

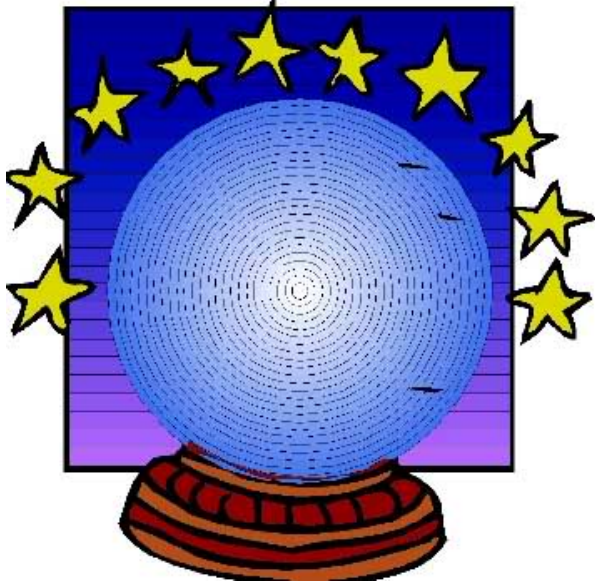
## The Crystal Ball - July 25 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, July 24 2008 7:00 PM -

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It is official; The Summer of 2008 is definitely the Summer of the Joker. Yes, we should say the Summer of The Dark Knight, but forget about that, it's Heath Ledger's portrayal of the homicidal maniac that is shooting this movie to heights that haven't been seen in a long time. In this week's Crystal Ball, Mitch talks about that, this week's two theater releases of note (&quot;The X-Files&quot; and &quot;Step Brothers&quot;), as well as this week's DVD releases and Hollywood rumors.



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And now that we are &quot;done&quot; with blockbusters for the summer (no, I don't consider &quot;Mummy 3&quot; as a blockbuster), look for &quot;The Dark Knight&quot; to stay at #1 for a couple of more weeks, and it will stay in the Top 5 possibly past Labor Day as well. The only question is; will it surpass the \$436 million brought in by &quot;Shrek 2&quot; in 2004, and become the biggest box office hit since &quot;Titanic&quot;?

I wouldn't bet against it.

## News and Rumors

~ Peter Berg is set to follow up his (box office) successful directing job of "Hancock" with another superhero...sort of. Berg will produce and direct "Hercules: The Thracian Wars". It will focus more on the mortal side of the Greek half-god, perhaps getting into his inner conflicts a little better than Berg was able to pull off with "Hancock". No rumors yet regarding who will be the star. We haven't had a decent Greek God movie since "Clash of the Titans", so here's to hoping for something good.

~ George Lucas is looking into purchasing/developing the technology that could turn all of his Star Wars movies into 3-D features. Sounds good...as long as he finds a way to edit out Jar Jar Binks.

~ NBC will be airing their own attempt at the "24" audience with "My Own Worst Enemy". Christian Slater will be the one hoping his career gets the boost that Keifer Sutherland enjoyed by playing a spook. The twist on this one? Slater plays an efficiency expert/family man named Henry AND a Jack Bauer-esque spy named Edward. But Henry doesn't know about Edward due to some high tech gizmo installed in him that allows his boss (Alfre Woodard) to pull a switch enabling the other personality to take over. Good buzz on this...but I'm a little leery on the concept at this point. Sounds a little too close to Josh Weldon's "Dollhouse".

~ I think each week I'll just start listing the Stupid Sequels and Remakes in one blurb. Unless noted otherwise, assume I'm of the opinion that all of these are bad ideas. "Top Gun 2: Maverick Flies Back to the Mother-ship", "Harold and Kumar Do Something Else Stupid", "Hairspray 2: The Revenge of the Curling Iron", and "RoboCop 8: Detroit is Still an Open Sewer" (that they are planning to make these sequels is a fact; the titles have been changed to mock the guilty). And then there is MTV's idea to remake "The Rocky Horror Picture Show". Yes...remaking campy cult films is always a good idea. See also; "Reefer Madness; the Movie

Musical&quot;.

~ For a sequel that may not be in the &quot;why in the HELL are they making this?&quot; category; &quot;Anchorman 2&quot;. Will Ferrell is teaming back up with Adam McKay, so the &quot;brains&quot; behind the very popular first movie are intact. For this one, we'll jump ahead a decade, and see how Mr. Burgundy handles the 80s.

~ And finally, a technology note. Tired of all those cables hanging off from the huge flatscreen you hung on the wall of your Man-Cave? Sony and Samsung have announced that they plan to adopt a standard technology called Wireless Home Digital Interface (WHDI) that will make those pesky HDMI and audio cables a thing of the past. Motorola, Sharp and Hitachi are also buying into the technology, which would add about another \$100 to the cost of the sets.

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

#### **The X-Files: I Want to Believe**

Starring: David Duchovny, Gillian Anderson, Billy Connolly

Plot: If you watched the original series, then no explanation is necessary. If you didn't, then no explanation could help. (OK, this one involves a troubled priest with psychic visions).

