

## The Crystal Ball - Feb 9 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, February 08 2007 7:00 PM -

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"Hannibal Rising" at the theaters and "The Departed" on DVD are the big movie releases today, which Mitch hits on in this weeks edition of The Crystal Ball. Mitch also fills us in on the two films expected to be the blockbuster Memorial Day movies of 2008, and also provides us all the latest Hollywood rumors and projects in the works. Have a nice weekend everyone ...



Good thing there are interesting news stories and good DVD releases coming out, because I'm getting really tired of sounding like a broken record when it comes to new releases (they all suck).

### News & Rumors:

~ It has been announced this week that the blockbuster Memorial Day movies of 2008 will be Indiana Jones 4 and Speed Racer. I'm still shaking my head on that second one.

~ Haven't heard much from Benicio Del Toro lately...that's about to change as he's signed on to do a remake of the classic horror story "The Wolfman". I might be a little leery about that except for the fact that the screenplay will be written by Andrew Kevin Walker, who penned "Se7en".

~ I'm still not sure how well the gambling film "Lucky You" will do, but there is another one on the horizon that looks intriguing. "21" will tell the tale of some MIT geeks who swindled Las

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Vegas out of millions. Kevin Spacey, Laurence Fishburne, and Kate Bosworth are set to star. Kate Bosworth as a geek? Yeah, right.

~ Everyone who reads my column know how much I just love Adam Sandler comedies (about as much as I love the Baltimore Ratbirds). So just guess what I think about his 2008 comedy "Zohan", about a Mossad agent who fakes his death so that he can anonymously move to New York and become a hair stylist.

~ More "Iron Man" news. Jeff Bridges will join the cast as a confidant and close business associate of Tony Stark (Robert Downey, Jr.)

~ Goodbye, Anna Nicole. The first thing I thought of was a line from Dennis Miller after the broadcast of several of the reality series "The Anna Nicole Smith" show on E! Network. "Somebody put down the f-in camera and HELP HER!"

### **This week's new releases:**

I'm also including two movies on my list that will start on Valentine's Day.

Title: **Hannibal Rising**

Starring: Several C-List nobodies.

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Plot: The origins of the man who made “fava beans and a nice chianti” into a catchphrase.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: With this lame fourth film in the Hannibal Lecter series, they’ve now covered all the whole numbers in my rating system. “Silence of the Lambs” gets a four football rating, the gross “Hannibal” got a 2 (maybe even a 1 ½ if I have to think too much about Hannibal eating the brains out of a drugged out but still alive Ray Liotta), “Red Dragon” got a 3 (But the original “Manhunter” would score a 3 ½), and now this schlock-fest would get a 1. Bad acting. Bad directing. Bad script. Bad movie.

But not the worst of the week, surprisingly. That “honor” would go to...

Title: **Norbit**

Starring: Eddie Murphy, Thandie Newton

Plot: A dweeb engaged to a fat, nasty woman meets the girl of his dreams.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: This may end up rivaling “The Adventures of Pluto Nash” as Eddie Murphy’s worst movie. I don’t know why certain no talent actors seem to keep thinking that dressing up as fat women is incredibly funny, because this just looks to be 20 kinds of stupid. I’ve heard

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that Dreamworks and Paramount Pictures had to edit the hell out of this “family picture” just to get it down to a PG-13 rating. There are also rumors that Eddie Murphy’s behavior on the set was so bad that co-star Thandie Newton almost quit.

Title: **Music and Lyrics (starts February 14<sup>th</sup>)**

Starring: Hugh Grant and Drew Barrymore

Plot: A washed up pop star needs help writing a song for an admiring teen sensation.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: Lord save us guys from sappy romantic comedies released on Valentines Day! OK...I’m ashamed to admit that I really liked Hugh Grant in “About a Boy” and “Notting Hill” (hated him in “Two Weeks Notice”. And according to the buzz, there is some great chemistry between him and Drew. This will be much better than the last two romantic comedies that have hit the theaters, “Catch and Release” and “Because I Said So”, but that’s not saying much

Title: **Tyler Perry’s Daddy’s Little Girls (starts February 14<sup>th</sup>)**

Starring: Gabrielle Union, Idris Elba, Tracee Ellis Ross

Plot: A successful young attorney falls for a blue collar single father of three girls.

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[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: Tyler Perry isn't wearing a dress in this one...if only Eddie Murphy could do the same. Perry is actually a pretty talented film maker, and this one could be more successful than his "Diary of a Mad Black Woman".

### New DVD Releases on Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>

[The Departed](#) – Obviously, the best release of the week, and a certain purchase by me on Tuesday. Watch it this week and you'll be cheering for it to win the Oscars.

**Half Nelson** – Under the radar Indie film that led to Ryan Gosling earning an Oscar nomination for Best Actor.

**Infamous** – Another Indie film, this one totally bombed financially and critically as it is a biography of Truman Capote that simply cannot hold a candle to Phillip Seymour Hoffman's brilliant performance in "Capote"

**Marie Antoinette** – Probably this week's choice for a movie to add to my Netflix queue. Most people just didn't seem to get Sophia Coppola's modernized take on the original Party Girl.

**School for Scoundrels** – Lots of people had high hopes of this teaming of Bad Santa and Napoleon Dynamite. And lots of people were highly disappointed.

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**Zoom** – 2006 was not a good year for Superheroes. “Superman Returns” underperformed, “X-Men United” lost focus, “My Super Ex-Girlfriend” was kryptonited at the box office, and then there was this “X-Men Kiddies” type flick with Tim Allen...and by far it’s the worst of the bunch.

### Calendar Watch:

Next week, [Ghost Rider](#) , [Breach](#) , *Bridge to Terabithia*,

Upcoming Biggies (click on the hyperlink to view the available trailers).

