramount)
Sense & Sensibility A Modern Retelling (Indie)
7 Sins (BMG)
Seventh Soldier (Rising Sun)
Sex Diva (Breaking Glass)
Shelby American The Carol Shelby Story (Alan Ferguson)
Shepherd (Shoreline)
Signed, Sealed and Delivered Truth Be Told (Cinegrid)
Simple Simon (International)
Sle Usen An Emma Fielding Mystery (Cinegrid)
1944 The Longest Days (Rising Sun)
Nightmare Radio The Night Stalker (Rising Sun)
No Chains No Masters (Film Movement)
No Hamburg No Beatles (Maverick)
Nosferatu The Real Story (Rising Sun)
The O. Henry Playhouse Complete Series (Classixtv)
Of Dice and Men 2 (Rustblade)
On the Day (Burning Bulb)
The One That Got Away (AMID)
Out of Season (MVD)
Out of the Nest (Well Go)
Out of Time (Freestyle)
Painkiller (Cineverse)
Paper Champions (Rising Sun)
The Partisan (Brainstorm)
Polycarp (Vision)
Pretty Young Thing (International)
Primitive War (Samuel Goldwyn)
Princess for a Day (BMG)
Prisoner of War (Well Go)

To Grandmother's House We Go (Warner)
Together (Neon)
Tommy (International)
Tropical Heat (Full Moon)
True American Horror (Unicorn)
TT Isle of Man 2025 Official Review (Duke)
Tuvalu (Synergetic)
2000 Metals to Andriki (Paramount)
Under Fire (Vertical)
Universal Language (Scilloscope)
Unlocking Christmas / The Christmas Charade / Operation Nutcracker (Cinegrid)
Unshattered (Leomark)
A Valentine's Match (Cinegrid)
The Very Best of The Ed Sullivan Show 1 Unforgettable Performances (Sofa)
The Very Best of The Ed Sullivan Show 2 The Greatest Entertainers (Sofa)
A Very British Christmas (Rising Sun)
Very, Very Valentine (Cinegrid)
Victoria (International)
Vivante Minelli Movies That Stay with You (Deskpop)
Vinnie Vegas Vegas (Rising Sun)
We Steal Secrets The Story of WikiLeaks (Universal)
We're Not Safe Here (Well Go)
Wedding Bells (Cinegrid)
The Wedding Party (Deskpop)
Welcome to My Side (International)
Were the World Mine (Wolfe)
What Remains (Vantage)
What We Hide (Gravitas)
Why Didn't They Ask Evans? (Apple)
Wicked The Real Story (Rising Sun)
Wildflower The Documentary (Buffalo 8)
Winning The Racing Life of Paul Newman (Chassy)
Winter Castle (Cinegrid)
Without a Doubt God Is Always There (BMG)
Always There (BMG)
Year One (Freestyle)
Yellowstone Complete Series (Paramount)
Yes Repeat No (Freestyle)
*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:
→ 14 Ghosts
→ Glitch Ditch 78

From Affirm:
Soul on Fire

From All Channel:
The Girl Who Cried Her Eyes Out

From Alpha:
→ The Funny Company V.3
→ Follow That Man V.8
→ The Reverb of Romance
→ The Lady's List

From AMD:
Harry Wild Season 4 Irish Blood
→ The Walking Dead Daryl Dixon Season 3
→ From Angel: Testament Season 1
→ The Senior
→ Truth & Treason
→ Sen Sen

From Blue Fox:
→ Omniscient
→ Reader: The Prophecy
→ From BMG: Without a Doubt
→ God Is Always There
→ The Ground beneath Our Feet
→ The First Hymn
→ Psycho Therapy
→ The Shallow Tale of a Writer Who Decided to Write about a Serial Killer

From Buffalo 8:
→ Rule of Thirds
→ Negligence
→ From Cinegrid: Royal 9-Movie Collection
→ Mystery 9-Movie Collection
→ Robin and the Hoods
→ Killing Faith
→ Santa Tell Me/Findings Santa
→ The Christmas Sweetest
→ Following Yonder Star/The Gift of Peace
→ Private Princess Christmas
→ Polar Opposites/Winter Love Story/Winter in Vail/Baby It's Cold Inside/Hearts of Winter/Love in

Wonderland
From Cineverse:
Jingle Bell Run
Adventures of Secret Mailman
Killing Faith
From Criterion:
David Byrne's American Utopia
Caught by the Tides
Captain Blood
→ Cloud
From Dead Letter:
Soon
From Decal:
→ Under the Stars
→ Code 3
→ Icefall
From Deskpop:
From Improv to Icon
The Journey of Mike Nichols
Lady in the Locket
→ The Last Movie
→ They Ever Made
→ American Schemers
→ Bad Faith
→ Cry of Silence
→ Honor Student
→ M30 Oxy
From Digicom:
→ Murder on Flight 502
From District 22:
The Wedding Party
From Drafthouse:
Thank You Very Much
From Dreamscape:
Christmas with a View
Dead Voices
An English Haunting
Falling for Daisy
Gold Betrayal
Bikini Blue
Buoyancy
A Witches' Ball
Christmas with a Prince
→ A Royal Baby
Finite The Climate of Change
Elipse
The Exchange
Maddy the Model
Christmas Wedding Planner
The Alpha Test
The Price of Death
→ Endurance
→ Eternal Sky
→ Wild but True
Season 1
From Film Movement:
→ A World Apart
→ Israel Palestine on Swedish TV 1958-1989
→ Animal Tales of Christmas Magic
From First Run:
E. T. 1982 - Eileen
Gray and the House By the Sea
→ The Making of a Japanese
From Freestyle:
→ Capturing Kennedy
→ Vindication Swim
→ Diano Murjer and 1978
→ The Thistle in the Kiss
→ The Mighty Oaks
From Full Moon:
Sinful Strippers Pack
→ Model Behavior 3
DVD Movie Collection
From GC:
Hope's Hollywood Christmas
From Giant:
→ The Making of Plus One

