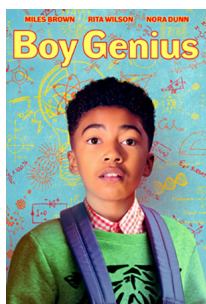


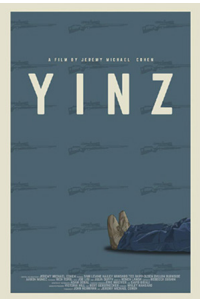
Blu-ray/DVD Roundup for November 8, 2019

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Hello and welcome to another look at highlights arriving this week on Blu-ray and DVD. There's a little mix of everything in this edition that includes big Hollywood productions, along with small, independent efforts. 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!

Ambition - This independent thriller involves a young violinist preparing for a life-changing audition. However, when a suspicious death occurs, the musician begins to fear that she may be the next target. The lead starts to suspect her friends of the crime, as well as a mysterious new neighbor who has just moved in. She must determine who the responsible party is before she ends up dead.

This picture is directed by New Line Cinema founder Robert Shaye and is making its debut on disc through Shout! Factory. It received a limited run at theaters a few weeks ago and there haven't been any reviews posted yet. The cast includes Katherine Hughes, Jared Bankens and Dylan McNamara.

The Art of Racing in the Rain - Based on the bestselling novel, this drama follows an aspiring Formula One racer whose life is narrated from the point of view of his pet dog. As the man meets his wife, gets married, has a child, begins his career, and goes through various joys and trials, the pooch offers his own analysis of the events and deciphers what it all means. More critics disliked the philosophies being relayed than enjoyed them.

Still, most commented that it was clichéd, ridiculously sentimental and ultimately came across as false and manipulative. It stars Milo Ventimiglia, Amanda Seyfried, Kathy Baker, Martin Donovan, Gary Cole and Kevin Costner (as the voice of the dog).

Boy Genius - A 12-year-old prodigy enrolls in high school, struggling to make new chums. When his friendly older brother is accused of theft and those around threaten to send him to boarding school, the lead becomes determined to use his brain in order to prove his sibling's innocence. He enlists the help of fellow outcasts as well as eccentric adults, including a science

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teacher and a crime novelist. This independent comedy received a very limited release at cinemas about a month ago and is now hitting disc.

Reviews were generally mixed. It features Miles Brown, Rita Wilson, Nora Dunn, Skylan Brooks and Zach Gilford.

Corporate Animals - Corporate team-building exercises are poked fun at in this horror/comedy. A megalomaniac CEO decides to drag her assistants and employees and do some spelunking in New Mexico. When they become trapped underground and have to wait for a rescue party, the angry group must fight the urge to turn on each other. Of course, they fail, and violence (as well as cannibalism) soon follows.

The press didn't find this effort all that amusing or scary. Demi Moore, Ed Helms, Jessica Williams and Karan Soni headline the feature.

Fast & Furious Presents: Hobbs & Shaw - This spin-off of the *Fast & Furious* series follows two enemies, one a lawman and the other a criminal, who are forced into partnering when the world is threatened by a cyber-terrorist. Along the way, tensions and bickering arise between the leads when one of the heroes falls for the other's sister (who also happens to be a secret agent). Notices were more positive than negative for the latest entry in this franchise. While the cast was likable, some suggested that the story was so brainless and dopey that the movie felt like a missed opportunity.

It features Dwayne Johnson, Jason Statham, Idris Elba, Vanessa Kirby, Cliff Curtis and Helen Mirren.

The Kitchen - Set in the 1970s, this flick follows the wives of a group of gangsters working out of Hell's Kitchen. After the men are all arrested and sent to prison, their spouses decide to take over the criminal family business, learning on the fly how to deal with their competition and the FBI, using any means necessary. Unfortunately, reaction toward this drama was far-from-enthusiastic.

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The movie stars Melissa McCarthy, Tiffany Haddish, Elisabeth Moss, Domhnall Gleeson and James Badge Dale.

Life Without Basketball - This documentary tells the story of Bilqis Abdul-Qaadir, a female college basketball player who, due to her religious beliefs, dressed in a hijab while competing on the courts. The honor student broke several records while playing in college for the University of Memphis, but found her professional career stalled after FIBA (the organization which governs the sport of basketball worldwide) refused to allow her to play in traditional garb. This documentary details the athlete life's after the ruling and her attempts to start a non-profit organization to promote the game and help inspire youngsters to stay true to their beliefs. The doc has played a few festivals to positive response and is now debuting on disc.

