

The Crystal Ball - April 11 Releases

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If you want something decent to watch this weekend...check out the Masters. Check out the Tribe games. Check out the Cavs Friday and Sunday. Check out your NetFlix Queue, or the latest selections at Blockbuster. Check out the grass growing in your yard, or paint a wall and watch it dry. Anything other than wasting time at the theater, because this weekend's new releases are weak says Mitch in this Friday's Crystal Ball. We do have Mitch's favorite movie of '07 releasing on DVD though, as well as news on Robert DeNiro's latest project.



The broken record continues.

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Anything other than wasting time at the theater because there is only ONE possibility of a decent mainstream movie between now and May 2nd, when "Iron Man" comes out, and that is Judd Apatow's "Forgetting Sarah Marshall"...which may be worthwhile (like "Superbad" or "Knocked Up"), or may be totally worth forgetting.

Unless you are the real artsy type, in which case you might be OK with checking out "Smart People" or "Shine a Light";

BTW...lots of updates on the "Calendar Watch" section. For those discouraged by the lameness of 2008 films (like me), check it out...help is on the way.

News and Rumors

~ Speaking of HORRIBLE bombs yet to come, the movie that was supposed to put United Artists studio AND Tom Cruise's career back into high gear, the WWII drama "Valkyrie", has had its release date now moved to February 2009. It was set for a June 2008 release, and then was moved back to October "to put it on contention for Oscar nominations". And now it's been moved to the graveyard of films; February...which this year gave us such illustrious films as "Over Her Dead Body", "Strange Wilderness", and "Witless Protection". Rumors are "Valkyrie" flat out blows chunks. Cruise's German accent is said to be laughably bad...worse then Kevin Costner's English accent from "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves".

~ CBS has yanked "Secret Talents of the Stars" after only one airing. I'm shocked, shocked! OK, actually I am shocked, because I thought with reality programming, they'd

stick with it, no matter how badly it sucked. I guess seeing 90 year old Mr. Sulu trying to sing a country song was about as close to the bottom as CBS wanted to go. Too bad. If they'd go a little further down, they'd run into the FOX programming heads.

~ In the latest lame sequel news, Disney Pictures has announced that we'll be getting the next episodes of "Cars" and "Toy Story" in the next few years. They also announced that all future computer animated films will be in 3-D.

~ Robert De Niro, Drew Barrymore, Kate Beckinsale, and Sam Rockwell will star in "Everybody's Fine". De Niro will play a recently widowed man who realizes that his deceased wife was the only connection he had to his own children, leading him to impulsively take a road trip to re-connect with them.

~ Finally, all of you "Jericho" fans may be in for a bit of a reprieve. CBS just might keep the post apocalyptic drama alive by making a deal similar to what NBC did with "Friday Night Lights", selling rights to DirecTV to air new episodes before they are shown on network TV.

This week's new movie releases:

Street Kings

Starring: Keanu Reeves, Forest Whitaker, Hugh Laurie

Plot: A recently widowed LAPD cop is forced to go against the cop culture that had been his entire life after he is framed in the execution of a fellow officer

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: This is one of those projects that got kicked around Hollywood for years, with Spike Lee once being scheduled to direct it. David Ayer is the man who ultimately landed the job, only his second directing gig after a movie that could actually make Christian Bale look bad; "Harsh Times". So how much do you think this is going to suck with the Uber-Dood himself, Keanu? I'd love to see it be decent just because of how much I like Whitaker and Dr. House himself, Hugh Laurie...but it won't be.

My Estimated Rating: Tim Couch (1 ½ footballs)

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Smart People

Starring: Dennis Quaid, Sarah Jessica Parker, Ellen Page, and Thomas Haden Church

Plot: A doctor looks after her injured former English professor, unaware that she will soon have to contend with his clumsy affections, the attitude of his Young Republican daughter, and the sudden arrival of his good-for-nothing adopted brother

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: Might be a worthwhile indie comedy for those that really loved "Juno". Although Ellen Page filmed this BEFORE she made her breakthrough, this is said to almost feel like a sequel, with Page playing the tart-tongued 17 year old daughter of Quaid, playing very much against type as an intellectually snobby curmudgeon.

My Estimated Rating: Frank Ryan (3 footballs) (but definitely not for everyone)

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Prom Night

Starring: Brittany Snow, Scott Porter, Jessica Stroup

Plot: A group of high school students are stalked on their prom night by a vengeful killer.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: Lame slasher porn (as if there is any other type). You want to see teenagers terrorized and murdered at a high school? Go rent "Carrie".

My Estimated Rating: Mike Phipps (1/2 football).

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Shine a Light

Starring: The Rolling Stones

Plot: Martin Scorsese's documentary of the career of the Rolling Stones, including concert footage from their "A Bigger Bang" tour.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: This was released last week to about 250 theaters nationwide, and you should now be able to find it in at least one theater no matter where you live. In any case, Roger Ebert says that it "may be the most intimate documentary ever made about a live rock 'n' roll concert". That's good enough for me.

My Estimated Rating: Brian Sipe (3 1/2 footballs...assuming you are into these types of films).

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New DVD Releases for Tuesday, April 15th

Juno - It is finally out...my pick for Best Picture of the year. The little Indie Pic that could, led by the little firecracker Ellen Page in the title role as the "cautionary whale". Do not expect this to be a sitcom level laugh-fest. It is a comedy with a heart as big as Juno's stomach...and a lot of good drama and character development as well. I will certainly be purchasing it on Tuesday.

Aliens Vs. Predator - Requiem - No chance of me purchasing this. A second chance to make total crap out of two of the greatest extra terrestrial species ever to grace the silver screen.