[The Astronaut Farmer](#) – February 23<sup>rd</sup> – Billy Bob Thornton as a farmer who builds a rocket on his farm and intends to make a flight in it. The concept is completely goofy, but it looks like it might be something that works.

[The Number 23](#) – February 23<sup>rd</sup> – Mystery/ Supernatural Thriller with Jim Carrey and Virginia Madsen. I’m hoping this is the exception to the “February Stinker” rule, but I’m seeing in some places where they are calling this a “mystery comedy”...which doesn’t sound good.

[Zodiac](#) – March 2<sup>nd</sup> - Jake Gyllenhaal and Robert Downey, Jr star in the tale of the Bay Area serial killer.

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[Wild Hogs](#) – March 2<sup>nd</sup> - John Travolta, Tim Allen, Martin Lawrence and William H. Macy as four middle aged buddies take off for the open road on motorcycles, only to end up crossing paths with a Hell's Angels gang. Might be the Movie to Beat when it comes to next year's "Razzies" for "Worst Picture".

[300](#) – March 9<sup>th</sup> - Frank Miller adaptation of the Frank Miller graphic novel about 300 Spartans defending their homeland from the entire frickin' Persian Empire. Filmed in the same style as "Sin City". Geeks everywhere can't wait.

[Reign Over Me](#) - March 9<sup>th</sup> – First major fictional piece dealing with the effects of 9/11 on the families, starring Adam Sandler in an impressive looking dramatic role (if you can believe it) and Don Cheadle.

[Shooter](#) – March 16<sup>th</sup> - Political thriller with Mark Wahlberg as a sniper trying to stop an assassination.

[Sunshine](#) – March 16<sup>th</sup> – A team of eight scientists are sent off in a spaceship to try to re-ignite part of the dying sun. Saw a preview of it last week...and it could just be a really awesome movie visually at least.

[Lucky You](#) – March 16<sup>th</sup> – Long delayed film centered around the World Series of Poker with Eric Bana and Drew Barrymore.

[Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles](#) – March 23<sup>rd</sup> – They're baaaacccckkkk. Supposedly a little more adult oriented than the campy films from the 80s.

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[Rescue Dawn](#) – March 30<sup>th</sup> – Christian Bale as a pilot shot down in Laos in the early years of the Vietnam War, and his efforts to escape captivity.

[Grind House](#) – April 6<sup>th</sup> - Two one-hour short horror stories, one from Robert Rodriguez, the other from Quentin Tarantino. (April). I may hate slasher films, but this one looks too good to miss.

[The Kingdom](#) – April 20<sup>th</sup> – Jamie Foxx, Chris Cooper, and Jennifer Garner in a story about an American team sent into the Middle East to investigate a terrorist attack on Americans in Riyadh.

[Spider-Man 3](#) – May 4<sup>th</sup> - The webslinger versus Venom, Sandman, and Harry Osborne picking up his father's GoblinGear.

[Shrek the Third](#) – May 13<sup>th</sup> – Shrek & Donkey...together again. This time with the jolly green Scottish ogre trying to push off the king's crown onto a young Arthur.

*1408* – May 13<sup>th</sup> – John Cusack as a famed debunker of paranormal activities encountering real terror in this adaptation of a Steven King tale.

*Pirates of the Caribbean: At the World's End* – May 25<sup>th</sup> - Captain Jack goes for the hat trick.

*Ocean's Thirteen* – June 8<sup>th</sup> – Ellen Barkin replaces Julia Roberts and Catherine Zeta-Jones in this edition. Talk about a “Brian Giles for Ricardo Rincon” level trade. Will someone please stick a fork in this franchise?

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[\*Fantastic Four: The Rise of the Silver Surfer\*](#) – June 15<sup>th</sup> – This time the quartet go up against the Silver Surfer and the return of Dr. Doom. Please be better than the first one! (the trailer does look awesome).

[\*Evan Almighty\*](#) – June 22<sup>nd</sup> – Steve Carell's Evan Baxter from "Bruce Almighty" is now a Congressman chosen by God (Morgan Freeman) to receive His powers. A reported budget of over \$200 million on this will either make it this year's "DaVinci Code" (big budget, big box office) or this year's "Poseidon".

[\*Live Free or Die Hard\*](#) – June 29<sup>th</sup> - John McClane strikes again (probably with his walker).

[\*Transformers\*](#) – July 6<sup>th</sup> – Michael Bay (hack, spit) tries to spin a former children's cartoon into an "Independence Day" type Armageddon movie. As much as I hate to admit it...the teaser trailer looks good.

[\*Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix\*](#) – July 13<sup>th</sup> – These movies keep getting darker and better as they go. Voldemort (aka "relative of Art Modell") is back and targeting Harry and his friends for some nasty payback.

[\*The Simpsons Movie\*](#) – July 27<sup>th</sup> - ummmm...beeeerrrrr

*The Bourne Ultimatum* – August 3<sup>rd</sup> - Superspy Jason Bourne (Matt Damon) is back and looking for his roots.

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*The Invasion* – August 17<sup>th</sup> – Nicole Kidman and Daniel Craig in a sci-fi flick about an alien epidemic.

*3:12 to Yuma* – October 12<sup>th</sup> – Russell Crowe and Christian Bale in a remake of a classic Western with Bale as a farmer volunteering to escort a criminal (Crowe) to Yuma by train, with a battle of wits ensuing.

*American Gangster* – November 8<sup>th</sup> – Denzel Washington as a heroin kingpin from the Vietnam War era (he smuggled it back in the body bags of dead soldiers) and Russell Crowe as the investigator on his trail.

*Beowulf* – November 16<sup>th</sup> - Robert Zemeckis gets all medieval on us with a motion capture (like “Polar Express”) adaptation of the epic poem.