

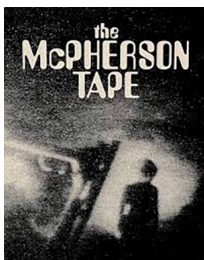
Blu-ray/DVD Roundup for May 1, 2020

Written by Glenn Kay For the Sun
Friday, 08 May 2020 05:26



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Welcome to another look at highlights arriving on Blu-ray and DVD. Readers will likely notice lots of independent fare. So, since you won't be able to make it out to the movies this week, be sure to give one of these titles a try!

Alone Across the Arctic - We'd all like to get out and explore more, but geographer Adam Shoalts takes it to new extremes in this documentary. In order to mark the 150th anniversary of Canada's Confederation, the subject decides to set off alone from Old Crow, Yukon (near the Alaskan border) and make the journey east across the continent to Baker Lake, Nunavut. He hikes and paddles his way over an entire summer through the wildest and most unexplored parts of the nation.

One or two reviews that have popped up state that while the host himself isn't the smoothest or most charismatic onscreen personality, the scenery is gorgeous and the movie provides some fascinating tips about surviving in nature.

Lucid Dreams - The latest from well-regarded Hong Kong actor/director/producer/composer

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Teddy Robin Quan (*All the Wrong Spies*) is a unique anthology. This movie tells four dramatic tales inspired by dreams that the filmmaker has experienced. One follows a person who has to arrange a fake wedding in order to repay a debt. Others involve a man learning to deal with his ego, as well as a reconnection between a writer and a long-lost mother.

The final tale follows a driving instructor who begins seeing spirits. Last year this picture was nominated for Best Original Score at the Hong Kong equivalent of the Oscars. The cast includes Dada Chan, Juju Chan, Kevin Cheng and Louis Cheung.

The Incoherents - Band reunions seem to be all the rage these days and this little drama appears to be inspired by the trend. A forty-something paralegal who was once a member of a '90s alternative music group notes his contemporaries re-forming successfully and tries to get his band together for a new tour. Every person he contacts is dealing with some sort of midlife crisis. Will the members overcome their personal issues and revitalize their musical careers?

It has only screened at a few New York film festivals (where it took home a prize or two). Jeff Auer, Annette O'Toole, Amy Carlson, Alex Emanuel and Jared Barel headline the feature.

Vanilla - In this independently-produced comedy, a young comedian tries to save her family business by selling her van. To complete the sale, she must drive it south all the way to New Orleans. In an attempt to avoid boredom during the journey, she invites an uptight entrepreneur to join her on her extended road trip. A bond forms and a romance begins to develop.

After they arrive and the van sale falls apart, the two are left to determine whether they should pursue the relationship. This little title has been picked up for distribution on disc, but hasn't played in many cinemas and so there aren't any write-ups currently available for it. Looks like curious parties will have to take a chance without knowing quite where things will lead. The cast includes Will Dennis and Kelsea Bauman.

When Lambs Become Lions - Taking viewers to the Kenyan bush, this documentary details the world of ivory dealers, as well as the rangers attempting to curtail their business. Using a cinema vérité, fly-on-the-wall approach, the camera captures both the desperate hunters attempting to provide for their families and the frightening experiences of soldiers trying to stop them. The filmmakers were granted complete access and followed their subjects for three

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years, recording their everyday lives. Critics ended up giving the picture excellent reviews.

One or two didn't like that the movie chose to step back and not impose a specific moral or message. Still, the vast majority did think that some of those onscreen were more sympathetic than others, and noted that the approach helped viewers understand why elephant ivory hunting has continued to persist in Kenya.

Blasts from the Past!

Wow, it's another jam-packed week when it comes to older movies arriving on disc. Those who grew up in the 1980s will certainly remember late night horror movie hostess Elvira, who would introduce cheesy movies and often crack jokes while doing so. Arrow Video is giving fans a new Special Edition Blu-ray of the character's big screen starring vehicle, *Elvira: Mistress of the Dark* (1988). In this comedy, Elvira leaves L.A. for Massachusetts to collect an inheritance after the passing of a family member.

The movie arrives on disc with a new 4K restoration from the original film elements. The film's original storyboards and extensive image galleries are provided too, along with the U.S. theatrical and teaser trailers. Sounds like a lot of fun for '80s film fans.

The AGFA (American Genre Film Archive) is a distributor out of Austin, Texas who is always putting out hard-to-find genre pictures. This week, they're releasing *The McPherson Tape* (1989), one of the earliest found-footage features ever created. Made a full decade before *The Blair Witch Project*, the low-budget flick follows a family celebrating and taping a birthday using a VHS recorder. They end up capturing a sudden and unexpected alien home invasion.

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This release includes a new transfer from the original 3/4" master tape, two different cuts of the movie, a director commentary on one of the versions, footage from the 1989 theatrical premiere, a TV segment on the production, a Q&A from a recent screening and more. This should certainly intrigue low-budget horror enthusiasts.

You Know, For Kids!

Here are some releases that may appeal to kids, including the classic cartoon, *Underdog*.

SpongeBob SquarePants: Bikini Bottom Bash

Underdog: The Complete Series

On the Tube!

And these are the week's TV-themed releases.

Arrow: The Complete Series

Arrow: Season 8

FRONTLINE: Amazon Empire: The Rise and Reign of Jeff Bezos (PBS)

NATURE: The Mighty Weasel (PBS)

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Room 222: Season 2

SpongeBob SquarePants: Bikini Bottom Bash

Underdog: The Complete Series

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