Live the Stream: The Story of Joe Humphries - For Joe Humphries, fly fishing is the most important thing in the entire world. This Pennsylvanian fisherman is also a conservationist, author and educator striving to keep the practice alive and teaching anyone who will listen to him express his enthusiasm for the sport. This documentary uses interviews with the 90-year-old legend, along with family, friends and acquaintances, to tell his life story, explain the importance of keeping rivers clean and detail his fly-fishing techniques and the practices that he has learned over a lifetime. The film played numerous film festivals and has won some awards along the way. It is now being released straight-to-disc so fishing enthusiasts can catch up with it.

Memory: The Origins of Alien - It has been 40 years since *Alien* hit cinema screens, introducing an iconic monster, spawning a franchise of films and building a massive fan base. This documentary goes into exhaustive detail about how the concept for the original feature came to be, and how the movie itself was put together. Pouring through the unseen archives of screenwriter Dan O'Bannon and artist H.R. Giger, the project offers new insight into the sci-fi/horror masterpiece. On the whole, critics liked what was presented to them.

Ophelia - Most know the name Ophelia from the Shakespeare play *Hamlet*. This take on the character tells the famous tale from her perspective. Set in Denmark, the story follows her response to the events involving a young prince driven mad by the need for vengeance after his father is murdered by his uncle. This version details Ophelia's struggle to choose between her boyfriend and the kingdom's rulers.

The press had a mixed reception to the picture. It stars Daisy Ridley, Naomi Watts, Clive Owen,

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George MacKay and Tom Felton.

Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark - Based on the popular young adult book series, this horror anthology is set in 1968 and follows three friends who meet a mysterious drifter carrying a sinister notebook of terrifying stories...a text that transcends time. The kids read several of these tales, only to find themselves a part of the story by the time they reached the climax. Overall, reviewers gave this creeper reasonable marks.

The cast includes Zoe Margaret Colletti, Michael Garza, Gabriel Rush, Austin Abrams and Dean Norris.

Undercover Brother 2 - The original *Undercover Brother* was an amusing little comedy starring Eddie Griffin that was released in 2002. It was about a secret agent attempting to stop "The Man" and his syndicate (known as The Organization) from unleashing a hallucinogenic drug and turning the public into brainless zombies. This sequel of sorts picks up with the original lead and his brother being found frozen in a snow drift. Unfortunately, the younger brother is the only one of the pair whom rescuers are able to thaw out.

As a result, the sibling is forced to take on "The Man" and another threat to the black community. This picture is debuting on disc and there are absolutely no reviews of it available at this time. It features Michael Jai White, Barry Bostwick, Jeff Daniel Phillips and Gary Owen.

The Wrong Todd - This independent sci-fi/comedy tells the story of a man whose relatively happy life comes under attack from an unexpected visitor...his evil twin from a parallel universe. Specifically, the sinister arrival has designs on stealing the lead's girlfriend, forcing the hero to try to convince his partner that he is the more suitable and valuable partner to spend her life with. This small feature has played a few film festivals in Austin, Los Angeles and Rhode Island and has received some positive notices. The write-ups that have appeared online call the film a simple, but sweet and heartfelt examination of how we all need to change and adapt in relationships. Jesse Rosen, Anna Rizzo and Sean Carmichael headline the feature.

Yinz - Here's another little production made on a shoestring in Pennsylvania. It has played a couple of festivals, but is also making its official debut on disc. According to the plot synopsis, it is about the lives of three upper class teenagers and how their world is turned completely

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upside down after an unexpected murder. Nothing else is known about the picture at this time other than the fact that it is categorized as a thriller.

There have been no official reviews. The cast includes Samuel H. Levine, Hailey Hansard and Teo Rapp-Olsson.

Blasts from the Past!

It's another busy week for classic and, well, not-so-classic titles receiving high definition upgrades. Arrow Video has a Special Edition Blu-ray of the thriller, *Apprentice to Murder* (1988). This film is set during a sickness that is plaguing a community in the early 19th century. An investigation is undertaken by a young man and faith healer to find the cause of the outbreak.

It stars Chad Lowe and Donald Sutherland. This disc includes a new 2K restoration of the film, a film critic audio commentary, a talk about religious horror cinemas with an expert in the field, an interview with the cinematographer and the make-up supervisor, as well as a trailer. Sounds like an interesting release.

