

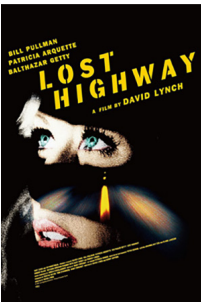
DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for June 28, 2019

Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
Thursday, 04 July 2019 12:55



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Welcome back to another look at Blu-ray and DVD highlights arriving on shelves. Yes, it's another jam-packed week with all kinds of interesting features in a variety of genres. 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!

The Aftermath - This period effort is set in postwar Germany and follows the wife of a British colonel who is sent to Hamburg to join him as he oversees rebuilding efforts. After arriving, she's surprised to learn from her husband that she will be sharing a home with its German owners, a local widower and his distressed daughter. The press didn't take very kindly to this drama. Many critics described it as uneventful and corny. It stars Keira Knightley, Alexander Skarsgård, Jason Clarke and Alexander Scheer.

Bittersweet Symphony - A musician is thrilled to finally finish a score for a big Hollywood motion picture, but finds her personal life coming apart in the process. She's forced to deal with complications that include a dying mother and conflict with her difficult ex-boyfriend. Apparently, this UK production is described as being partially scripted and often improvised, based on the issues facing the lead character. There aren't any reviews available yet. The cast includes Suki Waterhouse, Jennifer Grey, Poppy Delevingne and Griffin Dunne.

Call Us Ishmael - The Herman Melville novel *Moby-Dick* is the subject of this documentary. It was made by a university professor who did not appreciate the book as a youth, but came around to adoring it many years later after a second read. He travels around talking to literary majors, artists, philosophers and fanatics to get their impressions of the work and the effect it has had on their lives. Additionally, the film features passages from the book and diaries from the author read out loud. This project was backed through Kickstarter and has had a nice run at film festivals, but the first opportunity for most of us to see it will be on disc. David Schaerf, Laurie Anderson and Frank Stella all share their thoughts.

Furie - Action enthusiasts may be interested in this foreign-language Vietnamese picture. It tells the story of a criminal outfit in the country involved in human trafficking who discover and kidnap a young girl. They soon realize they've made a huge mistake when they learn that the kid's mother is an ex-gang leader who will do anything to wipe them out and get her child back. Notices for this picture were very strong.

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A couple of individuals described it as a rehash of *Taken* that merely swaps the protagonist's gender, but the vast majority called the fights and chases stunning and had a great time watching the protagonist mow down the villains with reckless abandon. Veronica Ngo plays the lead, with Pham Anh Khoa and Thanh Nhien Phan in supporting roles.

The Hummingbird Project - Two cousins and trading brokers from New York come up with an elaborate plan to connect fiber optic cables between Kansas and New Jersey, allowing the pair to take part in High Frequency Trading and making them and other locals millions in the process. However, their old boss sets her sights on their project, trying to stop its progress and steal the idea for herself. Reviews were mixed-positive for this techno-thriller. While a portion did criticize the premise as being a bit silly and less-than-exciting, slightly more liked the cast and called the movie eccentric and unique enough to hold their interest. It stars Jesse Eisenberg, Alexander Skarsgård, Salma Hayek and Michael Mando.

In This Gray Place - This little independent thriller involves a pawnshop hold up that goes very, very wrong. A man from the wrong side of the tracks attempts the heist with his girlfriend's brother, but finds himself taking refuge in a rest stop bathroom. Barricaded in, the police arrive, leading to a lengthy stand-off. As tensions mount, the robber begins to have hallucinations and visions that threaten not only his own safety, but the well-being of those around him. The cast includes Aleksander Ristic, Marcus Johns, Angela Nordeng and Phil LaMarr.

The Poison Rose - An ex-football player turned private detective finds himself handed a missing persons case from a fetching lady in distress. However, as the lead investigates, what started as a simple job, soon unravels into a conspiracy involving the important local citizens and numerous murders. While this neo-noir thriller boasts a great cast, the press was not enthused by what they witnessed. They said that despite the best intentions of the able performers, the script was full of holes and noted that the movie did little to excite viewers.

One reviewer even stated that the screenplay didn't even explain the reason for the movie's title. John Travolta, Morgan Freeman, Brendan Fraser, Famke Janssen, Peter Stormare and Robert Patrick headline the film.

Transit - This drama from German director Christian Petzold (*Phoenix*) involves a man trying to get out of Nazi-occupied France. To do so, he takes on the identity of a deceased writer. Things get very complicated when the protagonist encounters the wife of the man whose identity he has stolen, and begins to fall for her. Based on a 1944 novel, this foreign-language effort earned

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raves from film reviewers.

