

Blu-ray/DVD Roundup for May 20, 2022

Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
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Welcome to another look at highlights arriving on Blu-ray and DVD. This edition includes several high-profile and interesting independent efforts in a wide variety of genres. So, if you can't or shouldn't be heading out to the movies this week, be sure to give one of these titles a try!

BIG NEW RELEASES!

BELLE: This animated film from Japan follows an introverted student living in a small town. Despite not having friends in her normal life, the youngster creates a famous online persona of a globally-beloved singer. One day while performing, she is interrupted by a monstrous creature being chased by vigilantes. She decides to seek out and potentially help this unusual creature both online and in the real world.

Response towards the picture was very strong. A small number commented that the film was too long and suggested that it was geared exclusively towards teens. However, the vast majority were impressed, calling it visually striking and noting that the film effectively addressed themes like grief, as well as the potential dangers of spending too much time in online virtual worlds.

The disc has a Japanese language track with English subtitles and an English audio edition.

KICKING BLOOD: Also released as “Kicking Blood: A Vampire Love Story” this independent genre film involves a modern-day vampire who falls in love with a recovering alcoholic. She decides to start a relationship and attempts to quit drinking blood, doing everything possible to become a normal human being. Of course, this path is a difficult one and she finds it harder and harder to resist the urge to consume plasma.

The general reception towards this independent genre picture was decent. About a quarter of write-ups liked the concept but didn't think the film came to life, lacking romantic chemistry and chills. Still, most thought the vampirism motif was an interesting metaphor for alcoholism and liked the cast, calling it an interesting and original take on a well-worn genre. Alanna Bale, Luke Bilyk and Benjamin Sutherland headline the feature.

LICORICE PIZZA: Inspired by the life of an actual child actor, this 1970s-set coming-of-age tale follows a teen from the San Fernando Valley as he desperately tries to grow up and make a name for himself. On his school photo day, he befriends a 20-something photographer's assistant who is unhappy with her lot in life. The two get involved in various business schemes involving waterbed companies and pinball arcades, even crossing paths with Hollywood celebrities along the way.

This picture was nominated for several Academy Awards and earned plenty of praise during its release. A very small number stated that they couldn't relate to the characters and thought the story lacked focus. Everyone else called it wonderful, noting it was authentic in capturing the era and presented the fascinating lives of some enjoyably quirky characters. The film features Alana Haim, Cooper Hoffman, Sean Penn, Tom Waits and Bradley Cooper.

BLASTS FROM THE PAST!

Paramount are delivering a personal favorite on Blu-ray this week.

“Top Secret!” (1984) is a comedy from the Zucker Brothers (“Airplane!” “The Naked Gun”) that features Val Kilmer as a singer in the mold of Elvis Presley who attempts to help the French Resistance fight Nazis (in between performing ridiculous musical numbers).

The movie is absolutely hilarious. There are memorable tunes, a hilarious prison raid involving a cow and much, much more to enjoy. It is also very quotable and probably has even more gags packed into it than the filmmaker’s other, bigger hits. It’s definitely worth your while if you like wild comedies.

YOU KNOW, FOR KIDS!

There aren’t many options this week for kids, but here is what is arriving on store shelves.

“Misho & Robin” Season 1 DVD

ON THE TUBE!

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And here are all of the week's TV-themed releases.

"American Experience: Flood in the Desert" (PBS) DVD

"Blood & Treasure" Season 1 Blu-ray

"Great Escapes with Morgan Freeman" Season 1 (History) DVD

"Help" (Acorn) DVD

"The Last Kingdom" The Complete Series Blu-ray or DVD

"The Last Kingdom" Season 5 DVD

"Lucifer" Season 5 (Warner Archives) Blu-ray

"Masterpiece: Ridley Road" (PBS) DVD

"Misho & Robin" Season 1 DVD

"NOVA: Augmented" (PBS)

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“Slasher: Flesh and Blood” (A Shudder Original Series) Blu-ray

“Succession” Season 3 (HBO) DVD

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