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Flawless romance

A flawless 2012 Media Asia romantic comedy, Johnny To's **Romancing in Thin Air**, is being released on Blu-ray by Radiance (UPC#76-0137206385, \$40). The film captivates the viewer from the very first scene and never lets up as the characters all grow and blossom across its 111-minute running time. Louis Koo is a famous movie star who proposes to his costar on live television at an awards ceremony. Their marriage is also a media event, except that just as they are about to tie the knot, the actress's old boyfriend shows up and Koo's character is left at the altar. He later awakens from a drunken bender in an inn nestled in the mountains during the off season, where the widowed proprietor, played by Sammi Cheng, nurses him back to health. There are a bevy of marvelous secondary characters and plenty of witty plot turns to stretch everything out with laughter and tears until the final frames, but perhaps even more importantly, there is not one moment where the film takes too long to belabor a story point or shifts into humors that are not universally appreciated. The editing is as terrific as the performances, and the film never falters. Not only is it a perfect date movie, but it is wonderfully fulfilling entertainment even if you live as a hermit. It seems that Hollywood is incapable of making movies like this any more, but it is a good thing others can pick up the slack.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1. The image is sharp and hues are precise. The 5.1-channel DTS sound has a rewarding dimensionality, and despite being sung in Cantonese, the film's songs—yes, the characters sing, as well—are also universally appealing. There are optional English subtitles; an outstanding 28-minute summary of To's films with many mouthwatering clips and stills that will have you emptying your bank account to amass his work (while To's action films are exhilarating and classics in their own right, his romantic comedies can be seen as rivaling those of Preston Sturges); a good 15-minute interview with co-screenwriter Ryker Chan, who talks about his thought process in developing the plot; 25 minutes of behind-the-scenes footage that show how specific stunts and camera movements were achieved; 9 minutes of brief promotional featurettes; and a trailer.

Asian film expert Dylan Cheung supplies a very good commentary track, talking about the careers of the cast and crew, the film's production history (many of the scenes were made up as the filmmakers went along, including the discovery that it is difficult to breath at high altitudes), To's artistry and his uneasy relationship with the Chinese government, and the nature of Hong Kong romantic features. He also deconstructs the film as it goes along and offers up the movie's multiple layers of meaning in his summary. "**Romancing in Thin Air** is more than just a duality of love and loss, and how they feed into each other. **Romancing in Thin Air** is an artist trying to heal himself, trying to heal the ones he cares for the most, trying to heal those around him. It is the artist trying to heal his audience. **Romancing in Thin Air** is an act of love itself."

An American tragedy

Artists need discipline, but it is a many-faceted need. Look at the greatest works in any artform, and they represent artists who have pushed their creativity to the limits of their capabilities, often representing a point beyond the capabilities of others. But art is also about knowing when to stop, when to revise the last note or apply the last brushstroke. Because filmmaking represents such enormous investments, the financial source often wields a powerful disciplinary guidance over the film artist. The director and the director's collaborators must work within a set of expenditures and create a film that has an economically favorable running time so that the investment can be earned back in theatrical play. The advent of home video loosened the discipline that has long been required of running times. Sometimes, it is for the best—the film director submits a work that conforms to what was required for theatrical exhibition and the film (hopefully) succeeded, but then home video allowed the director to present an alternate, more elaborate motion picture that would probably not have had the same opportunity to establish itself in the theatrical marketplace, but is clearly a more satisfying and richer work of art.

There are even films that have won the Oscar for Best Picture but play better with longer 'Director's Cut' versions. Gradually, however, the general discipline of holding a film to a sensible running time has been slipping, and the enthusiasm of streaming services, who are less concerned about running times since viewers can start and stop when they please, have been tempting artists to discard the discipline they actually need to make a good film.

Martin Scorsese ought to know better. He has long been an extremely disciplined filmmaker, and he is steeped in the history of films, so he knows what happened with Joseph Von Sternberg, to cite one prominent example of a director who lacked discipline. But Scorsese's last two movies, **The Irishman** (Dec 20) and now his 2024 **Killers of the Flower Moon**, a Paramount and Apple TV production released as a three-platter 4K Blu-ray by Paramount and The Criterion Collection (UPC#715515331418, \$50), were not just movies that ran over 3 hours each, they were movies that really couldn't accommodate theatrical play, but hardly qualified as a limited series, either. It is as if the idea of streaming has freed him, when in reality it has exposed him to unwise choices.

Killers begins promisingly, with period production designs from Jack Fisk and an appealing romance between a WWI vet, played by Leonardo DiCaprio, and an oil-rich Osage Native American played by Lily Gladstone, and even presents a really terrific performance from Robert De Niro, as the uncle of DiCaprio's character, who plots to steal all of the oil fortunes from the Osage people, with a twinkle in his eye. Set in Oklahoma, not only is the film based upon a true story, its history was replicated previously in Mervyn LeRoy's episodic **The F.B.I. Story** (Sep 06) with pretty much the crimes and even the same character names (although that version only took up a half hour of the film). The rules are laid out clearly—the Indians do not have full control of their own money and must get permission from the government whenever they want to spend it—and the blend of intrigue and romance in the quasi-exotic setting makes you think you could be watching a masterpiece. But DiCaprio's character is dense, and not in a good way. While Gladstone and De Niro are so charismatic that they transcend the emotional and moral limitations of their characters, DiCaprio is trapped in his, with none of the charm he has brought to complex characters in the past. With his awful Twenties haircut, puffed out cheeks and phony bad teeth, he has nothing to work with, and when he starts really collaborating with De Niro's character, he loses what remaining sympathy he has generated. The final hour of the film is bleak, static and depressing, especially after DiCaprio's character is jailed, and the thrills that the film conveyed during its opening scenes are lost. The film would have been much better if it had been reconceived with Gladstone or even De Niro as its central character, and it would also have been better if it was much shorter than its 206-minute running time. Scorsese attempts to incorporate Native-American culture in the narrative, but for the most part it feels like an afterthought, nominally inserted at times to validate the movie's quest for accuracy. The film is beautifully executed and the performances are excellent, but the project is wrongheaded, and not even the lovely 4K transfer can rescue its second half.

The presentation is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1. The picture on the standard Blu-ray platter that has also been included in the set is mildly grainy, and while hues on the 4K presentation are a little paler, the differences are less significant than the loss in smoothness and sharpness that the standard Blu-ray succumbs to. The drama is less taxing thanks to the crispness of the image. Curiously, like **The Irishman**, the computer aided visual effects are awkwardly applied and undercut the otherwise realistic atmosphere the film establishes.

The Dolby Atmos sound provides an enveloping, crisply delivered audio environment. There is an alternate audio track that describes the action ("Ernest wears a suit and bowtie. Molly wears a structured coat with golden buttons and shoulder tassels.") and optional English subtitles. The Native-American languages heard in the film are translated with permanent English subtitles.

Tragedy (Continued)

The third standard Blu-ray platter holds a number of special features. The segments do not start up where they left off if playback is terminated. Along with a trailer, there is a brief minute-long look at artist Noah Keroah preparing a sculpture that was used in the film and its promotional artwork; a 36-minute documentary going over the history represented in the film and what went into making the movie while staying as true as possible to that history; a good 33-minute portrait of the Osage community, going over its history (they cite **The F.B.I. Story**, but say it doesn't mention the Osage when it fact it does), traditions and how they cooperated with Scorsese; an excellent 25-minute interview with cinematographer Rodrigo Prieto talking about how specific sequences were shot, how he worked with other members of the crew, how he had to be flexible when people came up with ideas at the last moment, and how several scenes in the film were inspired by **Days of Heaven**; and a thoughtful 30-minute Cannes press conference with Scorsese, a member of the Osage tribe and the stars, talking not just about the film but about its approach to history and the community it was exploring (which continually impressed Scorsese the more deeply he got into his research—"I was so moved. This is what grounded me. When I heard what their values are about love and respect and loving the Earth, really understanding how to live on this planet, I found that the values were so important to me. It reoriented me every time they spoke as to what we are doing here on Earth.")

History marches on

An absolutely brilliant film burdened with a topicality dilemma, Alan J. Pakula's 1976 Warner Bros. feature, **All the President's Men**, has been given the best possible opportunity to sustain its relevance with a magnificent 4K transfer on the Warner 4K UltraHD Blu-ray release (UPC#883929842490, \$30). The film is entertaining regardless of its context as a depiction of two reporters working on getting their story, but the film was made in the immediate aftermath of the events it depicts, and to be fully appreciated, a viewer needs to have lived through those events as well to understand how remarkably accurate its details are. As the past recedes, that becomes less and less possible as a way to assess how superbly it has been put together. Unless steeped in the history of the times, viewers will not understand the 1972 news reports broadcasting in the background—items such as the withdrawal of George McGovern's running mate from the presidential race—and how relevant those snippets are to the information the heroes, Washington Post reporters played by Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman (it is a shame that films back then weren't eligible for a Best Casting Oscar, because this movie would have nailed that one hands down), are searching for and gradually uncovering. And it is in 4K that those details are especially striking. The film's monophonic audio track is thrilling—David Shire's musical score is sparsely applied, but at one point, the few notes he puts down on a piano are augmented between their spaces by Redford's footsteps, which plop in a perfect tempo to the notes—and every background smidgen of dialog is distinctive. Letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1, the picture is unflinching. The cinematographer, Gordon Willis, is famous for his affection of darkness, and every shadow in the film is solid and pure on the disc, certifying the penetrating contrasts of clarity and opaqueness that he intended.

It is because the look and sound of the film are as rewarding that it can endure as an entertainment. Following a seemingly minor break in at an office building on a slow news day (helped, perhaps, because plainclothes cops were randomly selected to take the call when uniformed officers were delayed, thus confusing the burglars' lookout), Redford's character is assigned the story and begins asking questions to those observing the first bench appearance of the burglars and uncovering what could be dismissed as inconsequential links between the burglars and the White House. As he and Hoffman's more aggressive reporter, who gets himself assigned to work on the story, do painstaking research through phone books and personnel lists, following up by interviewing low level staffers (notably one played by Jane Alexander, although every performance is an emotionally tactile mix of apprehension and guilt—Stephen Collins, Robert Walden, Lindsay Crouse and Valerie Curtin are also terrific), they gradually piece together the connections and tell a coherent story of money being used illegally to influence elections. At the same time, the paper's reporters and editors, wonderfully embodied by Penny Fuller, Martin Balsam, Jack Warden and especially Jason Robards, demonstrate how the grain of a news story is shaken away from the chaff.

Running 138 minutes, the film faces one final challenge in its path to the cinematic pantheon, and that would be relevance. "Nothing's riding on this except the First Amendment of the Constitution, freedom of the press and maybe the future of the country," says Robards in the film's climactic moment, and that warning seems almost quaint a half century later, particularly given the fate of the Post itself. Nevertheless, it will take much longer for that determination to play out—will the film eventually be banned for so astutely articulating the need for and workings of an independent press, or will it remain a remarkable portrait of the human strengths and flaws that comprise the American government and the citizenship it serves?

Warner previously issued a *Two-Disc Special Edition* Blu-ray (UPC#883929351022, \$20), which is not as appealing despite a much stronger array of special features. Letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.78:1, the picture is murkier, and it is by directly comparing the 4K presentation to the standard Blu-ray that one can appreciate how much better the 4K version is in every respect. Not only are details better delineated on the 4K version, but gradations of light and dark are better defined. The film is not particularly colorful, but where the standard BD just seems bland and flaccid, the sharpness and the precision of the 4K images continually stimulate a viewer's attention.

