

Blu-ray/DVD Roundup for May 6, 2022

Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
Friday, 13 May 2022 03:54



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Welcome back to another look at some of the highlights arriving on Blu-ray and DVD. It's a busy edition filled with all sorts of features both big and small in just about every genre imaginable. So, if you can't or shouldn't head out to the movies this week, be sure to give one of these titles a try!

BIG NEW RELEASES!

AMERICAN REJECT: A contestant on a popular singing competition show has her dreams shattered when she gets eliminated. Even worse, her contract with the program states that a

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camera crew gets to follow her around as she returns home to live with her mother.

It's a humiliating experience and with no prospects on the horizon, the lead decides to participate in a local Easter Spectacular. An unexpected series of events offer new hope for the depressed individual.

There aren't many write-ups for this independent picture, but it has won awards at various festivals and received decent reviews from those who saw it. They called it a sweet redemption story that provides a few chuckles. It stars Kathleen Elizabeth Monteleone, Annaleigh Ashford, Keala Settle, Mary Birdsong, Rebecca Black and Billy Ray Cyrus.

CONSTANTINE: THE HOUSE OF MYSTERY: As many readers will already know, Warner Bros. have spent the last few years releasing numerous animated superhero adventures based on DC characters. Many of them are R-rated, including this week's effort.

The disc contains a collection of shorts, including one featuring the character of Constantine. In it, he wakes up with amnesia in the title location and is attacked by foes, before reawakening in the same place. As the scenario repeats over and over, he must find his way to stop it from repeating and escape to safety.

You'll also get tales featuring characters like Kamandi, Blue Beetle, Captain Storm and many others. This sampling of animated shorts appears to be making its debut on disc, so there aren't any write-ups of it available. The voice cast includes Matt Ryan, Camilla Loddington, Ray Chase and Lou Diamond Phillips.

GAGARINE: This foreign-language film from France follows a teenager named after famed Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarine. Like his hero, the youngster aspires to fly into orbit one day. When his housing project is scheduled for demolition, the lead is inspired to try something wild and crazy in order to save his home and the people in it, as well as make himself a better life.

Notices were excellent for this little feature and it won awards at European film festivals. There were only a few who didn't care for it ... they wrote that the movie ultimately veered too far into the lead's imagination for its own good. Everyone else thought it was a sad but powerful film with incredible cinematography. They were also taken by how the main character uses his imagination to try and escape his real problems.

It features Alseni Bathily, Lyna Khoudri, Jamil McCraven and Finnegan Oldfield.

KING OTTO: Soccer enthusiasts may be interested in checking out this documentary about German coach 'King" Otto Rehhagel. The figure earned many titles and accolades in his homeland, but this film focuses on his time as head coach of the Greek national team. In 2004, he led them into the UEFA European Championship. The team had previously never won a game in any major competition, but they went on an incredible and unexpected run through the tournament, ultimately winning the final.

This film tells the story of what happened and tries to inform audiences on why it occurred. Write-ups were positive for this non-fiction effort. A few complained that they weren't impressed with the subject's boasting and said the movie didn't deliver much interesting history about the man. However, the consensus was that the feature was an engaging and fun documentary that told an inspirational underdog story.

MR. JONES: Based on real events, this drama is set in the 1930s. It follows British journalist Gareth Jones, who traveled into the Soviet Union to write a story on life in the country. While there, he uncovers a conspiracy to cover up a horrific famine that is killing millions of citizens. The lead tries to get his story out to the media around the world, but finds his life being threatened by officials trying to hide the truth (remarkably, his reports would inspire George Orwell to write the classic novella *Animal Farm*).

Members of the press gave this European co-production high marks. A small number believed that the filmmakers had trouble condensing and focusing the story, lessening its impact. Still, the consensus was that it told an incredible and engaging chronicle of events that would make viewers realize the power of having a free press. James Norton, Vanessa Kirby, Peter Sarsgaard and Joseph Mawle headline the movie.

TOM CLANCY'S WITHOUT REMORSE: An elite Navy SEAL seeks revenge after a squad of Russian soldiers, in retaliation for his role in a secret mission, assassinate his pregnant wife. Grief stricken and furious, the protagonist teams up with a fellow SEAL and an FBI agent to track down those responsible. In doing so, he also discovers a deeper scheme that may start a war between the U.S. and Russia.

The feature received more negative write-ups than positive ones. Almost half suggested that the movie provided solid action and was predictable but entertaining. Slightly more stated the film was generic, the characters underwritten and that it delivered nothing more than a collection of overly familiar spy tropes. It stars Michael B. Jordan, Jamie Bel, Guy Pearch, Jodie Turner-Smith, Lauren London and Brett Gelman.

TURNING RED: The latest animated feature from Pixar Studios ("Soul," "Coco," "Up," "Monsters Inc.," "Finding Nemo," "Toy Story") follows a 13-year-old girl dealing with overprotective parents. If that wasn't enough trouble, she then learns that when she gets overly excited, she turns into a giant red panda. This causes a great deal of strife in her life as she tries to figure out what to do about her unusual gift.

Write-ups were very upbeat for this family feature. A tiny fraction though some of the film's themes were a bit muddled and that the movie wasn't as powerful as the studio's other efforts. Yet the overwhelming majority said the awkwardness experienced by the main character was very relatable, the positive messages were effective and that the flick worked as a fun and

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good-natured coming-of-age story. The voice-cast includes Rosalie Chiang, Sandra Oh, Ava Morse, Hyein Park, Maitreyi Ramakrishnan, Orion Lee and James Hong.

YOU KNOW, FOR KIDS!

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

“Francis the Talking Mule 7-Film Collection” (Kino) Blu-ray

“Sprinter Galore” Season 3 DVD

ON THE TUBE!

And you’ll find a list of all the week’s TV-themed releases below.

“Beverly Lewis’ The Reckoning” (Hallmark Channel) DVD

“The Good Fight” Season 5 (CBS) DVD

“The Larkins” Series 1 DVD

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“NATURE: American Horses” (PBS) DVD

“Silk Hope” (1999 TV-movie) (Questar) DVD

“Sprinter Galore” Season 3 DVD

“Traces” Year 2 (BBC) DVD

“The Wedding Veil” (Hallmark Channel) Blu-ray

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