In the Name of the King: A Dungeon Siege

Tale - Believe it or not, this may actually be worse than AVP2. Jason Statham as a medieval hero. Ray Liotta as an evil leader of a race of evil animal-warriors. Burt Reynolds as...I have no idea...but it's bad.

The Final Season - Sean Astin and Powers Boothe in a baseball movie about a small town whose high school team is playing in the final season before merging with a bigger school. Clichés so thick you can swat them away like flies.

Calendar Watch

Next week: [88 Minutes](#), *Forbidden Kingdom*, *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*

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

[Deception](#) - April 25th - Hugh Jackman and Ewan McGregor in an "Eyes Wide Shut" sort of tale about a mild mannered accountant becoming entangled in the goings-on at an underground sex club.

[Iron Man](#) - May 2nd - The latest

mega-budgeted superhero flick. Looks very promising, and the casting of Robert Downey, Jr. as the alcoholic billionaire who designs a supersuit was inspired

[Speed Racer](#) - May 9th - Emile Hirsch, Matthew Fox, and Christina Ricci as Speed, Racer X, and Trixie in the Wachowski Brothers' ("The Matrix" trilogy) adaptation of the campy 1960s Japanese anime.

[*The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian*](#) - May 16th - The same four kids from the first movie return to Narnia...1300 years after their last visit in that enchanted land's time frame, to help restore the throne to the rightful heir.

[*Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*](#) - May 23rd - Spielberg and Ford team up one more time, with Cate Blanchett as the romantic interest, and Shia LaBeouf

("Transformers") as
Indy's son.

[Sex and the City](#) - May 30th -
The movie version of the HBO
series hits the big screen. Can
we guys get our share of this
pie and have a movie version
of "Deadwood"?

[You Don't Mess with](#)

[the Zohan](#) - June 6th - Adam Sandler as a former Mossad agent setting up shop as a hairdresser in New York City.

[Kung Fu Panda](#) - June 6th - Jack Black as the voice of a reluctant panda bear recruited by a team of Kung Fu masters.

The Incredible Hulk - June
13th -

Looks to be much, much better than the Ang Lee stink-fest, with Edward Norton taking on the role of Bruce Banner.

The Happening - June 13th

- Latest M. Night Shyamalan thriller, starring Mark Wahlberg in a tale about a family on the run after natural disasters threaten the entire planet.

[*Get Smart*](#) - June 20th -
Steve Carell, Anne

Hathaway, and Alan Arkin take on the roles of Maxwell Smart, Agent 99 and The Chief. As much as I hate movie adaptations of television shows, this one has potential.

The Love Guru - June 20th -

Mike Myers already catching as much hell from India as Sacha Baron Cohen did from Kazakhstan for making fun of cultures that don't seem to have a sense of humor.

[Wall-E](#) - June 27th -
Pixar's next
masterpiece, about a
garbage cleaning
robot who dreams of
the stars.

[Wanted](#) - June 27th -

Look for this to make a box office star out of James McAvoy ("The Last King of Scotland", "Atonement"ot;) as he plays a young man brought into a secret society of assassins by a hot,

hot looking Angelina
Jolie. Morgan
Freeman plays their
boss.

Hancock - July 4th -
Will Smith as a
hard-living

superhero needing
the use of a public
relations
professional (Jason
Bateman) to repair
his image.

Hellboy II: The

Golden Army

- July 11

th

- The big red cigar chomping demon with a bad attitude is back for more butt kicking.

The Dark Knight - July 19 th

- Batman is back, and this time he's tracking the Joker, played by Heath Ledger. Most likely the box office

champion of 2008.

Mamma Mia! -

July 19
th

- Something for
the ladies to

attend while the
guys are busy
watching Batman
kick the Joker's
ass. A musical
featuring the
songs of ABBA.
And my wife wants
us to go see it.

Sigh.

X-Files 2 - July 25
th

- Little is known
yet about these

further
adventures of
Scully and
Fox...not even the
title.

Tropic Thunder -

August 15

th

- A group of actors shooting a big budget war movie are forced to become the

soldiers they are
portraying in the
film. Stars Ben
Stiller, Jack
Black, and
Robert Downey
Jr, playing a
white actor

donning black
make-up to
"fit the
part".

The International

- August 15

th

- Clive Owen
and Naomi

Watts in a thriller
about an Interpol
agent's attempts
to break up an

international
arms dealing
ring financed by
a high profile
bank. (What can
Wachovia do for
you?)

Righteous Kill -

September 12

th

- Robert De Niro

and Al Pacino

together again

as NY

detectives

working on a
case that may
be related to
both a serial
killer and a man
they might have
wrongly
imprisoned

years before.

Eagle Eye -
September 26
th

- Shia LaBeouf
and Michelle
Monaghan as a
mother and son
who become
unwitting
members of a

terrorist cell
plotting a
political
assassination.

RocknRolla -
October 31
st
- Guy Ritchie
hopefully back
in form for
another tale of

London
gangsters.
Gerard Butler,
Thandie
Newton, Tom
Wilkinson, and
Jeremy

Frackin' Piven
star.

*Quantum of
Solace -*

November 13
th

- The next
James Bond
film, picking up
shortly after
the events

ending
"Casino
Royale"

Harry Potter

and the
Half-Blood
Prince -
November 21
st
- The sixth of
J.K. Rowling's

seven books,
setting the
stage for the
two part
conclusion in
2010 and
2011.

Defiance -

December 19
th

- Daniel Craig
and Live
Schreiber as
Jewish

brothers in
WWII
Russian,
leading a
band of
refuges in
striking back

at the
Germans. A
major early
Oscar
contender