The 4K presentation has alternate French, Spanish and German audio tracks, optional English, French, Spanish, German, Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Finnish and Chinese subtitles, and a number of special features that were originally part of Warner's DVD release (Mar 06), including a 28-minute retrospective documentary, a 16-minute piece on the

deep background source Redford's character uses to verify parts of his story, and a 7-minute clip of Robards promoting the film on Dinah Shore's talk show. There are also two fresh pieces, an 8-minute appreciation of the film and an 8-minute piece on the two reporters, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, depicted by Redford and Hoffman in the movie.

The standard Blu-ray has alternate French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and German audio tracks, and optional English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, German, Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish and Finnish subtitles, the featurettes from the DVD that also appear on the 4K release, and additional material that was on the DVD, including an 18-minute piece on Woodward and Bernstein that was trimmed and modified for the shorter piece on the 4K platter, an original 10-minute production featurette and a trailer. Most importantly, there is an excellent commentary by Redford that originally appeared on the DVD and does not appear on the 4K release.

The second platter features an excellent 2013 Discovery Channel documentary running 88 minutes entitled *All the President's Men Revisited*, directed by Peter Schnall, that provides a comprehensive history of Watergate, including interviews with the surviving figures, as well as interviews with Woodward, Bernstein and other Washington Post reporters and editors, other figures from the press and the political parties involved, as well as Redford and Hoffman. There is fantastic archival footage of Richard Nixon on the day he resigned, excerpts from the White House tape recordings, a thorough chronology of the senate investigations and much more. And yet, even the documentary was made in a more innocent time. Woodward naively suggests, "Imagine a president getting away with that unfolding scandal in today's political environment," while the more prescient political consultant, James Carville, believes, "One thing about Watergate. It was going to change the culture of Washington. It did no such thing. You know of course this kind of thing is going to happen again. And it's going to happen on a much, much bigger scale."

Just an old fashioned love movie

The subtitle translation for one of our favorite lines of dialog in Claude Lelouch's 1967 **A Man and a Woman** (*Un Homme et Une Femme*) has been altered and downgraded on the StudioCanal Criterion Collection Blu-ray release (UPC#715515331814, \$40). Jean-Louis Trintignant and Anouk Aimee, both playing widowed parents, are driving from Deauville to Paris after visiting their respective children for the weekend when an old love song comes on the radio. Aimee's character laughs and Trintignant's character good-naturedly chastises her, "Faut pas rire. Ces chansons faisaient pleurer en 1914." On the Warner Home Video DVD (Apr 03), it was translated as, "You mustn't laugh. It was enough to make you cry in 1914," while on the Criterion Blu-ray, the optional English subtitles come out as, "You must not laugh. This type of song used to make people cry." By removing the date, a specified reference to the song's nostalgia is altered to a generalized lament, and viewers will be less likely to connect the dots and realize that the film has now aged even more than that song had at the time the characters were listening to it.

Probably more than any other film of its day, **A Man and a Woman** introduced Sixties America to French culture, attitude and romance. The film has never made audiences cry, but it certainly inspired plenty of other visceral responses, especially on the dating scene. Running 103 minutes, it is about the relationship that develops between the two adults. Aimee's character has not entirely outgrown her grief, and that becomes a pitfall in their potential romance. There isn't much more to the film than that on the surface. There is a lot of footage of Trintignant's character driving, particularly in a rally competition, and there is footage of them playing with their kids at the beach during the winter. There are also flashbacks, mostly through Aimee's character remembering her husband, played by Pierre Barouh, who sings a song number during one especially lyrical montage celebrating Brazilian music. After several platonic weekends, they eventually have an interlude, which leads to the film's swirling finale.

The Sixties were a time of discovery, whether it was sorting out how automobiles should compete—Trintignant's character is a racing driver—or how movies should function. While experimental films more concerned with style than with content had always existed, it wasn't until the Sixties that the marketplace truly accepted experimentation as a valid storytelling alternative. Even then, Lelouch's style was looked down upon by many serious critics, who could not see how his curvilinear camera movements and emotive scene construction were as valid as the block lettering that traditional filmmakers employed or the Dadaist construction that other experimental filmmakers were utilizing. Lelouch's films are, by and large, films of emotion, and emotion is truth, whereas all of the words we use to interpret emotion or even to describe objects that are, on a quantum level, constructed of emotion, can only approximate that truth. Hence, the camera movements in **A Man and a Woman**, and Francis Lai's transfixing music, are intended to magnify and color the emotional states of the characters rather than spelling them out in the way that a standard film would attempt and find wanting. You don't pin the movie down, you just swoon from it and come away in a heightened state of enchantment.

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Except for that one issue we have with the subtitling and a couple of other minor quibbles, the Blu-ray is a fantastic improvement over the DVD, which wasn't bad to begin with. Even the subtitling, overall, is better, translating the lyrics to the songs in addition to the dialog while the DVD left them blank. The picture has an aspect ratio of about 1.66:1, an improvement over the DVD's masked 1.78:1 (in one of the supplements from 1967, Lelouch says that the film is in 1.33:1 but will be shown at 1.66:1). Overall, there is far less wear on the image. The black-and-white passages have a mild blue tint but are sharper than the straight black-and-white sequences on the DVD, and there is an even greater difference in the color sequences. Even though the DVD looked terrific, the BD has substantially sharper and more accurately detailed hues and flesh tones. The monophonic sound is richer and better detailed than the sound on the DVD, although Criterion has not included the alternate English language track that the DVD had. Unlike the DVD, the special features do not start up where they left off if playback is terminated. The 23-minute production featurette that appeared on the DVD has been carried over. In addition, Criterion provides a terrific 23-minute interview with Lelouch from 2025 talking about his love for films and music ("To me, music is the best way to speak to our irrational side. In my films, there's the rational and the irrational. The rational side is our intelligence, telling us we're mortal. And then our irrational side is our unconscious, telling us we'll live forever.") and how he came to make the movie; a great 11-minute collection of footage from press events in 1966 just as excitement over the success of the film is peaking; and two trailers.

Finally, Criterion has also included Lelouch's marvelous, frantic uncut early morning drive through the streets of Paris from 1976, **C'était un rendez-vous**, a 9-minute short that is so good, it was previously released on a DVD by itself from Spirit Level (Aug 06). It comes with a 3-minute introduction by Lelouch (including a map of the route), in which he admits that it was he and not an anonymous professional driver at the wheel, breaking all of those Parisian traffic laws.

Cult classic in 4K

The purpose of a murder thriller is supposedly the solution to the mystery and most often the triumph of good over evil, but the real purpose to the best murder stories is simply the opportunity to explore characters placed in stressful situations, using the momentum of the narrative as a lure to sustain an interest in how the personalities and souls of the characters grow from their experiences. Ivan Passer's 1981 United Artists release, **Cutter's Way**, did not do all that well because it was far more interested in the characters than in the mechanics of the murder, but that was in part because expectations for the film were not suitably prepared by the distributor. It was only in later festivals, art houses and then on home video that the film, re-titled by United Artists Classics from its original *Cutter and Bone*, captured the attention of cult fans who had the patience and attitude to embrace it. To that end, MGM and Radiance have released a superb two-platter 4K Blu-ray (UPC#760137205043, \$55) that presents the film as the outstanding tale of characters and crime that it was intended to be. You even have the choice of watching the film with the *Cutter and Bone* title card if you so desire.

Based upon a novel by Newton Thornburg, Jeff Bridges is a sun-kissed Santa Barbara boat salesman and gigolo whose car stalls one night in the pouring rain. Since the lights on his car have died, he is situated in the dark when another car draws up behind him and a figure gets out, dumps something somewhere, and then gets back in and speedily drives off. Leaving his car where it is, Bridges's character walks to a friend's house. The friend is an alcoholic and disabled Vietnam veteran played by John Heard, whose character hobbles around without an arm, a leg and an eye, living with his long suffering alcoholic wife, touchingly played by Lisa Eichhorn. The next day, Bridges's character is arrested, briefly, because it was clearly a body that was dumped and he is at the very least a witness. Heard's character quite quickly identifies exactly who the murderer appears to be, and the two men spend most of the rest of the 109-minute movie like Hamlet, trying to decide what to do about it.

As with **Becket**, you wish you could see another version of the film where the two stars exchange roles, but in any case, the performances by everyone involved are not only captivating, they are the real point of the movie. There is momentum throughout the film, and while it may seem ambiguous at first glance, the ending is fully resolute if you let your imagination fill in a couple of easy blanks, but meanwhile, as the movie progresses, you get to know every character better and better and better. Another character, played by Ann Dusenberry, the victim's sister, also joins them for a while, but disappears without explanation at the start of the final act. Regardless, the relationships become richer and more complex in every scene, and like *Hamlet*, there is just enough suspense and mystery lingering in the film's atmosphere to make every moment of the film entrancing.

Especially in 4K format. The image on the standard Blu-ray included in the set—which is the only one where the alternate title card is an option—is a little grainier and is therefore a little more alienating, although colors are still fresh and it doesn't look bad. The 4K presentation, however, is smooth and finely detailed, so that when the image is purposefully murky or dark, its composition does not break your concentration. The film essentially looks as great as it is ever going to look. The monophonic sound is solidly delivered, and there is a terrific alternate audio track that isolates Jack Nitzsche's unique (a lot of glass and water) musical score. There are optional English subtitles.

An enthusiast who grew up in the film business, Matthew Specktor, provides an appreciative commentary track, going over the production history, identifying locations and pointing out the film's many strengths. "These scenes are so good. The scenes between Jeff Bridges and Lisa Eichhorn really feel like the emotional core of the movie for me. She got the part, of course, when she read opposite Bridges. They cast her immediately. Rightly so."

Prompted by crime film expert Gillian Wallace Horvat, assistant director Larry Franco and production manager Barrie Osborne provide a second commentary, going into great detail about the actual production and how individual members of the cast and crew contributed. Even when Franco can't remember what he was doing during the shooting of a specific scene, Osborne recalls the particulars, and between the two of them, every moment is effectively deconstructed.

Finally, film historians Julie Kirgo and Nick Redman supply a third commentary, also sharing an overview of the production details and artist backgrounds, but offering a more extensive thematic and artistic analysis of the film. In addition to referencing *Hamlet*, Kirgo also suggests the film is inspired by *Moby Dick*. They point out the differences between the film and Thornburg's novel (which had a bleaker, more unfortunate ending), go over Passer's unheralded career, praise the film's ambiguities and supply a good summary as the film plays out of why it can be such a rewarding experience.

The standard Blu-ray also contains a number of other special features, including a great 42-minute discussion of the story's crime genre qualifications ("This book and this film partially represent that move that happens in the Seventies from the hippies to the punks. This is a proto-punk novel in a lot of ways. These are people who are rejecting everything. They're not quite as enlightened as they think, and they are self-centered and individualized, and that's the thing that noir and punk have in common, is this, like, they're both examinations and simultaneously symptoms of the American disease.") and the film's artistic strengths; a decent 38-minute interview with Passer about the film and about his life ("America accepting me as a director was a surprise to me because I didn't expect that that country would need a Czech director who doesn't speak English."); a nice audio-only 6-minute reminiscence from Bridges; a welcome and amazing 39-minute interview with Eichhorn, who recalls the history of her career on a nearly day-by-day basis and describes events vividly; a good 26-minute interview with producer Paul Gurian talking about the project and the various false starts and wrong turns that were made before all the pieces came together; an 11-minute interview with United Artists executive Ira Deutchman about the film's marketing and his involvement with the creation of United Artists Classics; an interesting 12-minute interview with music editor Curt Sobel sharing his memories of working with Nitzsche on the music; a decent 26-minute appreciation of the film by Bertrand Tavernier ("The best film about post-Vietnam America."); a trailer; and a modest collection of promotional memorabilia in still frame.

