DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for April 28, 2017

Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
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Welcome back to another edition listing all of the highlights coming your way on DVD and Blu-ray. There's plenty to choose from here, including a big Oscar-winner and a sequel in a major action/horror franchise. So, if you can't make it out to the movies this week, be sure to give one of these titles a try!

BIG NEW RELEASES!

Bokeh - This drama involves two American tourists vacationing in Iceland. After waking up one

morning, they are surprised to discover that literally everyone has disappeared. The pair go wandering around to try and find out what happened and what to do about it. Reviews for this independent production were split right down the middle. About half thought the movie looked gorgeous and effectively maintained an eerie mood. The others found the characters bland and didn't feel that enough was revealed in the end to justify the journey. The cast includes Maika Monroe, Matt O'Leary and Arnar Jonsson.

Catfight - Two college friends reunite at a party but find that their lives have moved in very different ways; one is wealthy wine enthusiast, while the other is a struggling artist. The two come to verbal barbs and a physical altercation that leads to conflict for years to come. This independent feature is a black comedy from writer/director Onur Tukel (*Summer of Blood*). It earned good reviews from the press. A few complained that the characters were just too nasty and unlikable, but more believed that it was a unique and at times biting satire. It stars Sandra Oh, Anne Heche and Alicia Silverstone.

The Daughter - After a 15-year absence, a man returns to his small-town home for his father's marriage to a mill owner. He reconnects with old friends, only to learn that his dad and new bride plan on closing the mill, putting the protagonist in the middle of a community quarrel. Critics were generally positive about this updated, Australian adaptation of the 1884 play, *The Wild Duck* . A few described it as too melodramatic for their liking, but more complimented the photography and fine work of the cast, helping to make the drama compelling. It features Geoffrey Rush, Ewen Leslie, Paul Schneider, Nicholas Hope, Miranda Otto and Sam Neill.

La La Land - One of the biggest films of last winter was this Oscar-winning musical, which took home prizes for Best Actress, Director, Cinematography and Music. It follows an aspiring actress and jazz musician attempting to fulfill their dreams in Hollywood and the struggles they face on a personal and professional level. As you might have guessed, notices were extremely strong for the feature. They called it an impressive homage to musicals of the past with great performances and a somewhat melancholy tone. The cast includes Ryan Gosling, Emma Stone, Rosemarie DeWitt, John Legend and J.K. Simmons.

The Marine 5: Battleground - The fourth sequel in this action series that originally stared John Cena follows the lead character from the last couple of installments in an all new adventure. This time out, the ex-marine is working as an EMT. He must help an injured man who has been targeted by a ruthless biker gang. This one has been made by WWE Studios for the DVD market exclusively, so there have been no reviews. In essence, you shouldn't expect too much

from this one. It features Mike 'The Miz' Mizanin, Maryse Mizanin, Heath Miller, Trinity Fatu and presumably even more wrestlers in supporting roles.

Mean Dreams - This coming-of-age thriller involves a 15-year old boyfriend and girlfriend living in a small, farming community. When the two decide to run away to escape an abusive father, they steal some cash from the dad for the trip. Unfortunately, the parent is a crooked cop and the money is part of a drug deal. As a result, the pair are ruthlessly pursued by the policeman. Notices were strong for this independent production, with compliments suggesting that it is a simple, tense and beautifully shot effort that bears some resemblance to Terrence Malick films like *Badlands*. It stars Sophie Nelisse, Josh Wiggins, Bill Paxton and Colm Feore.

Shangri-La Suite - Here's an indie drama with an eccentric premise. Set in 1974, a relationship develops between two institutionalized individuals with mental issues. When the Elvis-obsessed man is told in a vision to kill the famous singer, they both head on the road and plot an assassination. This one only played at festivals and reaction wasn't particularly good (many have stated online that the tone is off), so there haven't been many write-ups. For most, this release will be the first opportunity to see it. The headlining cast includes Emily Browning, Luke Grimes, Ashley Greene, Ron Livingston and Trevante Rhodes, with narration by Burt Reynolds.

Underworld: Blood Wars - The fifth film in the action/horror series picks up with its heroine "Death Dealer" fighting both Lycan forces and vampires who have turned against her. With each group close to wiping out the other, she plots a way for both to survive and stop the current war between species. The press were less-than-thrilled with the latest installment. They called it dull, repetitive and humorless with stiff, exposition-heavy dialogue and a lack of interesting characters. There were lots of comments about putting a stake through the heart of this franchise. It stars Kate Beckinsale, Theo James, Tobias Menzies and Charles Dance.