From Grizzly Chihuahua:
Princess for a Day
From Holmes:
Jim vs. The Future
From Henline:
Polycarp
From Indican:
→ Taping
From Indiepix:
Infinite Summer
→ The Nude
From International:
Black Magic
Death Ride
Demon Hunter
A Place Called Silence
Who's the Suspect
Dark Planet
Table for Six 2
→ Sex Ritual
→ The Rage
→ Ice 3
→ Possession
→ Witchbitch
From ITN:
→ Taken from Rio Bravo
From Jinga:
Darklands
From Ketchup:
→ Afterburn
From Kino:
→ Aler
→ A Few Feet Away
→ The Milky Way
→ A Few Feet Away
→ Koin 75
→ ReEntry
→ Home Free
→ Put Your Soul on Your Hand and Walk
From Legacy:
Holiday in the Hamptons
Christmas at Maxwell's
Christmas for Three
From Lionsgate:
→ Good Fortune
From Lost Sheep:
Sugarhouse
From Magnolia:
Rabbit Trap
A Savage Art
→ Good Night and Good Luck Live from Broadway
→ Plainclothes
→ It's Never Over
Jeff Buckley
From Meatball:
Without a Doubt
God Is Always There
From MPI:
The Complete Lucille Ball Specials
→ No Dogs Allowed
→ Sandbag Dam
→ Mount Season
From Mubi:
Lurker
From Music Box:
Kill the Jockey
→ Naked Ambition
→ A Little Prayer
From MVD:
The John Wayne Gacy Murders
The Rubinos Live at Rockpalast 1978
Earth Quake Live at Rockpalast 1978
Young Blondes
Stalked and Murdered
Rockers
Afraid?
→ El Cuerpazo Del Delito
→ Love & Soul A Heart Story
→ Emergent City
→ Vampire Zombies from Space

→ Swastika
From Neon:
→ Shelby Oaks
From Northrup:
An Aspen Christmas
Conspiracy
From Paramount:
The Great Escaper
Becoming Thurgood
→ Kissinger
→ Royal Flying Doctor Service Season 3
From Pinnacle:
→ Karen Kingsbury's The Christmas Ring
→ The Blind The Phil Robertson Memorial Edition
From Pop Twist:
→ Beyond Graceland
→ Lady Smith Black Mambazo
From Quiver:
London Calling
From Reel Vault:
→ Pointed Heels
→ King Kung Fu
From Rising Sun:
→ Clutch
→ The Dragon's Gate
→ Hitting Licks
→ I Hear Monsters
→ Movies
→ Joke of Justice
→ A Light Outside
→ The Plastic Men
→ Rock Paper Death
→ South of the River
→ Trapped Alone
→ Vanished
→ Whisky Run
From RJ:
A Gunfighter's Deal
From Rob Diamond:
Lady in the Locket
Forgiveness Girl
From Rustblade:
→ Drag Me to Fest
V.2 Tales from the Italian Horror Festival
From Sandpiper:
Stagecoach
Peter Benchley's Creature
My Summer Story
Rock-a-Doodle
Yours Mine and Ours
Return to Me
→ Zapped
→ The Meteor Man
→ Mannequin
→ Dirty Work
→ Shad the Movie
→ My Summer Story
→ Return to Me
→ Peter Benchley's Creature
→ Yours Mine and Ours
From Social:
→ The Dark House of Mystery
→ Return to the Dark House of Mystery
From SRS:
The Great Buddha Arrival
The Rite Rite
The Rite Rite
House Shark
From 360:
Forgotten Mysteries of the 18th Century
Innovators of Black History V.2
Time-Lapse NY
Ancient Symbols 3
Great Mysteries of Akhenaten
Blu-ray The Art of the Disc

From Universal:
→ Law and Order Complete Series (104 platters)
→ Bugonia
→ Black Phone 2
→ Stitch Head
From Vantage:
→ Camera
→ Haunted Heart
→ Sugar Baby
From Vertical:
Stolen Girl
→ Dead of Winter
From Vision:
→ The Good Fight
→ Batman Gotham by Gaslight
Beyond Paradise Season 3
→ The Clique
→ Cradle 2 The Grave
→ Critics 4
→ Falling Skies Complete Series (15 platters)
→ The Fox and the Child
The Gilded Age Season 3
→ Green Lantern First Flight
→ The Handmaid's Tale Season 6
The Handmaid's Tale Complete Series (20 platters)
→ One Battle after Another
Silent Witness Season 28
Sister Boniface
Mysteries Season 4
→ Suicide Squad Hell to Pay
→ Superman vs. The Elite
Tom & Jerry The Golden Era
Anthology 1940-1950s
From Well Go:
Beast of War
→ Altered
From Wild Eye:
Sharks N Da Hood
The Nutty Network
MyNameIsAby
Anonymous
→ You're All Doomed
Darbe's Dream House
→ Arachno
→ Apocalypse Bigfoot
→ Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Shark
From Wondscape:
NASA Moments JPL and the Beginning of the Space Age
→ NASA Moments JPL and the Space Age
Mission to Mars
From Wownow:
Reversible Reality
From X4:
Without Warning
Drink and Be Merry
→ The Red Admiral
→ The Bezuindenhout
→ Boring
From YinYin:
→ Last Flight
→ Legacy
→ My Name Is Nobody
→ To Kill for Love
→ Path to the Dream
→ Even Trade
→ Caught in the Game
→ The White Moss
→ Vlado
→ Goodbye America
→ Ghostfinders