Military action in 3D

Every 3D movie has some component that literally stands out, so that you look forward to each time it appears on the screen and feel a special thrill when it does. Sometimes it is foreground and background shrubbery, sometimes it is laboratory beakers and sometimes it is Medieval spikes. In the 1954 black-and-white Allied Artists Korean War feature directed by Lesley Selander and released on a 3D Blu-ray by 3-D Film Archive and OliveFilms, **Dragonfly Squadron** (UPC#887090083003, \$25), it is the dimensional effect created by the grouping and blocking of people. Whether they are gathered en masse in a cafeteria for a briefing, or huddled around an airplane getting ready to take off, each body has its own space and each individual is alive, separated from the other individuals around him. Yes, there are some other great 3D effects, as well—whirling propellers, anti-aircraft guns pointing over your head, debris sprayed from explosions and even the coffee machine in the aforementioned cafeteria—but much of the film is about the gathering and deployment of personnel (virtually none of it actually takes place inside a cockpit), and in 3D, that is the movie's strength and delight, watching the rounded bodies bob about and shuffle past one another.

Set in the earliest days of the conflict, before Americans could directly engage with the invading North Koreans, John Hodiak is an officer assigned to an airfield near an invasion point whose unit is in charge of training Korean pilots before the base is overrun. Complicating matters, Bruce Bennett is a prickly, weary doctor at a nearby hospital and Barbara Britton plays his wife, who used to have a thing with Hodiak's character, likes him better and is only staying with Bennett's character out of marital guilt. Three guesses as to which one doesn't make it to the end. Fess Parker, laughably listed on the jacket credits as 'Jess Parker,' has a small role near the beginning, and Chuck Connors, whose physique and jaw were made for 3D, shows up well after the Intermission, enlivening the final act of the 84-minute film as the head of a battered relief column. Either footage was dropped to fit the running time or the film wasn't planned well to begin with, but parts of that last act are confusing. One moment characters are on the run, and the next, they are reunited in a field hospital, still in a battle zone, but safer. Regardless of that dramatic hiccup, however, the 3D effects are all the film needs to become fully satisfying entertainment.

A 2D version of the film is also available on the platter, along with a 2D trailer, but the film is less effective in that format, becoming all talk and very little action. Presented with an aspect ratio of about 1.66:1, there are individual speckles here and there (some of which float across the image in 3D), but otherwise, the presentation is sharp and free of overt wear. While the picture has a pervasive graininess, that seems to be part of its original cinematography. The monophonic sound is drab and easily distorted if the volume is raised too high. There is no captioning. Unfortunately, Olive has only released the film in the 3D format that requires a special player, battery-powered glasses and a special screen to achieve its effects, even though, with its nice-looking image, it would have been an ideal title to include the less effective but still viable red/blue shift and cellophane glasses 3D process.

On the run

An engrossing, linear crime story about a thug played by Lino Ventura trying to avoid the law, Claude Sautet's 1960 **Classe Tous Risques** begins in Milan when Ventura's character mugs a courier to grab some cash, and then follows his travels to the French Riviera and on to Paris, where his old comrades are less enthused about helping him than they should be. A young personable driver played by Jean-Paul Belmondo doesn't know any better and aids him when the others won't. Ventura's character also has his two children with him, which complicates matters. Running 108 minutes, the film, released as a two-platter 4K Blu-ray by the Criterion Collection (UPC#715515330718, \$50), intersperses action with character development and essentially takes the viewer along for an enjoyable and stimulating ride. While that narrative appears straightforward, there is a non-sense feel to the complications that Ventura's character encounters and the changes he witnesses in the characters he meets, and it is the maturity of the storytelling that compensates for the narrative's inevitabilities.

The black-and-white film is presented with an aspect ratio of about 1.66:1. One shot is out of focus, but that is the cinematographer's fault. Otherwise, the workmanlike image, keeping up with the characters on the run, is strikingly sharp. The 4K presentation has more detail than the image on the standard Blu-ray included in the set, but the differences are minor since most of the shots have such a makeshift feel. Nevertheless the 4K playback undoubtedly makes the movie even more captivating, even when the differences are not obvious. The monophonic sound is reasonably clean, and there is a brief but promising musical score by Georges Delerue. The film is in French with optional English subtitles. The standard Blu-ray also contains three trailers, an 8-minute profile of Sautet and his work on the film and the complete 12 minutes of footage from an interview with scenarist (and former Death Row inmate) José Giovanni that was excerpted in the 8-minute piece, along with 14 minutes of interesting interviews with Ventura from throughout his career.

For love, and beauty, and delight, there is no death nor change

While it may at first glance seem like the exact opposite, Vincente Minnelli's 1956 **Tea and Sympathy**, an MGM production released by Warner Bros. as a *Warner WB Archive Collection* Blu-ray (UPC#84041834-4903, \$25), makes an appropriate third corner with **Some Came Running** and **Home from the Hill** in what one might call Minnelli's 'Masculinity Trilogy.' Meticulously composed in a widescreen format, which is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1, the film is a barely disguised gay parable about a young man in college ostracized by his peers because he has different values and cultural impulses than they do. Given that the Fifties were an era that valued conformity, it would have been easy enough for viewers to be in willful denial of that story component and still find the film to be a stimulating drama about a sensitive student played by John Kerr and his house advisor's sympathetic wife, played by Deborah Kerr (no relation). John Kerr's character goes through a rollercoaster of anxiety, teased as a sissy by his would-be macho housemates (including Darryl Hickman, Dean Jones and Tom Laughlin), torn by his clueless father (nicely and frightfully played by Edward Andrews) and then stirred into further confusion and frustration by the meddling of Deborah Kerr's character. Today's viewers, however, will likely better appreciate the nuances to the film than what viewers in its day could comprehend, not that John Kerr's character, as presented in the film, could ever possibly be pigeonholed as either closeted or straight (the visually sublime climactic seduction scene is a marvel of motion picture etherealness and one of Minnelli's most haunting sequences), but because what is being imposed upon his character by others is now so clearly part of their failings and not his. The film has scattered moments of raw emotional discomfort offset only by Minnelli's invitingly complex rectangular framing and color coordinated production designs. It was once a daring film, and while it may not seem like one now, it has withstood the passage of time and attitude through the eccentricity of its dramatic conflicts and the timeless structure of its presentation.

To that end, the Blu-ray is outstanding, free of blemishes or faded hues. Flestones are precisely detailed and fabrics are as clear in texture as they are in color. The monophonic sound is in decent condition and there are optional English subtitles. Along with a trailer, there is a widescreen color 7-minute 1956 MGM Tom and Jerry cartoon, *Down Beat Bear*, in which the cat and mouse encounter a hip dancing bear and try to collect a reward while also fighting with each other with musical instruments and appliances. Warner's DVD (UPC#883316311080, \$13) has a weaker, more convoluted image with over-saturated hues, along with a softer audio track, optional English subtitles and the trailer.

The Gable guy

We reviewed the MGM film that made Clark Gable a star, **Red Dust**, in Feb 26. At the other end of his career, MGM cast Gable in a variation of the same story, set in Africa in a **Hatari!** setting rather than on a Malaysian rubber plantation, the 1953 **Mogambo**, which has now been released by Warner Bros. as a *Warner WB Archive Collection* Blu-ray (UPC# 840418342961, \$25). Directed more as an assignment than as a personal vision by John Ford, the film may not have the sizzle of the pre-Code **Red Dust**, but with Ava Gardner and Grace Kelly as the two women Gable's character romances amid the jungle heat and cute animals, it sets the imagination going all the same. Gable may be substantially older than before, but that just increases his aura as an alpha male. The animal footage is impressive—Gardner comes reasonably close to being stepped on by a baby elephant that doesn't know any better—and the film's monophonic audio mix, effectively replicated on the BD's DTS track, delivers the guttural roar of a panther with unnerving clarity. Running 116 minutes, the film was shot substantially on location and is a highly satisfying mix of exotic romance and

adventure. Gable's character does shoot a gorilla at one point, but he feels bad about it, since it was only in self defense.

The film is presented in an aspect ratio of about 1.66:1 and the color transfer is gorgeous. The Technicolor hues are fresh, and even the wildlife inserts look smooth and clear. There are optional English subtitles, a trailer, a 1951 color MGM Tom and Jerry cartoon running 7 minutes entitled *Just Ducky* (about the mouse trying to teach a baby duck how to swim while the cat tries to eat it), and a 1953 color MGM *Traveltalks* short running 9 minutes entitled *Land of the Ugly Duckling*, visiting Denmark and exploring the haunts of Hans Christian Anderson.

Gable was in his prime for the 1941 MGM western directed by Jack Conway, **Honky Tonk**, another Warner *Archive Collection* Blu-ray (UPC#84-0418344880, \$25). The film was written by Marguerite Roberts and John Sanford. It is an axiom that if a western has a woman contributing to the screenplay, it will have interesting female characters who are central to the story, and indeed, both Lana Turner and Claire Trevor have terrific parts they can sink their teeth into. Gable plays a gambler who opens a saloon in a mining town after psyching out the competition, playing Russian roulette with another gunslinger played by Albert Dekker (the film challenges the Production Code on a number of fronts, but always indirectly—the gun isn't loaded). Turner's character arrives from the East looking for her father, played by Frank Morgan, whom she believes to be an upstanding judge. Trevor is a local bar girl. The dynamics may be predictable, but the 105-minute film is an ideal blend of romance and gunplay, despite a fairly significant situational plot shift to usher in the film's second half. And Gable is amazing. Always terrific when he is speaking in front of a crowd, his character calms an angry mob more than once with a quick-thinking speech, and throughout the film, he is the fast-talking charmer audiences flocked to, but his best moment of all is wordless—emotions cross his face in clearly rippled waves when Turner's character tells him she is expecting a child. It is not just that you can see what he is thinking and feeling, he makes you feel for him at the same time.

Chill Wills and Marjorie Main are also featured. The squared full screen black-and-white picture is spotless, with crisp contrasts, amplifying the pleasure of the stars' presence and skills all the more. The monophonic sound is clear, and there are optional English subtitles, a trailer, a 9-minute color MGM Tom and Jerry cartoon from 1941 entitled *The Midnight Snack* (the mouse cracks open the refrigerator, the cat busts him but starts snacking from the fridge himself, and then the black maid comes downstairs and the cat makes a mess chasing after the mouse); a 9-minute black-and-white MGM *Our Gang* short from 1940 entitled *Fighting Fools* (the kids have a battle on an empty construction site, using dormant equipment and other tools as weapons), and a serviceable 51-minute *Lux Radio Theater* adaptation of the feature from 1946 with Turner and John Hodiak, hosted by William Dieterle—Hodiak is fine, but the absence of Wills and Morgan makes it harder to follow.

