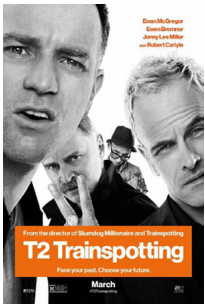


DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for June 30, 2017

Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
Friday, 30 June 2017 08:06



This is another one of those extremely busy weeks. There is a huge variety of new releases arriving on Blu-ray and DVD, with something in just about every genre. So if you can't make it out to the movies, give one of these titles a try!

BIG NEW RELEASES!

Absolutely Anything - It took a long time for this British comedy to make it to US theaters, coming some two years after it release elsewhere. The story involves a group of aliens who arrive on Earth. They decide to experiment on humanity by giving an Average Joe incredible powers and then watch what he does with them. While a few found it enjoyably silly, this effort from Terry Jones of the Monty Python troupe didn't impress most critics. They called it a hit-and-miss effort lacking satirical bite and wasting a great cast. It stars Simon Pegg, Kate Beckinsale, Sanjeev Bhasker, Rob Riggle and Eddie Izzard, as well as the voices of Robin Williams, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Michael Palin and Eric Idle.

The Autopsy of Jane Doe - This one was released on DVD a few months back but is now making its debut on Blu-ray. The independent horror film is about a father and son team of coroners who get an unusual arrival at the morgue – a perfectly preserved body that is the victim of a brutal and violent murder. As they begin an autopsy to identify her and get to the bottom of what happened, eerie questions are raised which put the team in mortal peril. Reviewers gave this feature (from *Trollhunter* director Andre Ovredal) high marks. They stated that it effectively created a sense of dread from the very beginning and built the tension to a fever pitch by the climax. It features Emile Hirsch, Brian Cox, Ophelia Lovibond, Michael McElhatton and Olwen Catherine Kelly.

The Belko Experiment - A group of American businessman working at a high rise in Bogota, Columbia become part of a deadly social experiment in this action/horror picture. They're locked inside and told to murder each other or they will all be killed. Members of the group all react in different ways as they search for some kind of exit. The movie split the press. Some found it violent, mean and sadistic while others called it nasty, grimly fun dark comedy. Guess it just depends on your taste. The movie comes from director Greg McLean (*Wolf Creek*) and writer James Gunn (*Guardians of the Galaxy*). The cast includes John Gallagher Jr., Adria Arjona, Tony Goldwyn, Michael Rooker, Sean Gunn, John C. McGinley, Melonie Diaz, Josh Brener and Brent Sexton.

CHIPS - This adaptation of the cheesy, late-70s-early-80s cop show becomes a straight-forward comedy featuring two new actors in the roles of Poncho and Jon. Newly paired, the California Highway Patrol members don't get along and must overcome personal conflicts in order to help take down a sinister group working within their own headquarters. Sadly, reviews were quite poor for this effort. Most complained that the film relied too heavily on crude humor and ultimately wasn't funny enough to recommend. The cast includes Michael Pena, Dax Shepherd, Vincent D'Onofrio and Rosa Salazar.

Heli - Here's another arthouse picture made in 2013 that is finally being released here on video. This Spanish-language feature set in Mexico involves a family who accidentally get themselves in the middle of a brutal drug war. The patriarch must protect them after cocaine ends up in their hands. The drama earned decent reviews during its release. Some found it too glum and nihilistic, but more were impressed by the tense, horrifying and unrelenting events depicted as the clan come under assault by the cartel. It also earned plenty of nods around the festival circuit. The cast includes Armando Espitia, Andrea Vergara, Linda Gonzalez and Juan Edwardo Palacios.

Money - Two businessmen manage to steal \$5 million dollars in this independent crime thriller. Unfortunately, an uninvited houseguest arrives and plots to take all the money from them, leading to several kinds of double-crosses and attempts at misdirection. This one is arriving exclusively on DVD and there isn't any word on it yet. It has played at several festivals and earned some prizes here and there. Online write-ups have suggested that it's not exactly unique, but is twisty and well put together for a little indie picture. Jess Weixler, Kellan Lutz, Jesse Williams and Jamie Bamber headline the feature.

Sun Choke - This independent horror film involves a young character who undergoes a psychotic break. As part of her treatment, she's subjected to some very unusual holistic remedies from her odd lifelong nanny and caretaker. The bizarreness of the routine begins to take its toll and the lead finds herself headed towards another violent breakdown. Reviews were strong for this effort. A few didn't think it hit the mark, but it seems that the majority found the acting exceptional and enjoyed the creepy low-key vibe maintained. The cast includes Sarah Hagen, Sara Malakul Lane and Barbara Crampton.

T2 Trainspotting - Those Scottish heroin addicts are back in this sequel set some 20 years after the original cult classic that helped launch several careers. This time out, the central character Renton returns home from abroad, reuniting with his old friends. Together, they get involved in

more trouble. The entire cast, as well as director Danny Boyle (*Slumdog Millionaire* , 28 *Days Later*) have reunited and the press appears to have enjoyed their latest adventure. While there were some who didn't find it to be particularly memorable, far more complimented the onscreen chemistry between the actors and the dark comedy, highlighting the maturity seeping into the character's lives. It stars Ewan McGregor, Ewen Bremner, Johnny Lee Miller, Robert Carlyle and Kelly MacDonald.

