

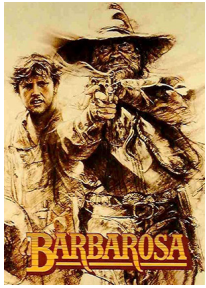
## DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for Sept. 2, 2016

Written by Gallupsun Staff

Friday, 02 September 2016 03:09

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Welcome back to another look at highlights coming your way on Blu-ray and DVD. There are a couple of big hits arriving, as well as some intriguing older films. 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!

*Citizen Soldier* - This documentary follows the National Guard's 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team stationed in Afghanistan. Cameras are mounted on helmets and move with them as they perform a tour of duty. Reception from the press was decent for the doc. Several believed it provided an interesting, first-person perspective from the front lines, although others felt a little uncomfortable about the film and said it seemed more like a recruitment than an actual examination of the troubles in that part of the world.

*The Jungle Book* - Disney's been in the habit lately of producing live-action remakes of their animated properties. The latest is this fable (based on the work of Rudyard Kipling) about a boy living in the jungle who befriends a bear and must escape the clutches of a nasty tiger. The public and press loved what they saw, giving it high marks and earning massive box-office returns. It has been called an excellent family film that deftly blends computer imagery with strong live-action performances. The movie stars Neel Sethi and features the voices of Bill Murray, Ben Kingsley, Idris Elba, Lupita Nyong'o, and Scarlett Johansson.

*Me Before You* - Romance fans looking for a weepy tearjerker will likely want to check out this film, which was a sleeper success at the box office this summer. The story involves a relationship that blooms between a wealthy, paralyzed Londoner and his small-town-raised caretaker. It divided critics, although more gave it a passing grade than a failing one. About half

thought it was earnest and the performances were strong enough to recommend; others found it formulaic and obvious in its emotional manipulations. The cast includes Emilia Clarke, Sam Claflin, Vanessa Kirby, and Charles Dance.

*The Phenom* - Here's a baseball drama that got strong reviews over the summer, but only managed a very limited release at cinemas. It's about a major-league rookie pitcher who struggles with his new position and is demoted to the minors. A sports psychologist is sent in to help the youngster, revealing the kid's deep-seated issues with his father. As mentioned, reaction was positive, stating it was a surprisingly uncharacteristic sports movie that favors relationships over the game itself and provides some excellent performances from its well-established cast. Johnny Simmons, Ethan Hawke, Paul Giamatti, and Alison Elliott headline the feature.

*What Happened, Miss Simone?* - This documentary arrived last year courtesy of Netflix and is now being given an official DVD/Blu-ray release. It documents the story of the legendary singer/songwriter and activist, Nina Simone, who dabbled in various music genres that include jazz, blues, folk, and R&B (to name but a few). Reviews were very strong for the feature. While a few thought it oversimplified its subject, almost all suggested the rare recordings and previously unseen footage revealed over the course of the running time would captivate fans.

### Blasts From the Past!

Actor/director/writer Orson Welles had quite a career with highs like *Citizen Kane* (1941) and *To*

*uch of Evil* (1958), as well as terrible lows (most notably, freaking out while doing a voice-over for a frozen peas commercial and getting drunk on the set of another — you can see what I'm talking about further down the page). Still, no one can dispute that he was an extremely talented filmmaker who continued creating cinematic works outside of the studio system after the majors had had enough of his antics. Criterion's bringing two of the Welles' lesser-known but very interesting independent efforts to high definition.

*Chimes at Midnight*

(1965) is a French production directed by Welles based around the character of Falstaff from Shakespeare's

*Henry IV*

. Many consider this title visually spectacular and as strong as his most beloved films. The Blu-ray release contains a new restoration of the feature, commentary with film scholars, new interviews with historians, writers, cast members, and the daughter of Welles, along with many other bonuses.

Not only that, but Criterion's also got a Blu-ray of *The Immortal Story* (1968), one of the last pictures Welles managed to finish before his death (he also concluded work 1973's

*F for Fake*

, but several other features he was shooting piecemeal over the years were never completed). This color film made in France only runs 60 minutes and aired as a TV-movie, but is still well-regarded. It's about a rich merchant who hears of a strange sailor's legend and attempts to play it out in real life. The disc includes another film historian commentary track, interviews, and a documentary on Welles, among other bonuses.

Kino has another Fritz Lang movie on the way. *Destiny* (1921) is a thriller about a woman whose fiancé disappears; she makes a deal with the devil to try and find him. Scorpion releasing also have an interesting title coming to Blu-ray. On a different tact,

*Barbarosa*

(1982) is a Western about outlaws starring Gary Busy and Willie Nelson — the cast alone should pique some interest. The movie has developed a strong following over the past couple of decades with genre enthusiasts. Now you can own it in widescreen high-definition.

Finally, Image is putting out *The Commitments* (1991) on Blu-ray for the first time ever. This Irish musical drama from director Alan Parker (

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*Fame*

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*Pink Floyd The Wall*

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*Mississippi Burning*

) is about a group of poor kids forming a soul band. The film caused quite a sensation during its original release. If memory serves, it's a fun little flick. Released as a 25

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Anniversary Edition, the disc features retrospective interviews with the director, as well as a commentary and behind-the-scenes featurettes.

## You Know, For Kids!

Here are some titles youngsters may be interested in.

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*Miraculous: Tales of Ladybug & Cat Noir: Spots On!*

*My Little Pony Friendship is Magic: Everypony's Favorite Frights*

*Pound Puppies: Halloween at Shelter 17*