Hope and Fields cross paths

"Take me down to the bar. We'll drink breakfast together." W.C. Fields was on the eve of his best feature work, an amazing string for four comedy classics over the following 3 years, when he headlined Paramount's musical comedy, **The Big Broadcast of 1938**, which has been released on Blu-ray by Universal (UPC#840418342350, \$22). It is only because the film also featured another up and coming comedian, Bob Hope, in his first credited feature film role, that the show is not thought of as a Fields movie. Hope had the good fortune to sing a song in the film that went on to win an Oscar (and become Hope's signature tune, *Thanks for the Memory*), essentially sharing equal time with Fields in the movie's scattershot narrative. Yet the reason **Big Broadcast** is so good is that it is indeed a Fields movie, with the added attractions of Hope, Martha Raye, Dorothy Lamour, and a genuinely elaborate musical dance number celebrating the waltz, among other things.

What Fields brings to the film, in addition to his tried and true comedy routines, is his absurdist, fantastical world where anything can happen and anything almost does. Directed by Mitchell Leisen, the film is set upon a futuristically styled ocean liner, competing with another (normal looking) ship to break the record crossing the Atlantic from America to Europe. That the ship does indeed look at least a tiny bit like today's cruise ships, albeit without the roller coasters, is a testament to how outstanding and witty its production designs are. The film is transfixing just for its looks, since the boat's interiors are as sleek and curvy as its exteriors, and for that matter, even the costume designs, particularly Raye's outfits, are wildly creative. Having honed his skills on the radio, Hope's comedic timing is already riveting in its humor, and while Fields does not share screen time with him, the film eagerly jumps from one to the other, and to a lesser extent to Raye, so that no one style of comedy becomes stale. And yet, despite all of those great comedians—the less remembered but lively Ben Blue also has a major part—and other appealing musical numbers, the film is at its most thrilling when it cuts to the miniatures of the ships steaming through the water (something that could seemingly only happen this creatively in a Fields film). Thus, every moment in the 91-minute program is fresh and delightful (oh yeah, there is also a contemporary opera star doing *Ride of the Valkyries*), and remains as engaging now as it was in 1938.

The squared full screen black-and-white picture is in excellent condition. There is some minor wear in a couple of places, but most of the time the image is smooth, sharp and clean. The monophonic sound is in acceptable condition, and there are optional English subtitles.

Goodman swings!

Nobody knows who Steve Allen is any more, and barely anyone knows who Benny Goodman truly is, so the irony that Allen plays Goodman in the 1955 Universal-International production directed by Valentine Davies, **The Benny Goodman Story**, released by Universal Studios Home Entertainment on Blu-ray (UPC#840418341148, \$22), has mostly evaporated. You see, Allen was a late night television host in the Fifties—he pretty much pioneered the format—and he would often poke fun at or even ridicule pop stars coming on his show to play rock and roll, since such music, at the time, was looked down upon by the establishment. Indeed, if one is familiar with him at all today, it is from the still circulated clip of him having Elvis Presley sing *Hound Dog* to a real basset. So apparently, he learned absolutely nothing playing Goodman (to whom he bears such an appropriate likeness that the casting of him was almost inevitable), who was met with the same ridicule and difficulty early in his own career when he wanted to push the boundaries of the pop music of his time, an offshoot of jazz known as ‘swing.’ It is not an obscure connection—the entire first half of the film’s narrative is about how others think his music is brainless, and the barriers he has to break through to get it heard.

As for the film, Allen is a placeholder. He delivers what is needed of him, fingering and blowing his clarinet persuasively enough to sell the music. He does not have the emotional mastery that James Stewart delivered in Universal’s **The Glenn Miller Story** (May 86), but you can’t expect that, and fortunately, the emphasis of the film is not so much on him as it is on his character’s music, which is deconstructed and delivered sublimely, using Goodman’s original recordings. The second half of the 116-minute film incorporates a frustrated romance with a wealthy New York philanthropist’s daughter, played by Donna Reed, to keep the narrative momentum energized after the band becomes a success, but throughout the film, the music is expertly integrated with the narrative in a way that can allow it to take over and power the film again and again. There is a wonderful montage that we’ve never really seen duplicated, showing what listeners in each time zone are doing during a late evening broadcast of his band’s performance. In one of the most exciting moments, Allen’s character squeezes into a tight space in front of his band with a cement wall behind him, and you wonder what is going on, but then the entire bandstand begins to ascend and you realize that it is rising from below to present the group at a concert at New York’s Paramount Theater. The crowd, made up of teenagers, goes wild when the musicians appear—a generational mania stretching from Johann Strauss and before to Taylor Swift and beyond—and you can’t help but feel the excitement the kids are feeling, because the music is still that good, and always will be.

The disc’s monophonic sound is also strong and solid, delivering the score with clarity and minimal distortion. The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1. Hues are very fresh and while the image does have a natural grain that can break up details here and there, it is sharp and exhilarating, with accurate fleshtones. There are optional English subtitles.

Charming pre-Code farce

Ernst Lubitsch had nothing directly to do with the enjoyable pre-Code 1932 Paramount romantic farce, **This Is the Night**, released on Blu-ray by Universal Studios Home Entertainment (UPC#840418342367, \$22), but he was working at Paramount at the time and it is clear that the film, directed by Frank Tuttle, was influenced by his sensibilities, from the economical camera moves to the European atmosphere. Charlie Ruggles is a wealthy playboy who hires a decoy, played by Lily Damita, to pretend to be his wife on a trip to Venice so that he can be with his lover, played by the saucy Thelma Todd, without her husband—Cary Grant in his first motion picture performance—becoming suspicious. Now obviously, any woman who would choose Ruggles over Grant (who also appears to have a cameo bit in the beginning as another character, selling French postcards) ought to have her head examined, but you just kind of go with the flow since it is inevitable that Ruggles’s character belongs with Damita’s character. Roland Young, who is virtually interchangeable with Ruggles as a performer, plays his best friend and also falls for Damita’s character—literally, in fact, since he ends up in a canal. The plot is less important than the stars doing their routines, which are delightful, and combined with the music (there are songs, too), the production designs and the dynamic camera moves, the 71-minute feature accomplishes everything required of it to sustain its charm from beginning to end.

Irving Bacon is also featured, as a butler who has a bad habit of accidentally pulling off Todd’s clothing again and again. You gotta love that pre-Code era. The squared full screen picture is in black and white, although a second option gives most of the outdoor night scenes (they miss one) a bluish tint. It is an additional pleasure and worth selecting, particularly since it helps to hide some of the minor scratches and other wear marks that appear now and then. Otherwise, the image transfer looks reasonably nice, with sharp contrasts. The monophonic sound is fine for the film’s age, and there are optional English subtitles.

Crime and romance with Cary Grant

With a white blotch of hair in the center of the black above his forehead, and lighter touch of it above his sideburns, Cary Grant is a Chicago gangster who leaves on a train for California vowing to go straight in the terrific 1933 pre-Code Paramount feature, **Gambling Ship**, a Universal Studios Home Entertainment Blu-ray release (UPC#840418342343, \$22). The film is so good it is surprising no one has ever remade it. He meets a classy woman on the train, played by Benita Hume, and they fall for each other, although, and this is the only spoiler we’ll provide, neither one knows who the other really is. Running a brisk 71 minutes, the film is an ideal blend of crime and romance, and climaxes in a roaring storm where the good guys are heavily outnumbered, but manage to outfox the bad guys nevertheless. Okay, so that was another spoiler, but the film has many other surprises. Grant delivers his usual blend of eagerness and stoicism, and while it seems like he never once changed his acting style across the decades, it worked so well for him that he didn’t have to.

Hume gives an excellent performance, as well. Glenda Farrell, Arthur Vinton and Jack La Rue costar. Other than the pitiful security protocols the heroes seem to be using on their boat, the film is just about perfect, and is suitable for many repeated viewings, although the squared full screen black-and-white picture is a bit on the worn side, with quite a few speckles at times, undercutting the reasonably sharp contrasts and clear details. The monophonic sound is serviceable and there are optional English subtitles.

Stuffed with stars

Squeezed into 93 minutes, it seems like the entire Paramount lot shows up for George Marshall’s 1947 benefit feature, **Variety Girl**, released on Blu-ray by Universal Pictures Home Entertainment (UPC#840418342336, \$22). It is in part a film comedy about filmmaking (there is a funny bit with Cecil B. DeMille) and uses a plot—two girls arrive in Hollywood hoping to make it big, and a confusion about their identities gets them both past the Paramount front gate—to keep up its momentum until the finale where the story is wrapped up and the film segues into a series of blackout sketches with even more stars, followed by a final number with Bob Hope, Bing Crosby and the others. Mary Hatcher and Olga San Juan play the would-be starlets, with Frank Ferguson in a major part as the studio head and DeForest Kelly in a nice role as his talent handler. There is not enough room to list everyone else who shows up, but most of them are still readily recognizable, and even the ones whose fame is flickering a little make their cameo moments seem special. Among the highlights, William Bendix stands out with a couple of amusing skits, Pearl Bailey and Spike Jones have musical numbers, Gary Cooper and Alan Ladd have their moments, and Marshall even works in George Pal’s Puppets. Hope and Crosby also have one of their most memorable, laugh aloud put-down exchanges, especially when Crosby throws out, “Fade will you, flagpole face, before I beat you to a pulp with my Oscar.”

The squared full screen black-and-white picture has wear around the reel-change points and a scattered scratch or two in other places, but the image is fairly sharp and contrasts are nicely defined. The monophonic sound is clear, and there are optional English subtitles.

What goes on in a hospital basement

Based upon one of Arthur Hailey’s well researched bestsellers, the generically titled 1961 United Artists feature, **The Young Doctors**, released on Blu-ray by MGM (UPC#840418338964, \$22), is set primarily in the basement of a hospital, in its pathology lab. Fredric March is the head of pathology and kind of stuck in old habits, while Ben Gazzara plays a new hire who intends to clean the unit up and get it running correctly with or without the collaboration of March’s character. There are two standard medical dramas incorporated into the 102-minute feature, both involving the hospital staff. Dick Clark is an intern whose wife is expecting and there is a complication with the pregnancy, while Ina Balin plays a nurse who attracts the attention of Gazzara’s character and then develops a problem with a growth on her knee. Eddie Albert has a major part, while Edward Andrews, Arthur Hill, George Segal and Barnard Hughes have briefer appearances. Presented with an aspect ratio of about 1.66:1, the black-and-white film obviously has soap opera components, but directed by Phil Karlson, it also tries to convey a serious and at times documentary atmosphere, managing to generate a few tears while sustaining a serious and intelligent atmosphere. The performers are uniformly engaging. There is a quasi continuity error that kind of puts Clark’s character in two places at once, but otherwise the film is a reasonably impressive and entertaining production. The monophonic sound is strong and clear, and there is a brief but aggressive Elmer Bernstein musical score. The image transfer is free of noticeable wear and is reasonably sharp, with well defined contrasts. There are optional English subtitles, a trailer and a nice 2-minute montage of publicity stills.