Kino has a large grouping of Blu-rays as well. First is the box set, *Hitchcock: British International Pictures Collection* (1927-1931) which includes five movies made in the UK from early in the director's career. Titles include the silent features *The Ring* (1927), *The Farmer's Wife* (1928), *Champagne* (1928) and *The Manxman* (1929), as well as one sound title, *The Skin Game* (1931). The set includes new scores for some of the pictures, archival audio interviews with Hitchcock, and film historian commentaries on some of the flicks.

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Additionally, Kino is releasing the US film-noir *Naked Alibi* (1954) with Sterling Hayden. It comes with a film historian commentary as well as a trailer.

The distributor is also making available the more recent high school-set drama, *New Port South* (2001), as well as the UK-made atom bomb thriller, *Seven Days to Noon* (1950). They've also got the Hollywood film-noir, *Woman in Hiding* (1950). The first two Blu-rays include trailers, while the third features a film historian commentary track.

Budget friendly Mill Creek Entertainment has decided to get on the holiday bandwagon and put out the very cheesy *Santa With Muscles* (1996) on Blu-ray. Hulk Hogan leads the cast of this critically reviled comedy about an evil millionaire on the run, who disguises himself as Santa Claus, takes a knock to the head and awakens to believe that he is the real figure. The cast includes a young Mila Kunis, as well as Garrett Morris, Clint Howard and Ed Begley, Jr. It may provide some inexpensive high definition entertainment for bad movie fans.

Believe it or not, *Galaxy Quest* (1999) was released two decades ago and Paramount is celebrating with its “*20th Anniversary - Never Give Up, Never Surrender Special Edition.*” The movie comes in a Steelbook package and, one assumes, includes all of the previously released extras.

Speaking of re-releases, Lionsgate has decided to give Edgar Wright's *Cornetto Trilogy* a picture upgrade. That means this week you can pick up 4K Blu-ray ray editions of *Shaun of the Dead* (2004), *Hot Fuzz* (2007) and *The World's End* (2013). They're all exceptional movies and well worth picking up if you haven't already. Now you can pick up the set along with some drumstick ice-cream cones and get in on the fun.

Universal is also putting out a couple of catalogue titles Blu-rays. This week, they include the well-reviewed Ellen Burstyn fantasy/drama, *Resurrection* (1980). It's about a woman who loses

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her husband in a car accident and awakens to find that she suddenly has healing powers. Additionally, a 4K Steelbook of the Oscar-winning WWII drama, *Schindler's List* (1993), will be hitting shelves.

Disney is giving the long-forgotten sequel, *101 Dalmations II: Patch's London Adventure* (2003) a Blu-ray release. Disney is also getting on the 4K bandwagon by re-releasing several animated titles with improved picture quality. The titles coming your way include

Big Hero 6

(2014),

Moana

(2016),

The Princess and the Frog

(2009),

Tangled

(2010), and

Zootopia

(2016).

You Know, For Kids!

There is lots of kid-friendly entertainment arriving this week. The highlights are listed below.

101 Dalmations II: Patch's London Adventure (2003) Disney

The Berenstain Bears: Lend A Helping Hand (PBS Kids)

Big Hero 6 (2014) 4K

Christmas Break-In (2018 family TV-movie with Denise Richards and Danny Glover)

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Christmas With Molang

Garfield and Friends: Season 2

Merry Christmas Llama Llama!

Moana (2016) 4K

The Princess and the Frog (2009) 4K

Tangled (2010) 4K

The Wiggles - Party Time!

Zootopia (2016) 4K

On the Tube!

And here are all of the TV-related discs coming your way.

Bronx SIU: Season 2

Christmas Break-In (2018 family TV-movie with Denise Richards and Danny Glover)

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Christmas Everlasting (Hallmark TV-movie)

Garfield and Friends: Season 2

A Godwink Christmas (Hallmark TV-movie)

Good Omens (Amazon)

A Joyous Christmas (Hallmark TV-movie)

Letterkenny: Seasons 1 & 2

Ms. Fisher's Modern Murder Mysteries: Series 1

Odyssey: The Chamber Music Society in Greece

Road to Christmas (Hallmark TV-movie)

Rocky Mountain Christmas (Hallmark TV-movie)

The Simple Heist: Series 2

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Yellowstone: Season 2

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