
YOU BETTER NOT CRY
CHRISTMAS
BLOODY
CHRISTMAS


WOMEN TALKING

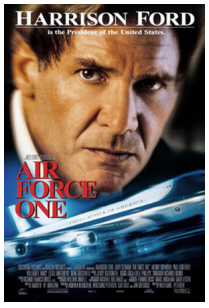

JOAN
CRAWFORD · CARSON · SCOTT
Mildred Pierce
The kind of Woman most men want — BUT SHOULDN'T HAVE!


MAKING
MR. RIGHT


DE NIRO
SNIPES
THE FAN


John Travolta
Olivia Newton-John
GREASE is the word


SCHWARZENEGGER
THE RUNNING MAN


HARRISON FORD
is the President of the United States.
AIR FORCE ONE



Welcome to another look at some of the latest Blu-ray and DVD highlights. This edition is a little quieter, but there are a few notable releases arriving on disc, as well as some interesting older features. So, if you can't make it out to the movies this week or need to stay indoors, be sure to give one of these titles a try!

BIG NEW RELEASES!

CHRISTMAS BLOODY CHRISTMAS: On Christmas Eve, a record shop owner looks forward to closing for the holiday and partying. Her plan goes wrong when a robotic Santa Claus at a nearby toy store goes haywire, breaks out and begins murdering anyone it encounters. The owner, some other employees and customers become targets and must fight for their lives against the sinister Saint Nick.

The press responded favorably to this independent horror flick. One quarter of reviewers didn't

think that it made the most of its concept and wrote that the end result felt derivative and predictable. However, most commented that the movie succeeded at delivering some gross-out moments, as well as plenty of laughs.

The movie stars Riley Dandy, Sam Delich, Jonah Ray, Dora Madison, Jeremy Gardner and Jeff Daniel Phillips.

WOMEN TALKING: Based on the book by Miriam Toews, this feature is loosely based on a real incident. The plot begins with the women of an isolated religious community discovering that a series of rapes committed against various members was performed by one of their leaders. The ladies initially feel powerless to do much about it, but ultimately get together to discuss whether to stay and mount a fight, leave as a group, or allow the abuse to continue.

The film earned a lot of praise and has been nominated for two Academy Awards (for Best Picture and Best Adapted Screenplay). A tiny group complained that the film was unsubtle, too talky and the story's resolution disappointing. Everyone else thought the performances were fantastic and that the screenplay was smartly written. They also noted that it would also give viewers plenty to talk about afterwards.

It features Jessie Buckley, Rooney Mara, Claire Foy, Judith Ivey, Ben Whishaw and Frances McDormand.

BLASTS FROM THE PAST!

While there aren't many new titles this week, there are tons of older films receiving high-definition upgrades.

Criterion is presenting a 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray set of what is considered one of the best movies ever made. *Mildred Pierce* (1945) is a melodrama from Michael Curtiz (*The Adventures of Robin Hood* , *Casablanca* , *White Christmas* , *King Creole*) starring Joan Crawford as a devoted mother who divorces her husband and tries to set up a successful restaurant business to support her spoiled daughter. In addition to the picture upgrade, this latest edition includes a conversation between to film critics on the movie, an excerpt from a 1970 interview with Crawford, a feature-length documentary on Crawford, a Q&A with co-star Ann Blyth, a discussion with the author of the original novel the movie is based on, as well as a trailer.

Kino is making plenty of Blu-rays available to customers. *Asphalt* (1929) is a German thriller about a traffic cop tasked with escorting a beautiful thief to the police station. She turns on the charm, making his job more difficult than anticipated. It comes with a film historian commentary.

If comedies from the 1980s are more to your liking, the long out-of-print feature *Making Mr. Right* (1987) is reappearing on Blu-ray. This underrated romantic-comedy is about a publicist hired by a space agency to help promote their newest achievement. She is told that a scientist has created a human-like robot to command shuttle missions. The robot looks exactly like its maker, but is much kinder. This innocent robot ends up forming an unexpected friendship with the ad woman.

The Blu-ray contains a 2K restoration of the film and a new audio commentary with producer/director Susan Seidelman (*Desperately Seeking Susan*) and star Magnuson. You'll also get interviews with the pair and a trailer. The first copies of the disc come in a special cardboard slipcase.

Mill Creek is adding a few titles to their Retro VHS Collection, which contains Blu-rays of movies in their original VHS cover packaging. The first title is the thriller *The Fan* (1996), in which an obsessed psychopath stalks a professional baseball player. It stars Robert De Niro and Wesley Snipes.

You can also pick up the thriller, *Fear* (1996). In this title, a teenager is stalked by an obsessive ex-boyfriend who ends up terrorizing the youth's entire family. The cast includes Mark Wahlberg, Reese Witherspoon, William Petersen, Amy Brenneman and Alyssa Milano.

And *Problem Child* (1990) is the third title arriving with the special packaging. This film follows a couple who are tormented by the youngster whom they decide to adopt.

Paramount is releasing some noteworthy titles as well. The first is a discounted repressing of the hit musical *Grease* (1978) with John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John. This version includes all bonuses from previous editions, including the singalong track.

The Running Man (1987) is receiving a 35th Anniversary Blu-ray. The action film is set in a dystopian future where a game show is the most watched program in history. It features convicts being forced to compete against gladiators and battle to the death. When a heroic figure is set-up for a crime he didn't commit, he sets out to fight his way to freedom. The movie stars Arnold Schwarzenegger and is based on a story by Stephen King. The disc contains a Blu-ray with a recent 4K restoration.

Sony is giving a couple of catalog titles the 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray Steelbook treatment. *Air Force One*
(1997) is a popular action film with Harrison Ford as the President. When his plane is hijacked by terrorists, he decides to take them on himself. The feature also stars Gary Oldman and Glenn Close. Besides the upgraded image quality, this release comes with a trailer and an archival commentary track with director Wolfgang Petersen (
Das Boot
,
The NeverEnding Story

,
In the Line of Fire
,
Outbreak
,
The Perfect Storm
).

The period adventure film *The Mask of Zorro* (1998) with Antonio Banderas and Anthony Hopkins is also getting an upgrade. The legendary hero takes on a nasty tyrant trying to buy California from Mexico. Extras include an audio commentary with director Martin Campbell (
No Escape
,
Goldeneye
,
Casino Royale
,
The Protege
), a Zorro documentary, a dozen or so deleted scenes, a music video and a trailer.

Last week, Warner Bros. released a *Rocky* box set with the first four titles presented exclusively in 4K Ultra HD. They also put out the first film as a 4K Ultra HD and Blu-ray Best Buy Exclusive. Now, they've done the same with *Rocky II* (1979). One assumes other sequels from the set will follow in the coming weeks.

YOU KNOW, FOR KIDS!

This isn't a good time for kid's titles, but upcoming editions should be more plentiful.

ON THE TUBE!

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

Hallmark 2-Movie Collection: Marry Go Round & Wedding of a Lifetime (Hallmark) DVD

NOVA: Rebuilding Notre Dame (PBS) DVD

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By Glenn Kay
For the Sun