



### ROSA (Blu-ray) 88 Films

Yuen Biao delivers one of his most energetic performances in this action-packed blend of martial arts, comedy, and romance. After a bungled mission, eccentric cop 'Little monster' Hsia is partnered with hot-tempered officer 'Mustache' Lei Kung on a high-stakes case: finding a missing police informer. Their only lead is Rosa, the informer's mysterious girlfriend—but as danger mounts, love and loyalty become just as complicated as the case itself. Featuring stunning stunts, witty banter, and heartfelt drama, Rosa is a must-have for fans of classic Hong Kong cinema — now on Blu-ray with crystal-clear picture and sound.

### A SAVAGE ART (Blu-ray) Magnaolia Home Entertainment

A *Savage Art* chronicles the life and career of Australian-born, Pulitzer Prize winning political cartoonist Patrick Oliphant. Oliphant's tenure as an American cartoonist spanned five decades and ten U.S. Presidents. In 1990 The New York Times called Oliphant "the most influential editorial cartoonist now working." The film covers the history and importance of political cartoons in global democracies, as well as the decline in the profession and in the newspaper industry. It also highlights the effects of extreme political partisanship on media and editorial cartooning, and shows how Oliphant used his biting wit, sharp critical eye and masterful drawing skills to take on presidents, popes and the powers that be.

### THE ISLAND CLOSEST TO HEAVEN (Blu-ray) Cult Epics

Based on Katsura Morimura's 1966 best-selling travelogue, Obayashi's paradise-laden coming-of-age tale is an island retreat to the white sands of New Caledonia. Fulfilling her late father's dream to take her to the island closest to heaven, bookish teen Mari ventures solo to the archipelago's indigo waters in search of this mythic locale. Taking in the island's sites, Mari journeys off the beaten path, befriend a host of friendly locals in the process,

from islander Taro to footloose tour guide Yuichi. *The Island Closest to Heaven* is filled with a sense of old school Hollywood romanticism, and forms an affecting portrait of a young girl's journey to self-discovery and her own piece of heaven deep within.

### DELINQUENT SCHOOLGIRLS (Blu-ray) VCI Entertainment

Our protagonists in this K-Mart budgeted cinematic carrier are escapees from an insane asylum! One is an ex-baseball player turned rapist, another is gay, and the ring-leader is a low-rent impressionist. When they stumble upon an all-girls school, antisocial behavior with these silicone 'students' ensues, but with a twist — the busty babes know karate! DREAM

### SAGA OF THE PHOENIX - LIMITED EDITION (Blu-ray) 88 Films

88 Films presents the North American Blu-ray debut of the Hong Kong spiritual fantasy cult classic, *Saga of the Phoenix*, in a limited-edition release, loaded with bonus content. The Holy Maiden of Hell, Ashura, is sentenced to reside for eternity inside a statue of a reclined Buddha after being caught practicing magic on Earth. She refuses her banishment because she can't exist without the Sun. Abbott Ji Ku and High Abbess give her seven last days on Earth. Master Peacock, Lucky Fruit, and others are sent to keep her from breaking her promise to return and serve her punishment. Ashura might not be their only problem. Hell's Concubine orders her demonic squad to Earth to kidnap Ashura so she can drain her rival's spirit and control other devils. *Saga of the Phoenix* is steeped in underworld intrigue and high-flying martial arts choreography, combined with quirky comedic moments. *Saga of the Phoenix* is a unique mix of outrageous mystical fantasy and martial arts action. The characters trade blows that defy gravity, battle giant stone dogs, and unleash massive fireballs. At the center of it all is a cartoonishly adorable genie

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The time has come, the walrus said,

## TO TALK OF MANY THINGS of shoes and ships and sealing wax of cabbages and kings

by Sal Giaratani

### ARE THEY OUT OF THEIR MINDS????

Are our city councilors out of their collective minds? The news is that our city councilors are even considering eliminating all parking requirements for residential developments in the latest step reportedly toward affordability. Boston has already been reducing parking requirements for affordable housing in 2021, and allowed developers to build projects without parking if 60 percent or more residential units were income-restricted.