Fonda slumming

Henry Fonda went from making a couple of movies a year in the previous decades to cramming his schedule as much as he possibly could in the Seventies, padding his nest egg, apparently, and while he still worked in a decent production when he could land one, he also participated in a number of junky features, while maintaining his dignity as best as was possible. **The Great Smokey Roadblock**, a 1977 production released on Blu-ray by MGM and Amazon (UPC#8404183389889, \$22), which is called *The Last of the Cowboys* on the title card of the source material used for the disc, is sold as an action film, but it only has one climactic scene where the truck that Fonda’s character is driving knocks some police cars off a bridge in slow motion, and the rest of the show is a comedy road movie. Fonda’s character is a truck driver suffering from a terminal illness who sneaks out of the hospital one night, steals his truck from an impound (because he couldn’t make payments on it from the hospital), and tries to make one last drive. He picks up a hitchhiker played by Robert Englund, who accompanies him on the journey, and they stop at a brothel that has just been busted, agreeing to take the girls and furniture across the country to a new establishment. Eileen Brennan is the madam, and Susan Sarandon and Melanie Mayron are among the girls. Dub Taylor is featured as a hick sheriff. Directed by John Leone, the humor is usually strained, but the film does have its star appeal, and like most road movies, it generates some momentum just from the impression that the characters are going somewhere (although from the looks of the backdrops, they never actually leave California). It is nevertheless interesting to watch the septuagenarian Fonda, who can’t always keep a straight face with the clowning that is going on around him, demonstrate both professionalism and a conscientious awareness of his character’s emotional state at all times. The 104-minute film doesn’t really deserve the class he brings to it.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 1.85:1. The source material has some wear, including scratches and speckling, but the colors are reasonably fresh, fleshtones are accurate and details are relatively sharp. The monophonic sound is adequate. There are optional English subtitles and a half-dozen color photos in still frame.

Japanese teen fantasy

Most Japanese fantasy films set in high schools are flamboyant and juvenile, geared for a teen audience, but the lovely 1983 feature directed by Nobuhiko Obayashi, **The Girl Who Leapt Through Time**, is lyrical and meditative, using the metaphors not only of time and botany, but of film grammar itself to reflect upon the nature of life and existence. Released in a two-platter 4K Blu-ray set by Cult Epics (UPC#881190023198, \$50), the presentation has an aspect ratio of about 1.66:1 except that key moments are presented inside of that framing in a boxed image. Most of the film is in color, but parts of it, including the opening, are in black and white, and transition to color incrementally, as if the characters are becoming more aware of the world around them. All of this is tied into the heroine's onset of adolescence, as well. Tomoyo Harada plays a coed assigned to straighten up a lab room who is by herself in a storage area when a beaker shatters, a white gas appears and she collapses. When she is revived by her friends (the two boys who like her) and teachers, the beaker is not there. She claims to have the intense scent of lavender lingering in her memory, and on the way home with one of the boys, she visits the greenhouse that his grandfather maintains, sniffs more lavender (although the flower isn't actually a lavender, but that is what the subtitle translation and probably the dialog claim) and nearly passes out again. She hurries on home, where more events occur, and when she awakens the next morning, the events of the previous day are repeated. The given explanation for this is abstract and fantastical, but can also be linked to a buried trauma that has perhaps been unearthed with the oncoming of adolescence. Like haiku, Japanese stories are often more about the synergetic melding of ideas than an actual vector of occurrences—the circle of the clock rather than the advance of the calendar—and so it might be possible, in the wrong frame of mind, to dismiss the film as pointlessly silly, but the 104-minute film also studiously avoids any sort of childishness in its characters or conflicts, and instead offers delicate time-lapse blossoming of perspectives and insights on human emotion and how it carries forward with age.

Since there are special effects, the image has a naturally aged appearance in places because of the manipulation it has gone through, but otherwise the picture is sharp and hues are fresh. The image on the standard Blu-ray included in the set has an equally nice transfer, and the only real difference is the enhanced sharpness and detail created by the 4K format, but since it is a film that requires concentration and speaks to the subconscious, the added quality of the 4K presentation enhances a sense of immediacy in the presence of the characters. The 5.1-channel DTS sound has periodic spurts of surround effects and a solid delivery. The film is in Japanese with optional English subtitles. Along with a trailer, there is a good commentary track by Obayashi expert Alex Pratt, who deconstructs the literal story as it advances while also talking about the backgrounds of the cast and the crew, the phenomena of young female teen stars in Japanese films in the Eighties, and the effort Obayashi went through putting the film on the screen.

Additionally, the standard Blu-ray platter comes with a music video; an 11-minute promotional profile of Harada that includes a number of music segments; a decent 24-minute overview of Obayashi's films with plenty of tantalizing clips; a very nice 16-minute rumination on the film's locations (in a town called Onomichi, where Obayashi grew up) and how the locations now look after having traveled through time themselves; a 22-minute talk by Obayashi from 2015 through a translator in front of an American audience about the film and about filmmaking in general; and an excellent 24-minute interview with Obayashi about making the film, how he hoped to bring life to his hometown (which was revitalized as a tourist spot by the popularity of the movie), and the film's enduring legacy. "It was too early for the cherry blossom season, but due to Tomoyo's high school enrollment, we had to film then. So the cherry blossoms were later added with visual effects. I was worried if it was even possible. The work of a superhuman, I'd say. It was done by an experienced artist who was suffering from cancer at that time. He snuck out of the hospital and worked on this, and it turned out to be his last work. He spent his last days working out of his love for filmmaking, and that will stay forever in this film. What film does is give eternity to things made by mortal beings."

Fabulous Yen action

The first half hour of the 2010 Chinese action film, **Legend of the Fist: The Return of Chen Zhen**, is fantastic entertainment. It begins during World War I in France, as a Chinese contingent have to defend themselves against the Germans, with guns and bombs going off all over the place. Then the film shifts to a glorious Shanghai nightclub—reminiscent of the one in **Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom**, replete with a jazzed up Chinese rendition of George Bizet's *La Habanera*—and then onto the streets where Japanese assassins are trying to kill supporters of a Chinese resistance army. The hero in the WWI scenes, played by Donnie Yen, is working in the nightclub, but then goes out on the street, steals a disguise from a store window so no one will recognize him and breaks up the assassination attempt, saving a key figure. The action is exhilarating, the camera moves are exhilarating and Yen's athleticism is exhilarating. The nightclub, incidentally, is called, 'Casablanca.' By no means does the 106-minute film, which was directed by Andrew Lau, go downhill after that, but it just sort of levels off and never gets any better. This is Shanghai before World War II, so the Japanese are always going to win and the Chinese are always going to suffer. Yen's character gives the villains a run for their money and it really isn't spoiling things to say that he survives at the end, because even though he does, it feels like everything that he's been fighting for is gone.

The jacket copy on the Well Go USA Entertainment Blu-ray release (UPC#812491012369, \$30) suggests that Yen is playing the same character made famous by Bruce Lee and Jet Li in the **First of Fury** and **Fist of Legend** films, and while it is a stretch, the film does have kind of the same

dynamic, especially once the Japanese really start cracking down on the town. Qi Shu, Anthony Wong and Bo Huang costar. Letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1, what the film also has going for it is an incredibly sharp and shiny picture. The BD looks so slick that the action scenes continually take on an extra sense of excitement, rocking your subconscious as well as everything else. While the film's end credits promote a 7.1-channel sound mix, the disc only has a 5.1-channel DTS track, but that said, it is still continually thrilling, whether the noises are coming from a German machine gun or the nightclub's jazz band. The sounds have a sheer, solid punch, and are all over the place, constantly. There is an English language track in 5.1 DTS, two trailers and 18 minutes of rewarding behind-the-scenes footage.

Feldman cult feature

Coming across as a mix between Dustin Hoffman in **Rain Man** and Peter Falk, Corey Feldman delivers an eccentric performance in the oddball 2004 Eugenio Mira feature, **The Birthday**, released as a 4K Blu-ray by Arrow Video (UPC#760137202554, \$50). Feldman's character arrives at an aging hotel where he has been invited to a birthday celebration for his girlfriend's father in the ballroom. The father owns the hotel and it is scheduled to be torn down shortly after the party. Running 120 minutes, the film is closest in comparison to a night journey film, sort of like **After Hours**, even though Feldman's character never leaves the hotel. Instead, over the course of the evening, he is in and out of the ballroom, a room upstairs where his girlfriend has left her belongings, another party that is being held in a room on that same floor, the elevator, and the hotel's backrooms, kitchen, stairwells and roof. It begins with the structure of a romantic comedy, with Feldman's character trying to work up enough nerve to give his girlfriend a present, but the more often his intention is thwarted by a distraction, the weirder the film becomes, and while there is little hint of it at first, by the conclusion it has turned into a very weird fantasy horror feature. If you enjoyed **Joe vs. the Volcano**, you might well be beguiled, but if you lack the patience for movies that experiment with narrative form and genre expectations, then you might not be so eager to see it through. This is, however, where 4K comes in.

Arrow has also released a standard Blu-ray (UPC#760137202561, \$40), and it has strikingly deeper, richer colors than the 4K presentation, but the colors are also a little over saturated, where the 4K image is smooth, sharp and solid at every moment. Coupled with the wonderful 5.1-channel DTS sound, which has an invigorating and even experimental dimensional mix (the dialog is suppressed for a while near the end), the quality of the picture itself is enough to hold your attention and allow you to tolerate the activities on the screen. Hues on the 4K presentation look fine even though they are more subdued and less candy-like than the hues on the standard BD, but the precision of the image, coupled with Mira's camera moves and editing, pulls you along regardless of the oddities that begin popping up along the way (what appears on the first viewing to be staff members working on an ice sculpture with blow torches turns out, on a subsequent viewing, to be them defrosting an enormous tuning fork), and holds your attention entirely because of the pleasure conveyed by the camera's movements and images. Even Feldman's performance is less irritating when his facial features are smoother.

The picture is letterboxed with an aspect ratio of about 2.35:1. The film is a Spanish production, but it was shot in English and is supported by optional English subtitles. Both presentations have the same special features. There are two trailers, a small collection of promotional photos in still frame, a 10 minute interview with Mira and Feldman after a screening, another 17-minute talk by Mira about the film and an excellent 17-minute breakdown of a specific sequence, with Mira going into highly informative details about how he initially planned the shoot by timing the scene out on the set and then the various additional work that went into choosing and executing each shot.

Mira and Feldman also supply a rewarding commentary track, talking about the film's inception, explaining as best they can the plot, pointing out various technical aspects (Feldman is in at least part of every single shot of the film, although sometimes it is just his elbow) and sharing other trivia, such as when Feldman's character discards the Prince *Sign o' the Times* record album. "My first ex-wife had an affair with Prince, so there was a lot of meaning in taking that record and picking it up and throwing it on the floor. When I look at it with disgust and then I throw it, there's a reason for that."

Whodunit

On a dark and stormy night, the bridge is washed out, so a half-dozen different desperate travelers stop at a remote inn, owned and operated by a major criminal mastermind, to wait out the storm in the cheap 1943 PRC thriller, **The Black Raven**, a Film Masters *Archive Collection* Blu-ray (UPC#840418339121, \$22). Directed by Sam Newfield, there is a lot of arguing and spurious goings on in the first part of the 61-minute program, and then at the halfway point, there is a murder, and shortly afterwards, a sheriff shows up and tries to figure out who the murderer is. Much of the movie has this or that character creeping around in the shadows and semi-darkness, with rain pounding at the windows and the rafters. While the staging and acting may be a bit too stodgy for the film to be really fun, it can still be enjoyable to just see the characters struggling with the stress and the mystery of their situation. George Zucco and Wanda McKay star, and Glenn Strange is among the cast members. The squared full screen black-and-white picture has no significant damage and the image is not overly soft although the partial darkness of the setting is not aided by the weak contrasts. The monophonic sound is relatively strong, although the dialog recording leaves a bit to be desired at times. There are optional English subtitles, and the disc does not start up where it left off if playback is terminated.