A very small contingent were confused by the filmmaker setting the story in a more modern environment and thus couldn't get on its wavelength. Everyone else called it an incredible accomplishment, filled with tension and despair, while noting that the tale itself still seemed to be very relevant in today's world. It stars Franz Rogowski, Paula Beer and Godehard Giese.

Blasts from the Past!

Hold on, because this edition is jam-packed with new releases of classic titles. Olive Films has a couple of interesting ones. The first Blu-ray is for *The Believers* (1987), a thriller from director John Schlesinger (*Midnight Cowboy*, *Marathon Man*) starring Martin Sheen about a widowed police psychologist dealing with being a single parent and a disturbing case involving a cult that is sacrificing children. If memory serves, it is a decent horror/thriller that genre fans may appreciate.

The period drama *The Illusionist* (2006) kind of got lost in the shuffle after being released around the same time as Christopher Nolan's *The Prestige*. But it's a well-regarded title that has gained plenty of fans over the years (not to mention an Academy Award nomination for Best Cinematography). It features Ed Norton as a magician and Paul Giamatti as a cop investigating his strange techniques. The Blu-ray disc includes a director commentary, making of featurettes and a trailer.

Shout! Factory has a lot to promote this week. First, they have a Blu-ray of the Dom DeLuise comedy, *Fatso* (1980). This tale of a put-upon man who tries a series of crash diets arrives with an interview with producers Stuart Cornfeld and Mel Brooks, a film historian interview and publicity materials.

On the horror front, they are releasing a Collector's Edition Blu-ray of *The Green Inferno* (2013). This cannibalism tale about a group of students who are attacked in the South American rainforest comes with a CD copy of the original score, a new interview with writer/producer/director Eli Roth (

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Cabin Fever

,
Hostel

), a talk with various members of the cast, nearly an hour of behind-the-scenes footage, a director/producer/cast commentary, featurettes, and all kinds of publicity materials.

My personal favorite from Shout! this week is a Blu-ray Collector's Edition of the extremely entertaining zombie flick, *Night of the Creeps* (1986). This title is about a university overrun by alien slugs who enter victims both living and dead, and end up controlling them like zombies. It's a hoot with a lot of creativity on display and plenty of laughs in between the jolts. Two discs are included.

Kino has several fascinating Blu-rays as well. Their American Film Theatre line is putting out *Ga*
lileo

(1975), a biopic of the 17th century physicist. The disc includes an interview with star Topol, as well as a discussion Edie Landau. There is also a promotional film for the American Film Theatre titled

Ely Landau: In Front of the Camera

, and a gallery of trailers for the this line's features.

David Lynch fans (like myself) will be happy to know that they can finally pick up *Lost Highway* (1997) on Blu-ray. This one follows a jealous man who begins to receive strange messages from an odd figure, as well as threatening videos. Strange things occur and he transforms and escapes into the body of a young mechanic, only to eventually see the same sorts of problems arise. What isn't so great is that director Lynch is having some kind of disagreement with Kino over the title.

The filmmaker has announced that he doesn't approve of the transfer, and Kino has suggested that they've been forced into making some changes to the release due to the friction between the groups. It's all too bad, since Kino is generally a very reputable distributor. Let's hope everything gets cleared up in the near future. This is a great movie, so those interested in purchasing it may want to read some reviews when it comes out and then make their final decision; currently, this is the only way to get the movie in high-definition in North America, so there aren't many options otherwise.

You Know, For Kids!

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Here are some releases that may be of interest to kids.

Cinderella (1950) Disney

Wally Gator: The Complete Series (Warner Archives)

The Wonderful World of Oz: The Complete Series ('80s animated show - Original Japanese with English Subtitles)

On the Tube!

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

Agatha Christie's Criminal Games: Season 2

Agatha Christie's Criminal Games: Season 3

Christmas in Evergreen: Letters to Santa (Hallmark TV-movie)

Divorced Dad: Season 1

Francis Drake Mysteries: Season 2 (PBS)

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FRONTLINE: Marcos Doesn't Live Here Anymore (PBS)

Manhunt: Season 1

Marcella: Season 2

Poldark: The Complete Collection (70s series)

Survivor: Pearl Island: Season 7

The Wonderful World of Oz: The Complete Series ('80s animated show - Original Japanese with English Subtitles)

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