Walk of Fame - In this little comedy, a man decides to join an acting class after falling for an aspiring performer. Unfortunately, the teacher is a bit of a nut and his obsessive exercises and assignments begin to get under the skin of the new recruit. Can he overcome the course's obstacles and act his way into her heart? Critics didn't think so. Actually, there were very few who saw it during its limited release and they were largely unimpressed. They called the movie very forced and completely unfunny. Yikes! The cast includes Scott Eastwood, Malcolm McDowell, Chris Kattan, Jamie Kennedy and Laura Ashley Samuels.

BLASTS FROM THE PAST!

This is one of the busiest weeks in some time for older titles debuting on Blu-ray. Olive Films have a few noteworthy Blu-ray releases. *Deja Vu* (1985) is a UK drama with Jaclyn Smith about a man and wife who fall for one another. The man soon begins to believe that he was reincarnation and that his new lady is the reincarnation of his fiancée in a previous life. They also have *Money From Home* (1953), one of many wacky comedies that pairs Dean Martin up with Jerry Lewis.

The Savage Innocents (1960) is an adventure film about an Eskimo who accidentally kills a missionary. He goes on the run from police in the great white wilderness. It stars Anthony Quinn. Set in 1963, *Shag* (1989) is an ensemble coming-of-age film about a bunch of friends heading to college who head out for a final party of sorts in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The cast includes Phoebe Cates, Bridget Fonda, Annabeth Gish and Page Hannah. We'll get a review copy of the disc up later today.

Arrow Video have a Blu-ray/DVD combo of *Doberman Cop* (1977). This gritty Japanese action picture about a cop working to investigate the murder of a young woman in the nightlife district. It stars Sonny Chiba and comes from director Kinji Fukusaku (

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Battle Royal

). Besides a new high definition transfer, the disc includes new interviews with Chiba and the film's screenwriter, a video analysis and appreciation of the movie by a Fukusaku biographer, as well as publicity materials.

There's some fun stuff arriving from Shout! Factory as well. *The Angry Red Planet* (1959) is about a group of astronauts who end up landing on, you guessed it, Mars and find the planet populated with all sorts of freaky monsters.

Trespass (1992) is perhaps the most notable of the Shout! Factory batch. This crime picture involves a pair of firefighters who find a map leading to stolen gold in an abandoned factory building. They arrive to claim the loot, but walk in on a gang deal gone wrong.

Perhaps the biggest release arriving from Kino is a Blu-ray set called *The Pink Panther Film Collection*. This contains

all of the Peter Sellers features in the series, including

The Pink Panther

(1963),

A Shot in the Dark

(1964),

The Return of the Pink Panther

(1975),

The Pink Panther Strikes Again

(1976),

Revenge of the Pink Panther

(1978) and

Trail of the Pink Panther

(1982). Personally, I'm a big fan of

A Shot in the Dark

(

The Return of the Pink Panther

isn't bad either). By the first sequel, director Blake Edwards had figured out who the most engaging character was and what to do with him. Those two pictures feature Sellers at his manic best.

Still want more? You can also pick up the non-Sellers efforts which are being made available individually on Blu-ray. In *Inspector Clouseau* (1968), Alan Arkin takes over the role (as Sellers and director Blake Edwards were too busy filming

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The Party

). After the passing of the series star, Ted Wass was hired to take on the role of an equally inept detective sent to find the missing Clouseau in

Curse of the Pink Panther

(1983). Finally, Roberto Benigni steps in to take the lead role in

Son of the Pink Panther

(1993), playing another goofy cop who may actually be the son of the investigator.

Criterion also have a Blu-ray of the Sam Peckinpah disturbing classic, *Straw Dogs* (1971). It features Dustin Hoffman as a mathematician forced to take a stand against a bunch of intimidating, beer-swilling locals in his village hitting on his wife. There's some pretty brutal stuff in this picture and it caused quite a stir upon its original release. The disc contains a restored 4K transfer, audio commentary from a film critic, a 2003 documentary about the making of the movie, 1993 doc about Peckinpah himself, a conversation with editor Roger Spottiswoode (who later became a noted director in his own right), a piece addressing the film's controversies, archival interviews and behind-the-scenes footage and other bonuses. Sounds like a great package.

YOU KNOW, FOR KIDS!

There's lots here for kids as well. Read the highlights among new releases below.

Bunnicula: Season 1, Part 2

Cain: Season 1

Detective Montalbano: Episodes 29 & 30

Home Movies: The Complete Series

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Power Rangers

Power Rangers: Dino Super Charge: The Complete Series

Sammy & Co: Turtle Paradise

ON THE TUBE!

And here are the week's TV-themed titles.

Bunnacula: Season 1, Part 2

Midsommer Murders: Series 19, Part 1

Power Rangers: Dino Super Charge: The Complete Series

Prison Break: The Event Series

The Rockford Files: The Complete Series

The Story of China With Michael Wood (PBS)

The Strain: Season 3

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Striking Out: Series 1

When Calls the Heart: Heart of Truth (Lifetime)

By Glenn Kay

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