Raye, Hope and Grable

Bob Hope and Jack Whiting play lower level Naval officer brothers who are both smitten with the girl they grew up with, played by Betty Grable in the 1938 Paramount production, **Give Me a Sailor**, released on Blu-ray by Universal Studios Home Entertainment (UPC#840418342374, \$22). Top billed Martha Raye plays the sister of Grable's character and has been smitten with Whiting's character throughout her life. She and Hope's character are best friends, and obviously it takes all 78 minutes of the movie for them to figure out that they are made for each other. Directed by Elliott Nugent, the actual plot mechanisms are confused and often wildly illogical, but the film's star power, Hope's timing and Raye's slapstick skills will be enough to please undemanding viewers. The squared full screen black-and-white picture has minimal wear and is reasonably smooth. The monophonic sound is okay and there are optional English subtitles.

March Special Edition: African-American filmmakers

Our Mar 25 Special Edition featured boxed set Blu-ray collections of African-American filmmakers 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 Kino Lorber's **Oscar Micheaux The Complete Collection** (UPC#738329269395, \$90), the Criterion Collection's **Melvin Van Peebles Essential Films** (UPC#715515264617, \$125) and Criterion's **The Signifvin' Works of Marlon Riggs** (UPC#715515260114, \$50).

DVD News

CRITERION CORNER: The Criterion Collection is releasing Stanley Donen's **Charade** in 4K format with the commentary featuring Donen and screenwriter Peter Stone. Bob Rafelson's **Five Easy Pieces** will be in 4K and will have a commentary from Rafelson and interior designer Toby Rafelson; **Soul Searching in Five Easy Pieces**, a 2009 program; **BBStory**, a documentary about BBS Productions, with Rafelson, Jack Nicholson, Karen Black, Ellen Burstyn, Peter Bogdanovich, Henry Jaglom and others; a documentary featuring critic David Thomson and historian Douglas Brinkley; and audio excerpts from a 1976 AFI interview with Rafelson. Lav Diaz's **Magellan** will come with an interview with Diaz. Jafar Panahi's **It Was Just an Accident** will be in 4K and will include a conversation between Panahi and filmmaker Ramin Bahrani, and a Cannes Film Festival press conference from 2025 featuring Panahi and members of the cast and crew. Lisa Cholodenko's **High Art** will come with a commentary from 2004 featuring Cholodenko; a conversation between Cholodenko and filmmaker Karyn Kusama; interviews with Ally Sheedy, Radha Mitchell and photographer JoJo Whilden; and **Dinner Party** (1997), a short film by Cholodenko. Mel Hondo's **West Indies: The Fugitive Slaves of Liberty** will have a program featuring archival interviews with Hondo; an interview with African-cinema scholar Aoubakar Sanogo; and excerpted archival interview with cinematographer François Catonné. **Eclipse Series 6: Carlos Saura's Flamenco Trilogy** will contain **Blood Wedding**, **Carmen** and **El Amor Brujo**. Two John Waters films are being released in 4K format. **Hairspray** will feature a commentary featuring Waters and Ricki Lake; a conversation between Waters and WFUM DJs Dave "the Spazz" Abramson and Gaylord Fields; an interview with Lake and Colleen Fitzpatrick; reflections from Debbie Harry, Jo Ann Havrilla, Leslie Ann Powers, Clayton Prince, Shawn Thompson, and Pia Zadora; deleted scenes; a behind-the-scenes documentary; **Get to Know John Waters** from 1987; and an interview with production designer Vincent Peranio. **Desperate Living** will come with a commentary featuring Waters and Liz Renay; an optional Italian dub track; a conversation between Waters and film programmer Cristina Cacioppo; **Back to Mortville**, a tour of the film's main Baltimore location, led by Waters; interview with actors Susan Lowe, Mary Vivian Pearce, and Mink Stole; and an interview with production designer Vincent Peranio.

NEW IN BLU: The following titles have recently been released on Blu-ray—Bite School, Cool As Hell, Cool As Hell 2 The Quest for God's Bong, From Dusk Till Bong, Hack Job, Killer Waves, I Spill Your Guts, It Wants Blood!, It Wants Blood! 2, The Litch, Murder Zone 1 (Acid Bath), Murder Zone 2 (Acid Bath), Murder Zone 3 (Acid Bath), Murder Zone 4, Murder Zone 5, Murder Zone 6, Party Patrol 14, Party Patrol 15, Party Patrol 16, Party Patrol 17, Party Patrol 18, Party Patrol 19, Party Patrol 20, Party Patrol 21, Party Patrol 22, Party Patrol 23, Party Patrol 24, Party Patrol 26, Party Patrol 26, Party Patrol 27, Robot Dracula, What's in the Locker? (Acid Bath); Embalmer (AGFA); The Anti-vax Conspiracy, Year of the Rabbit (All3); The Great Smokey Roadblock, Triumph of the Spirit, The Young Doctors (Amazon); Good Boy, Out Come the Wolves, Talamasca The Secret Order Season 1 (AMD); David (Angel); Hoagie (Art); Marty Supreme (A24); Bird of Fire, Calling Nurse Meow, Caught in Time, Cloudy Mountain, Death

View, Deleted, El Bumbun, Emile, The Fall of Alejandra, Forbidden Womanhood, Illegal Dreams, The Pyramid, Ride Hard Live Free, Seeds, Theta States, 13 Tracks to Frighten Agatha Black, Unraveling, The World We Knew (Bayview); Filies Meurtrieres and the Films of Antoine Pellissier (Bleeding Skull); Rebuilding (Bleaker Street); Busted Babies, Coven of the Black Cube (Blood Sick); The Banished (Brainstorm); Ella McCay, Is This Thing On?, Zootopia 2 (Buena Vista); Bipolar 4, Casting Stones, Jack Jonah En Espanol, La Cabana (Burning Bulb); Autonomous Women, Yesterday (Capital); The Summoning of Chloe Kang (Cardinal); Body of Evidence, Demonwarp, The Gambler, Married to the Mob (CAV); The Strange Dark (Chroma); Little Amélie or the Character of Rain, The Swordsman Trilogy (Cinedigm); Cottonmouth (Cineverse); Classe Tous Risques, Killers of the Flower Moon, A Man and a Woman, Testament (Criterion); Flashlight (Cosmic); White Sun of the Desert (Deaf Crocodile); Hallow Road (Decal); Love Camp (Delirium); The Image Revolution (ETR); Swamp Dogg Gets His Pool Painted (Factory 25); Bye Bye Brazil, Solvent, Suo Duo Two Films by Masayuki Suo (Film Movement); Chaplin's Mutual Comedies (Flicker Alley); Squatch (Freestyle); Decadent Evil, Decadent Evil 2 (Full Moon); Pet Frenzy Complete Series (Gemini); Dead to Rights (Giant); The Grind (Indican); Not without Hope (Ketchup); America 3000, Beethoven, The Blue Light, The Business of Fancy Dancing, The Hi-Lo Country, Ilsa The Tigress of Siberia, Little Trouble Girls, Mairget Sees Red, Man about Town / Artists and Models, A Night in the Life of Jimmy Reardon, Peter Sellers Early Classics, The Prisoner of Zenda, Ray, Scott Joplin, The Sexplorers/Raw Love (Kino); The Bleeder (Klub Super 8); Aansoo Ban Gaye Phool, Aap Beati, Aavishkar, Ankur The Seedling, Anpadh, Anubhav, Bahurani, Bepanaah, Bollywood after Dark Bheegay Honth Tere, Bollywood after Dark Chanchal Haseena, Bollywood after Dark Midnight Romance, Bollywood after Dark Miss Teacher, Bollywood after Dark School Teacher, Bollywood after Dark Use & Throw, Chori Mera Kaam, Cursed, Do Chor, Dulaara, Ekka Raja Rani, Falak, Fifty Fifty, Gehrayee, Gharana, Hanste Khelte, Jhoothi, Joroo Ka Ghulam, Kabeela, Kartoos, Khel Khel Mein, Kuchhe Dhaage, Maati Maangey Khoon, Malditas, Manzil, 928 Nukes, Nishant, No One Will Hear You Scream, Oonche Log, Sachai Ki Taqat, Samadhi, Sau Din Saas Ke, Sawan Bhadon, Shakeela, Shatranj Ke Khilari, Sherni, Sparsh, Suhaag Raat, Swami, The Train, Vishwanath, Waqt Ki Awaz, Zakhmi Aurat, Zulm Ki Zanjeer (Leomark); Assault on Sacred Mountain, Nova Star, Radio Man, Remotely Famous (Liminal); Greenland, Greenland 2 Migration, The Housemaid (Lionsgate); American Magick, Greenland 2 Migration (Maelstrom); Bad Luck Banging or Loony Pom (Magnolia); The Chase, Eli Roth Presents Dream Eater, Genghis Khan, The Good Shepherd (Mill Creek); Blackberry, Supernova, Unspeakable Beyond the Wall of Sleep (MPI); The History of Sound, Lurker (Mubi); Agitator, Bakterion, The Birthday, Cat Sick Blues, Cruel Tale of Bushido, Cutter's Way, The Dancing Hawk, Eiichi Kudo's Samurai Revolution Trilogy, Helter Skelter, Highway to Hell, The Key, Picture of a Nymph, Razor Blade Smile, Sakuran (MVD); Teddy Out of Tune (Nobudge); All Creatures Great and Small Season 6, The Court Jester, Last Train from Gun Hill, The Running Man, The SpongeBob Movie Search for SquarePants, Star Trek Strange New Worlds Season 3 (Paramount); Mimics (Pinnacle Peak); The Survivor (Powerhouse); King Kung Fu (Reel Vault); Aita, All American Bikini Car Wash, Bad Boy, Blood Dynasty, Dead Woman Walking, Diamond Sky, Drakulon, Event Zero, Glyndebourne The Untold History, GOD Game of Death, Herman, History of the Gun, Hood Bosses, Illicit Content, The Maid, The Mill Killers, Night Has Settled, No Beast So Fierce, Paranormal Asylum, Paul Newman Behind Blue Eyes, Raising Hitler, Reputation, Rising Sun, Siné, Skinford Chapter 2, Sons of God, Soviet Zombie Invasion, Space Vampire, Tale of the Forest Unicorn, Tangled Up in Christmas, Taped Up Families, The Vindicator, We Go Again, World War I All Quiet on the Western Front The True Story, The Worst Film Festival Ever, Wrestling Alligators (Rising Sun); Deadwood Park (Saturn's Core); Petite Solange (Several Futures); Repeater (Shoreline); Anaconda, The Choral, Cobra Kai Complete Series, For All Mankind Season 2, A Lot Like Love, Merrily We Roll Along (Sony); Cape Cod Cthulhu, Jeanie's Face Exploded, Jim Haggerty's Unnatural Causes (SRS); Beam Me Up Sulu (Tribeca); Love and other Catastrophes (Umbrella); Armed (Uncork'd); The Benny Goodman Story, The Big Broadcast of 1938, Give Me a Sailor, Hamnet, Honky Tonk, Resident Alien Season 4, Resident Alien Complete Series, Scott Pilgrim Takes Off Complete Series, Song Sung Blue, This Is the Night, Variety Girl (Universal); The Accidental Getaway Driver (Utopia); Bonus Trip, Escape from Isis, Fungus, Junction, Portal in the Pines (Vantage); We Bury the Dead (Vertical); Dead of Night Complete Series (VHSHitfest); Humphrey Bogart Collection, The Gay Divorcee, It All Came True, Kingdom, Looney Tunes Bugs Bunny Collection What's Up Doc?, Looney Tunes Collector's Vault Volume 2, The Man Who Came to Dinner, Scooby's All Star Laff-A-Lympics, Tea and Sympathy, Tennessee Williams Collection (Warner); The Glassworker (Watermelon); Blazing Fists, Grizzly Night, Legend of the Fist The Return of Chen Zhen, Lone Samurai, Relentless (Well Go); Big Boobs Buster, Whitest Kids U Know's Mars (Whole Grain); La Cocina (Willa)