BLASTS FROM THE PAST!

We've got a lot to get through this week. Olive Films have some very rare and intriguing titles arriving on Blu-ray. The first group are from Polish filmmaker Walerian Borowczyk. Known for his unique movie poster art and animation work, the artist moved to France and began a filmmaking career. Some of his live-action titles can be explicit when it comes to sexual content. Reportedly, the ones here aren't particularly graphic, although they are well-regarded by cinema fans for their uniqueness and political commentary. *Blanche* (1971) tells the tale of a young woman in Medieval France who casts a spell over a King and his associates. They all fall for

her, and violence erupts during their attempts to woo her.
Goto: Island of Love
(1969) is a fable about a simple thief on an island led by a dictator. He moves up the ranks when others are eliminated after getting caught up in political dealings.

Also arriving are two Blu-rays featuring earlier, animated efforts. *Theatre of Mr. & Mrs. Kabal* (1967) aka
Mr. & Mrs. Kabal's Theatre
involves an eccentric married couple and their strange and at times surreal activities. Finally, you can pick up a collection of shorts in a disc titled,
Walerian Borowczyk: Short Films
(1962-73). There's an introduction from filmmaker Terry Gilliam (
Twelve Monkeys
,
Brazil
,
Time Bandits
), who is a fan of the artist and his work.

Olive Films also have a couple of non-Borowczyk titles hitting high definition. There's the French effort *Ophelia* (1963). It's said to be a modern take on Shakespeare's Hamlet. They also have *T he World's Most Beautiful Swindlers*
(1964), an anthology about cons taking place in different parts of the world and featuring filmmakers like Jean Luc Godard behind the camera. Alas, this is the short version that does not include the Roman Polanski segment.

On a different tact, Shout! Factory have some great cult films for your amusement. There's a Blu-ray of *Exterminator 2* (1984); it features a heroic vigilante armed with a flamethrower facing off against a villainous gang. The disc includes a commentary track with the director along with co-star Mario Van Peebles (who plays the villain) and publicity materials.

I Bury the Living (1958) is a little, low-budget chiller that I've always had a soft spot for. It's definitely a low-budget B-movie, but an atmospheric one with an eerie, ominous mood. It's about a cemetery director who accidentally puts the wrong pin on the wrong plot on his wall map. When the person suddenly dies, the new manager begins to fear that the board has some supernatural power. Who knows, maybe it can even raise the dead? The Blu-ray includes a new, high definition transfer, trailer and photo gallery.

Jerry Lewis fans can pick up *Don't Give Up the Ship* (1959), which features the comedian as a Junior Officer in the Navy who loses a destroyer and is tasked with returning to the sea to find it. *The Optimists* (1973) is a drama starring Peter Sellers as a song and dance man who befriends two children; they help him understand the world as much as he tries to offer guidance to them. The music comes from famed producer George Martin.

Criterion have a couple of great ones as well. *Rumble Fish* (1983) comes from famed director Francis Ford Coppola (*The Godfather* , *Apocalypse Now* , *The Outsiders*), telling the coming-of-age story of kid from the wrong side of the tracks. This one is much more introspective and existentialist than *The Outsiders* , with the filmmaker himself calling it an "art film for teenagers." It's a great looking movie too, beautifully photographed in black and white by Stephen H. Burum (*Something Wicked This Way Comes* , *The Untouchables* , *Carlito's Way* , *Mission: Impossible*). The Blu-ray includes a new 4K transfer, audio commentary with the director, new interviews and conversations with the cast and crew and a bevy of other incredible bonuses. If you like the movie, you'll want this disc.

They also have a high definition version of *Tampopo* (1985), a well-regarded Japanese film all about food. Specifically, the widow of a noodle shop owner who is determined to find the perfect recipe and her adventures in life while doing so. This one also comes to Blu-ray with a new, 4K transfer, a feature-length documentary on the making of the movie, an earlier short film from the director and new interviews with participants.

Warner Archive also have a couple of Blu-rays that can be specially ordered from their website. *From Hell It Came* (1957) is a low-budget monster movie about an island price who is wrongfully accused of a

crime and executed. He comes back as a walking tree, taking revenge on those who caused his death. Sounds like fun stuff. And
The Wheeler Dealers
(1963) is comedy starring James Garner and Lee Remick. It's about an entrepreneur trying to make some fast money on the New York stock market, but he's distracted when he falls for an analyst during his stay.

YOU KNOW, FOR KIDS!

Hope you like the *Power Rangers*, because that's about the only major release this week for young fry.

Power Rangers: Gekisou Sentai Carranger: The Complete Series

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