

The Crystal Ball - Feb 23 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, February 22 2007 7:00 PM -

It's Oscar Week ... which I'm sure you've noticed by now, as we ran Mitch's previews of the Best Picture candidates this week. In tonight's Crystal Ball, Mitch looks at the top theater releases of the weekend ... highlighted by "The Astronaut Farmer" and "The Number 23" starring Jim Carrey. Also, in the news and rumors section, Mitch confirms the third "Meet The Parents" movie as well as Tom Hanks working on a western film. Mitch's Oscar preview will post this weekend.



It's Oscar week...as if anyone frequenting these boards hasn't realized that by being required to look past the movie reviews to get the latest Cavaliers rumors. Don't worry, we'll be back to our normal programming next week.

I did something last week that I haven't done since I've started writing for Swerb...went to the theater to watch a movie with no intention of writing a review for it, as my wife wanted to see "Music and Lyrics" without listening to me acting like some expert once it was over. So I watched it as just a movie fan, left the "critic's hat" at home...and had a really good time. Considering my "date movie" options were "Catch and Release", "Because I Said So", or "Music and Lyrics", I got off relatively light.

"Ghost Rider" certainly seemed to live up to my prediction as a campy movie that would be so bad that it was good. I'm seeing it this weekend, and will have a review for you sometime next week.

News & Rumors:

The Crystal Ball - Feb 23 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, February 22 2007 7:00 PM -

~ Aaron Eckhart has been announced as Harvey Dent/Two Face in the Batman sequel "The Dark Knight". He'll be the "other villain" as Heath Ledger will be featured prominently as The Joker. Good choice, as far as I'm concerned. Let's just hope he's not one tenth as over the top as Tommy Lee Jones was in "Batman Forever".

~ Frank Miller fans, rejoice! Another Graphic Novel adaptation will be coming from the creator of "300" and "Sin City". "Ronin" tells the tale of a leaderless samurai warrior who has been reincarnated in a broken down future New York that is filled with all kinds of freaks. The ronin must destroy a demon with a mystic sword. I'm not sure if that's the same sword Hiro is trying to find on "Heroes".

~ Tom Hanks in a western? That'll be the case in 2008 when Barry Levinson directs Hanks and Julianne Moore in "Boone's Lick". Hanks will play a man escorting his sister-in-law (Moore) on a dangerous wagon journey from Missouri to Wyoming, and they fall in love along the way. I'm sure his brother will understand.

~ A third "Meet the Parents" movie will be made. When will they retire that useless little Focker?

~ If Bill Veeck were still alive, he'd definitely appreciate the addition of a woman with one leg being added to the next round of "Dancing with the Stars". I guess Heather Mills is afraid she's going to be left destitute after divorcing Paul McCartney. This freak show will also include Leila Ali, Clyde Drexler, Apolo Ohno, Big Pussy (Vincent Pastore), a former Miss USA, a former nobody from The Backstreet Boys, and some "actor"/country singer who happens to have the same last name as a famous Internet Movie Critic.

~ A sad moment for men everywhere. Robert Adler, the inventor of the television remote control, died this week at age 93. We raise our beers and channel surf in your honor, Bob.

The Crystal Ball - Feb 23 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, February 22 2007 7:00 PM -

This week's new releases:

Title: **The Astronaut Farmer**

Starring: Billy Bob Thornton, Virginia Madsen.

Plot: A farmer builds his own rocket and gets his entire family to buy into his dream of going into space.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: One of the weirdest concepts and titles I've ever seen, but this looks to be a very good flick...a feel good, family suitable movie that doesn't come off as **too** hokey. I look forward to seeing Billy Bob play something other than a despicable cad.

Title: **The Number 23**

Starring: Jim Carrey, Virginia Madsen

Plot: A man finds a mysterious book that is may be a foreteller of his own life and violent

The Crystal Ball - Feb 23 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, February 22 2007 7:00 PM -

behaviors.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: It's Virginia Madsen week! This would be the crappy one, as Jim Carrey decides to add "horror films" to the genres he sucks in. As goofy as Carrey has gotten lately, I'm waiting for him to be in the news shaving his head and getting his wrists tattooed.