NEW IN 4K: The following titles have recently been released in 4K format—Marty Supreme (A24), Is This Thing On?, Zootopia 2 (Buena Vista); Body of Evidence, Demonwarp, The Gambler, Married to the Mob (CAV); The Devil's Advocate, Hair Caesar, Outbreak, The Swordsman Trilogy (Cinedigm); The Blade, Classe Tous Risques, Killers of the Flower Moon, Viridiana (Criterion); Shanghai Blues (Film Movement); A Bridge Too Far, Dead Again, Ilsa The Tigress of Siberia, K2, Mimic, Port of Shadows, Ray, Somewhere in Time, Uncommon Valor (Kino); Greenland, Greenland 2 Migration, The Housemaid (Lionsgate); Bakterion, The Birthday, Blue Sunshine, Cutter's Way, The Devil's Rain, The Final Programme, The Key, Razor Blade Smile, Red Sonja, Salem's Lot, She Killed in Ecstasy, Vampyros Lesbos (MVD); Rango, The Running Man, Star Trek Strange New Worlds Season 3 (Paramount); Dead Kids, The Survivor (Powerhouse); Hamnet (Universal); Lone Samurai (Well Go)

An index to the reviews contained in this issue

BDs
All the President's Men 4K p2
The Benny Goodman Story p5
The Big Broadcast of 1938 p4
The Birthday 4K p6
The Black Raven p6
Classe Tous Risques 4K p4
Cutter's Way p3
Dragonfly Squadron 3D p3
Gambling Ship p5
The Girl Who Leapt Through Time 4K p6
Give Me a Sailor p7
The Great Smokey Roadblock p5
Honky Tonk p4
Killers of the Flower Moon 4K p1
The Last of the Cowboys) p5
Legend of the Fist The Return of Chen Zhen p6
A Man and a Woman p2
Melvin Van Peebles Essential Films p7
Mogambo p4
Oscar Mischeaux The Complete Collection p7
Romancing in Thin Air p1
The Signifyin' Works of Marlon Riggs p7
Tea and Sympathy p4
This Is the Night p5
(Un Homme et Une Femme) p2
Variety Girl p5
The Young Doctors p5

Current Attractions

The following DVDs recently appeared for the first time:
Absolutely Fabulous Complete Collection (Warner)
Act One (Bayview)
The Ad Libbers Surviving Episodes (Classico)
Adriatic The Sea That Unites (Bayview)
The Adventures of Robin Hood V. 25 (Alpha)
The Adventures of Robin Hood V.26 (Alpha)
After All (BMG)
The Afterglow (Bayview)
Afterlife Beyond the Light (Vision)
Agent Kelly (Filmhub)
Aia (Rising Sun)
Alex and Jaime (Bayview)
Al 4da Green (Filmhub)
Al American Blkin Car Wash (Rising Sun)
Al Creatures Great & Small Season 6 (Paramount)
All the Names of God (Kino)
All the Names of God (Myrad)
America 250 Alexander Graham Bell / Thomas Edison / The Wright Brothers (Wonderscape)
America 250 Boston Tea Party / Revolutionary War / George Washington (Wonderscape)
America 250 The Louisiana Purchase / Lewis & Clark / Sacagawea (Wonderscape)
American Magic (Maestrom)
Amityville Aliens (MVD)
Anacostia (Sony)
Ancient China A Journey Back in Time (Bayview)
Ancient India A Journey back in Time (Bayview)
Angels (Bayview)
Animal Within (Rising Sun)
April (Bayview)
Armed (Uncork'd)
Artists of the 20th Century Jackson Pollock (Bayview)
Artists of the 20th Century Wassily Kandinsky (Bayview)
Assault on Sacred Mountain (Liminal)
Autonomous Woman (Capitol)
The Avenging Hand (Alpha)
Baby Love Babies Being Babies (Bayview)
Bad Boy (Rising Sun)
Bad Provincial Stories (Bayview)
Battle for the Western Front (Uncork'd)
Bedroom Story (Reel)
The Benson Murder Case (Reel Vault)
Big Bad CGI Monsters (Socal)
The Big Johnson (Freestyle)
Bigfoot Massacre No One Gets Out Alive (Chemical Burn)
Bipolar 4 (Burning Bulb)
Bite School (Acid Bath)
Black Mamba (Bayview)
Blazing Fists (Well Go)
Bloodz vs Volvez (Bayview)
Bonus Trip (Vantage)
The Book of Life (Bayview)
Borderland (Bayview)
Born Dead (Bayview)
Boy on the Bridge (Bayview)
The Brighton Miracle (BMG)
Buddy Bebob vs. The Living Dead (Bayview)
Bully 911 (Bayview)
The Business of Fancypancing (Kino)
Buster Crabbe Western Feature Films (Alpha)
Casting Stones (Burning Bulb)
Censor Addiction (X4)
Cherot (Filmhub)
Charliebird (Freestyle)
The Choral (Sony)
Classe tous risques (Criterion)
Clka (Sony)
Clown and Out (Freestyle)
The Closer Complete Series (Warner)
Colora Kai Season 6 (Sony)
Code 3 V.4 (Alpha)
Condemned (Reel Vault)
Continental Split (Kino)
Cool As Hell (Acid Bath)
Cool As Hell 2 The Quest for Gods Bong (Acid Bath)

Cottonmouth (Cineverse)
County Line All in (Imagiom)
Cowgirls n Angels / Cowgirls n Angels 2 (Samuel Goldwyn)
Creatures of the Night (MVD)
Crossroads (Bayview)
Crybaby Bridge (X4)
Cursed (Leomark)
Dante Goes to War (Bayview)
Dark Legacy (Filmhub)
Dark Tales from Channel X (Bayview)
Date Bait (Alpha)
David (Angel)
The Dead Half (Bayview)
Dead Woman Walking (Rising Sun)
Death Breed (Bayview)
Death of a Salesman (Reel Vault)
The Debt of Maximilian (Bayview)
The Devils Daughter (Bayview)
Diamond Sky (Rising Sun)
Dilliantes (Bayview)
Dirty (Filmhub)
Discovery of Art Delacroix (Bayview)
Discovery of Art Kurt Schwitters (Bayview)
Discovery of Art Leonardo Da Vinci (Bayview)
Discovery of Art Maxfield Parrish (Bayview)
Discovery of Art The English The Masters Hogarth (Bayview)
Discovery of Art Toulouse-Lautrec (Bayview)
The Divine Sarah Bernhardt (Film Movement)
Don't Let Me Stay (Filmhub)
Dr. Smith and the Fantastic Castle (Bayview)
Dragon Heart Adventures beyond This World (Freestyle)
Drakulon (Rising Sun)
Dreamland (Bayview)
The Earthing Movie (Big Picture)
Eastern Philosophy (Bayview)
Eden's Last Chance (Bayview)
Eerie Fairy Tales (Bayview)
El Bumbun (Bayview)
El Proceso de Las Senoritas Vivanco (MVD)
Elenore Makes Love (Filmhub)
Elvis & Priscilla Conditional Love (Filmhub)
Endgame 2060 (Filmhub)
Epiphany (Deskpoo)
Equity (Filmhub)
Erich Von Stroheim The Man Who Loved to Hate Collection (Alpha)
Escape from ISIS (Vantage)
Event Zero (Rising Sun)
Everything Is Both (Filmhub)
Evil Night (Bayview)
Evi Nun (Kino)
Eye for Eye (Filmhub)
A Faith Under Siege (Alan Ferguson)
The Fall Guy (Reel Vault)
Feed First (Reel Vault)
Finding Sara (Bayview)
Finding the Zone (Freestyle)
First Haunt (Deskpoo)
Flashlight (Cosmic)
Flirting with Fate (Alpha)
The Follower (Bayview)
For Her (Bayview)
Forggetting Dad (Filmhub)
Four Star Playhouse V.1 (Alpha)
From Dusk Till Bong (Acid Bath)
From Sea to Shining Sea Katharine Lee Bates and the Story of America the Beautiful (Bullfrog)
Fungus (Vantage)
Galjin (Freestyle)
Genius Charles Darwin (Bayview)
Girl/Girl Scene 1984 (Filmhub)
The Girl in the Cornfield (Filmhub)
Gloria (Deskpoo)
Glyndebourne The Untold Story (Rising Sun)
God & Beer (BMG)
GOD Game of Death (Rising Sun)
God's Not Here (Filmhub)
The Golem Double Feature (Alpha)
Good Boy (AMD)
Great Kings of England King Charles I (Bayview)
Great Kings of England King Henry VIII (Bayview)

Great Kings of England Richard the Lionheart (Bayview)
Great Kings of England William the Conqueror (Bayview)
Great Queens of England Bouclicia of the Ioni (Bayview)
The Great Smokey Roadblock (Amazon)
Greenland (Lonsgate)
Greenland 2 Migration (Lonsgate)
Grizzly Night (Well Go)
H.P. Lovecraft's Two Left Arms (Bayview)
Hack Job (Acid Bath)
Half Moon (Filmhub)
Hamnet (Universal)
Happy Birthday (Filmhub)
Hellfire (Sony)
Hellfire (Rising Sun)
Herman's Hermits (Bayview)
The History of Sound (Mubi)
The Impressionists (Rising Sun)
Hood Bosses (Rising Sun)
The Housemaid (Lonsgate)
I Spill Your Guts (Acid Bath)
Idled (Bayview)
Illicit Content (Rising Sun)
Im Haunted (Filmhub)
Immaculate Possession (Bayview)
The Impressionists Degas (Bayview)
The Impressionists Pissarro (Bayview)
Inside the World's Most Haunted Houses (Filmhub)
Intervention (Giant)
The Iron Master (Alpha)
Is This Thing On? (Buena Vista)
The Islands (Bayview)
It Wants Blood! (Acid Bath)
It Wants Blood! (Acid Bath)
Jack Johnson an Espanol (Burning Bulb)
The Jakes Are Missing (Bayview)
JFK X Solving the Crime of the Century (Filmhub)
Journey in the Void (Bayview)
Journey to You / The Easter Bloom / The Blessing Braoel (Cinedigm)
The July Group (Reel Vault)
Junction (Vantage)
Justice Road (Filmhub)
Killer Rental (Cineverse)
Killer Waves (Acid Bath)
Killers of the Flower Moon (Criterion)
King Kung Fu (Reel Vault)
Kingdom (Warner)
The Kremlin (Bayview)
Lady Lawman (Not So Sane)
The Legend of King Arthur Camelot (Bayview)
Less than a Whisper (Bayview)
The Life after Death Project 21 (Acid Bath)
Encounters (Yellow Hat)
Life in Medieval Times (Bayview)
Life in Victorian Times (Bayview)
Life Love Dogs (Filmhub)
The Litch (Acid Bath)
Little Amelle or The Character of Rain (Cinedigm)
Little Trouble Girls (Kino)
Lover to Tell About It (Bayview)
The Living (Bayview)
Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman Complete Series (Warner)
Lone Samurai (Well Go)
The Lord Doesn't Hate You (Bayview)
Louisa An Amazing Adventure (Bayview)
Love the Skin You're In (Vertical)
Lovetubg (Bayview)
Lurker (Mubi)
Magnificent Lady (Reel Vault)
The Maid (Rising Sun)
Malditas (Leomark)
The Man with Four Legs (Bayview)
The Man with the Silver Case (Freestyle)
The Man with the Top Hat (Bayview)
Marty Supreme (A24)
Maverick Manhunt Brazil (Filmhub)
MaXXXine (Lionsgate)