The Boston City Council held a public hearing on December 9 on the proposal. No vote was taken but it appears it will be back on the city council agenda after the holidays. Now is the time for city residents to start contacting their district councilors and the chair of the council's planning, development and transportation committee chair, Councilor Sharon Durkan. As an East Boston resident today over in Jeffries Point and as a previous longtime resident of Charlestown such a proposal to allow for continued development without requiring on-site parking will only exacerbate the already growing shortage of parking spots in our city neighborhoods.

Adding more and more residents moving into new residential high-end developments out on to street looking for on-street parking isn't going to help either them or us find a parking spot. Also, what good does it do for City Hall to keep handing out residential parking

permits if there isn't any parking available?

Say No to ending parking requirements for developers. Why give them more reasons to overdevelop our communities?

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO BRENDA LEE

Singer Brenda Lee just turned 81 years old last Thursday, December 11. Every December just before Christmas her most famous hit "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" plays endlessly. I could listen to this cheerful song forever, not so for Mariah Carey's top Christmas song.

### DOES SHE EVER HEAR WHAT SHE SAYS?

Here's a little ditty from U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn), "When I hear Stephen Miller and his white supremacist rhetoric it reminds me of the way Nazis described Jewish people." She's so desperate to deflect attention away from the news of massive fraud from members of her own community in Minnesota that she threw the Nazi word at Miller. With her history of antisemitic comments, maybe she should avoid calling anyone a Nazi.

### GOLDEN OLDIE REMEMBRANCE

While listening to Sirius Radio on my car's dashboard this morning, I heard "These Eyes" by the Guess Who. Back in 1969 when I was only 21, this song was in the Top 10 in *Broadcast Magazine*. I love listening on Sundays to those old music shows by Casey Kasem. It is amazing how many old hits have withstood time so well! Can I tell you that back in the day when I was a band member of the SilentSirs I used to sing this one like I was somebody so cool.

### YO, ROCKY MAKIN' COMEBACK

The Philadelphia Art Board recently voted to return the iconic statue of Sylvester Stallone's Rocky back atop the steps of the Philadelphia Art Museum.

The bronze boxer will move outdoors once again, where it made its debut for the 1982 Rocky III movie. The 8-foot, 6-inch statue was created by Thomas Schomberg in 1980. Time to practice once again doing the Rocky run up those stairs, eh?

### REMEMBERING THE COCOANUT GROVE FIRE

Community members, descendants and local leaders gathered on piedmont Street on Saturday, November 29 to

mark the 83rd anniversary of the Coconut Grove fire to honor the 492 lives lost on November 29, 1942. Folks gather to remember as a tribute to the victims and to highlight the final push to complete the permanent memorial at the site. The dedication date is now scheduled for May 2026. For more information to donate, go to [cocoanutgrove.org](http://cocoanutgrove.org).

### NEW EAST BOSTON LIAISON FROM MAYOR'S OFFICE



(L-R): Sal G., and Carlos Garcia

I met Carlos Garcia, the Mayor's new East Boston Neighborhood liaison over at the Hyatt Hotel during the recent Eastie Elves event.

### REMEMBER PETER BALDASARI AND ALL HIS SAINTS POINTING THE WAY



Peter Baldasari

While walking past All Saint's Way on Battery Street it is hard not to think of Peter Baldasari as the guardian of all the saints inside that small alleyway dedicated to the saints. For decades it was Peter's job to keep the light burning at this sight. No one knew the saints more than Peter. Tourists would often stop by to gaze at it all and Peter was more than happy to talk about the saints. He would often recite the personal history of each and every one of them. All Saint's Way doesn't seem the same without him patrolling the piece of North End history. I miss him, everyone will miss him. Someone told me long ago that buildings don't make a neighborhood, nor do streets and parks. People, real flesh and blood people, give life to a neighborhood. People bring neighborhoods to life. Everyone together.

Peter never just lived in the North End. He lived for the North End. He was the North End.

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