Title: **The Abandoned**

Starring: Anastasia Hille, Karel Roden, Valentin Goshev (never heard of a one of them)

Plot: An adopted woman returns to her native Russia to visit a family farm she never knew of, and runs into a man with a similar story. Horror ensues!

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: "Mitch thinks all horror movies suck", blah, blah, blah. You're right...I do. BUT, if you're into horror flicks, this one's supposed to be pretty damn scary.

Title: **Reno 911!: Miami**

Starring: Thomas Lennon, Ben Garant, Kerri Kenney

The Crystal Ball - Feb 23 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, February 22 2007 7:00 PM -

Plot: The Washoe County Sheriff's Department of Reno is summoned to Miami Beach after a terrorist threat disrupts a police convention.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: If you're a fan of this quirky show, you'll probably love this as it's carrying an "R" rating, meaning they can push the boundaries a lot further than they can on Comedy Central. Sorry..."Ghost Rider" will give me my weekly recommended Dose of Stupid, so I'll skip this one.

New DVD Releases on Tuesday, February 27th

One movie that'll quickly find its way to the top five of my Netflix Queue...and a bunch of garbage.

Stranger Than Fiction – Wish I would have had time to catch this at the theater, but I'll be watching it very soon. Will Farrell actually pulls off going against type and playing a poor sap who is hearing an author's voice in his head as she writes about a fictional character who is going to die. What she doesn't know is that her fictional character is real...and it's Will. It's been said that Dustin Hoffman is great in his supporting role.

A Good Year – A Bad Movie. A "kindler, gentler" Russell Crowe doesn't work. Neither does Ridley Scott trying to do a sappy story of family remorse and redemption.

Tenacious D and the Pick of Destiny– I like Jack Black as much as the next guy, but this exercise of egomaniacal self indulgence run amok is just way too much for anyone but the biggest fan.

The Crystal Ball - Feb 23 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, February 22 2007 7:00 PM -

The Return – Cookie cutter horror flick with Sarah Michelle Gellar. Was so bad that even the horror aficionados stayed away, and it made less than \$8 million at the box office.

Calendar Watch:

Next week, [Zodiac](#) , [Wild Hogs](#) , *Black Snake Moan*

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

[300](#) – March 9th - 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 9th – 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 16th - Political thriller with Mark Wahlberg as a sniper being set up by the government to take the fall for an assassination.

The Crystal Ball - Feb 23 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, February 22 2007 7:00 PM -

[Sunshine](#) – March 16th – 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 recently...and it could be a really awesome movie; at least visually.

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

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

[Rescue Dawn](#) – March 30th – 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 6th - 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.

[Perfect Stranger](#) – April 13th – Hopefully Halle Berry is off the schneid with this thriller about a reporter investigating the death of a friend that through the internet got involved with a powerful married man (Bruce Willis)

[The Kingdom](#) – April 20th – 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.

The Crystal Ball - Feb 23 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, February 22 2007 7:00 PM -

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

[Shrek the Third](#) – May 13th – 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 13th – 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 25th - Captain Jack goes for the hat trick.

[Ocean's Thirteen](#) – June 8th – Ellen Barkin replaces Julia Roberts and Catherine Zeta-Jones in this edition. Talk about a “Brian Giles for Ricardo Rincon” level trade. Al Pacino in a role sure to induce his characteristic overacting won't help either. Will someone please stick a fork in this franchise?

[Fantastic Four: The Rise of the Silver Surfer](#) – June 15th – 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 22nd – 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”.

The Crystal Ball - Feb 23 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, February 22 2007 7:00 PM -

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

[Transformers](#) – July 6th – 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 13th – 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 27th - ummmm...beeeerrrrr

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

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

3:12 to Yuma – October 12th – 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 8th – Denzel Washington as a heroin kingpin from the

The Crystal Ball - Feb 23 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, February 22 2007 7:00 PM -

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 16th - Robert Zemeckis gets all medieval on us with a motion capture (like “Polar Express”) adaptation of the epic poem.