McBeter Fast Food Has a New King (Bayview)
Me and the Devil (Bayview)
Men Are Such Fools (Alpha)
Merly We Roll Along (Sony)
Midnight 3 (Socal)
The Mill (Bayview)
The Mill Killers (Rising Sun)
Mimory Freaks (Bayview)
Misdirection (Cineverse)
Moments of Darkness (Bayview)
Moonfire (Bayview)
Mr. Robinson Crusoe (Alpha)
Murder before Evenson (AMD)
Murder Zone 1 (Acid Bath)
Murder Zone 2 (Acid Bath)
Murder Zone 3 (Acid Bath)
Murder Zone 4 (Acid Bath)
Murder Zone 5 (Acid Bath)
Murder Zone 6 (Acid Bath)
Muzzle 2 City of Wolves (Image)
My Autopsy (Bayview)
Night Has Settled (Rising Sun)
Nite Haunted (Filmhub)
928 Nukes (Leomark)
No Best So Fierce (Rising Sun)
No One Will Hear You Scream (Leomark)
No Such Thing As Loyalty 3 (Filmhub)
Nora's Hair Salon 3 (Filmhub)
Nosotros (Bayview)
Nostradamus (Bayview)
Not without Hope (Ketchup)
Nova Star (Liminal)
Nuns An Italian Horror Story (Bayview)
Nuremberg (Sony)
The Odd Perspective (Bayview)
Of the People Women of the Civil Rights Movement (Bayview)
Old Habits Die Hard (Bayview)
Ombis Alien Invasion (Filmhub)
One Bad Apple A Hannah Swensen Mystery (Cinedigm)
Operation Anacostia The Battle of Roberts Ridge (Filmhub)
Operation Carpetbagger (Bayview)
Operation Fernby (BMG)
Operation X (Reel Vault)
Oscar Brown (Samuel Goldwyn)
Our Writter (Rising Sun)
Cry Mornings (Filmhub)
Pacific Battle Hell (Alpha)
Paranormal Asylum (Rising Sun)
Party Patrol 14 (Acid Bath)
Party Patrol 15 (Acid Bath)
Party Patrol 16 (Acid Bath)
Party Patrol 17 (Acid Bath)
Party Patrol 18 (Acid Bath)
Party Patrol 19 (Acid Bath)
Party Patrol 20 (Acid Bath)
Party Patrol 21 (Acid Bath)
Party Patrol 22 (Acid Bath)
Party Patrol 23 (Acid Bath)
Party Patrol 24 (Acid Bath)
Party Patrol 25 (Acid Bath)
Party Patrol 26 (Acid Bath)
Party Patrol 27 (Acid Bath)
The Passion Orator (BSX)
Paul Newman Behind Blue Eyes (Rising Sun)
Penitent (Bayview)
Perfect Horror (Bayview)
Phenit (Bayview)
Pike River (Brainstorm)
Pillars of Faith Religions of the World (Bayview)
Plato's Reality Machine (Filmhub)
The Poltergeist Diaries (Bayview)
Pompeii The Doomed City (Bayview)
Poppy (Indiepix)
Portal in the Pines (Vantage)
The Post Impressionists Gauguin (Bayview)
Psycho Therapy (Bayview)
The Pyramids Jewels of the Nile (Bayview)
Quakesaurus (MVD)
Quantum Supremacy (MVD)
Radio Man (Liminal)
Rainfalls (Bayview)
Raising Hitler (Rising Sun)
Rare TV Pilots (Alpha)
Ravenstein (Bayview)
Resawakening (Level 33)
Relentless (Well Go)

Remotely Famous (Liminal)
Repeater (Shoreline)
Reputation (Rising Sun)
Rescue from Gilligan's Island Trivia Edition (Filmhub)
Resident Alien Complete Series (Universal)
Resident Alien Season 4 (Universal)
The Risky Business A Look Inside America's Adult Film Industry (Filmhub)
The Roaring Game (Brainstorm)
Robot Dracula (Acid Bath)
The Romans in North Africa (Bayview)
The Romanic Poets (Bayview)
The Rubinos Live at Rockpast 1978 (MVD)
The Running Man (Paramount)
Runoff (Bayview)
Sins (Filmhub)
Second Honeymoon (Alpha)
Secret Space UFOs Fast Walkers (Filmhub)
7 Keys (Level 33)
The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World A Journey back in Time (Bayview)
Severe Clear (Filmhub)
Shackleton's Captain (Filmhub)
Shadow Force (Lonsgate)
The Shadows (Filmhub)
She Was Hers (Kino)
The Silent Saint (Bayview)
Sin (Filmhub)
Siné (Rising Sun)
Sisterhood Inc. / Return to Office (Cinedigm)
Skarecrow A Curse Never Dies (Bayview)
Skate to Hell (Deskpoo)
Skinfoor Chapter 2 (Rising Sun)
Somewhere in Montana (Eledic)
Song Sung Blue (Universal)
Sons of God (Bayview)
Soul Man (Bayview)
Soviet Zombie Invasion (Rising Sun)
Special ID (Well Go)
The SpongeBob Movie Search for SquarePants (Paramount)
Square One Michael Jackson (Filmhub)
Star Trek Strange New Worlds Season 3 (Paramount)
Step Back Door Closing (Freestyle)
Stolen Breath The Truth Revealed (Filmhub)
The Strange Dark (Chroma)
The Summoning of Chloe Kane (Cardina)
The Supernatural Witchcraft (Bayview)
Sure Shot Dombrowski (Bayview)
Suspended Time (Music Box)
Swipes on Hoops (Bayview)
Talamasca The Secret Order Season 1 (AMD)
Tale of the Forest Unicorn (Rising Sun)
Tangled Up in Christmas (Rising Sun)
Taped Up Families (Rising Sun)
The Assassin Season 1
Tax Broke (Ace Spectrum)
Tea Party in the Living (Bayview)
Teacher Shortage (Bayview)
Theresa (Filmhub)
The Things You Kill (Reverse)
357 Six Bullets for Revenge (Filmhub)
The Thom Birds The Collector's Set (Warner)
Time Travel Is Dangerous (Level 33)
Timesstamp (Kino)
Tipline Mysteries Dial 1 for Murder (Cinedigm)
Todd (Bayview)
Tomcat Tales (Filmhub)
Transparent (Filmhub)
The Transparent Woman (Bayview)
Travis The True Story of Travis Walton (Filmhub)
Triumph of the Spirit (Amazon)
Troubles (Bayview)
Tumbabout (Bayview)
Tunabots of Christmas (Persimmon)
Underground Comics (Filmhub)

Up on the Wootlop (Filmhub)
Vampires (Bayview)
VHS Resurrection (Filmlanda)
Vic Effects (X4)
Vice and Virtue (Deskpoo)
Villa Amore / Blind Date Book Club / The Perfect Bride / 3 Bed 2 Bath 1 Ghost / Legend of the Lost Locker / Wake Me a Match (Cinedigm)
The Vindicator (Rising Sun)
Vintage Exploitation (Alpha)
The Voice That Rode America The Dick Biondi Story (Freestyle)
Voltron Legendary Defender Complete Series (Universal)
Water Horse (Vision)
We Bury the Dead (Vertical)
We Go Again (Rising Sun)
What's in the Locker? (Acid Bath)
Winterset (Alpha)
The Woman in Brown (Alpha)
World War I All Quiet on the Western Front The True Story (Rising Sun)
The Worst Film Festival Ever (Rising Sun)
Wow! Never Knew That Season 2 (Dreamscape)
Wrestling Alligators (Rising Sun)
Yesterday (Bayview)
The Young Doctors (Amazon)
The Young Land (Reel Vault)
Zest for Death A Hannah Swensen Mystery (Cinedigm)
Zodiac Killer Project (Music Box)
Zootopia 2 (Buena Vista)
*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:
→ Party Patrol 27
→ Party Patrol 28
→ Party Patrol 29
→ Party Patrol 30
→ Party Patrol 31
→ Mercy
→ Mr. Saturday Night
→ Fallout Season 2
From AMD:
Midsomer Murders Season 25
The Assassin Season 1
→ Sanctuary A Witch's Tale Season 2
→ My Life Is Murder Season 5
→ Angel: I Was a Stranger
→ Solo Mio
From Black Bear:
Christy Shelter
From Bleeker Street:
→ Stray Kids The DominANT Experience
From BMG:
→ Love in Storytown
From Buena Vista:
→ Send Help
From CAV:
Steam Room Stories The Movie
From Chemical Burn:
Full Zombie Jacket
Marathon of the Living Dead
→ Hot Miils and College Babes vs. Zombies
→ Death Row Minds Murder and Punishment
From Cinedigm:
→ Frank Whittle A Genius in the Family
From Oscilloscope:
Peacock
From Paramount:
Primate
Of the People Women of the Civil Rights Movement
Black and Jewish America An Intwoven History
The Forsytes Season 1
The Court of Monte Cristo
→ Cooking with Legends
→ Parenthood (David Attenborough)
→ I Love Lucy Complete Series (33 platters)
From Pop:
Dr. Jekyll & Mistress Hyde
From Reel Vault:
The Bold and the Beautiful
From Rising Sun:
→ Star Mitzvah
→ Exposed
→ Future Sex
→ The Death of Snow White
→ Duels
→ Fearless
→ Do Not Disturb
→ First Love
From Samuel Goldwyn:
→ Cold Storage
→ Cool Light
→ Sniper No Nation
→ GOAT
From Syndicado:
The Princess and the Dragon
From 360:
Messenger 666 3D The Messenger
→ 3rd Take Season 1 Episodes 1-8
→ The Ubiquitous Compact Disc
→ America's Most Deadly UFO Encounters
→ America's Most Deadly Police Chases 2
From Uncork'd:
→ Blood in Them Hills
→ Bone Face
→ Monster on a Plane
→ The Christmas Chain
From Universal:
→ Covert Affairs Complete Series (19 platters)
→ Good Luck Have Fun Don't Die
From Vantage:
→ Knock Out Blonde The Kellie Maloney Story
→ Kill Craft
From Vertical:
Thieves Highway
From Vision:
→ Time Hoppers
From Warner:
→ Abbott Elementary Season 4
→ Call the Midwife Season 15
→ CHIPIs Complete Series (31 platters)
→ Father Brown Season 13
→ Get Smart Complete Series (25 platters)
→ Gilligan's Island Complete Series (17 platters)
→ Gotham Complete Series (26 platters)
→ It Came from a Derry Season 1
→ Looney Tunes Cartoons Complete Series (6 platters)
→ Rizzoli & Isles Complete Series (24 platters)
→ Task Season 1
→ Wuthering Heights
From Well Go:
The Forbidden City
→ Sweetness
→ Youngblood
→ Agent Zero
From Wonderscape:
→ America 250 Founding Fathers and Mothers
→ America 250 Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War
→ America 250 Legislative Judicial and Executive Branches
From X4:
→ I Know Exactly How You Die
→ Killer Thong