[View Trailer](#)

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The BeerBuzz: I never watched the series, and I didn't watch the movie from 10 years ago, so this might be the most confusing movie I've ever went in to see. However, this movie is SUPPOSED to be able to stand alone from the series and the first film. We'll see about that, as I'll be attending this with my wife, who never missed an episode.

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## Step Brothers

Starring: Will Farrell, John C. Reilly, Mary Steenburgen

Plot: Two really stupid over-40 losers become stepbrothers when their father and mother get married.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: There is almost no point in me even trying to discuss this. I have no intention of seeing another in the long line of movies where Ferrell does the only thing he has the talent to do; playing a complete, blithering idiot. But also be aware that some of that opinion is just from my personal distaste in Ferrell, and these types of films. For those of you that really enjoyed "Dumb and Dumber", "Superbad", and "Talladega Nights", this is supposed to be in the same line, and should be a lot more enjoyable to you than Ferrell's last flop; "Semi-Pro".

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

***New DVD Releases for Tuesday, July 29<sup>th</sup>***

**Harold and Kumar Escape from Guantanamo Bay** - Stoned slackers Harold and Kumar manage to get themselves confused as terrorists from Iran and North Korea. Hilarity and Neil Patrick Harris ensues! (I may even have to rent this to see if it fits into the "Guilty Pleasure" category...which I think it will).

**Never Back Down** - A rebellious teen is lured into an underground fight club, where he finds a mentor in a mixed martial arts veteran. I'm not sure that even our own MMA expert Scott Swerbinsky would like this snooze-fest.

**Doomsday** - Cheap rip-off of the cheesy "Resident Evil" movies, this one with a second rate television actress playing the Milla Jovovich part (but she's British!).

***Calendar Watch***

Next week; *The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor*, *Swing Vote*

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

[Tropic Thunder](#) - August 15<sup>th</sup> - 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";.

[Star Wars: the Clone Wars](#) - August 15<sup>th</sup> - First ever animated Star Wars project from Lucasfilm Animation.

[Righteous Kill](#) - September 12<sup>th</sup> - 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.

[Burn After Reading](#) - September 12<sup>th</sup> - The latest Coen Brothers' movie, with Brad Pitt joining Frances McDormand, George Clooney, Tilda Swinton and John Malkovich in a dark comedy about missing memoirs of a CIA agent.

[\*Eagle Eye\*](#) - September 26<sup>th</sup> - Shia LaBeouf and Michelle Monaghan as a slacker and a single mother who become unwitting members of a terrorist cell plotting a political assassination.

[\*Miracle at St. Anna\*](#) - September 26<sup>th</sup> - Spike Lee's tale of a a battalion of black American soldiers who became trapped in a Tuscan village during WWII.

[\*Body of Lies\*](#) - October 10<sup>th</sup> - Russell Crowe and Leonardo DiCaprio in Ridley Scott's spy tale of intrigue in the Middle East.

*Max Payne* - October 17<sup>th</sup> - Mark Wahlberg stars in the adaptation of the video game about a DEA agent out to avenge the deaths of his family.

*Pride and Glory* - October 24<sup>th</sup> - Edward Norton and Colin Farrell in a story about a family of prominent NYC cops who are shaken to their core when a scandal is uncovered.

*RocknRolla* - October 31<sup>st</sup> - Guy

Ritchie hopefully back in form for another tale of London gangsters. Gerard Butler, Thandie Newton, Tom Wilkenson, and Jeremy Friggin' Piven star.

## [Quantum of Solace](#) -

November 7

th

- The next James Bond film, picking up shortly after the events ending "Casino Royale";

[Australia](#) - November 14<sup>th</sup> -  
Baz Luhrmann's epic tale set  
in WWII Australia. With  
Nicole Kidman and Hugh  
Jackman. Think "Gone  
with the Wind" with  
kangaroos.

*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.

*The Road* - November 28<sup>th</sup>  
- Viggo Mortensen as a man walking with his son for months across a ravaged, post-apocalyptic

landscape in search of civilization. Charlize Theron co-stars.

*The Day the Earth Stood Still* - December 12<sup>th</sup> - Keanu Reeves in a remake of the classic 1951 sci-fi film.

# *Defiance* - December 19 th

- Daniel Craig and Live Schreiber as Jewish brothers in WWII Russian, leading a band of refugees in striking back at the Germans. A major early Oscar contender

# *Revolutionary Road* - December 19 th

- Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet as a young couple raising a family in a Connecticut suburb during the mid 1950s. Sam Mendes (&quot;American Beauty&quot;) directs

the "Titanic"; stars in their on-screen reunion.

*The Spirit* - December 25<sup>th</sup> - Frank Miller's next comic book adaptation, done in the same style as

&quot;Sin City&quot;.

**Blockbusters on the  
Distant Horizon** (mo  
vies that would seem  
to be big hits...as  
soon as they get

made or released).

[\*Watchmen\*](#) - March 6, 2009 - The screen version of what is arguably graphic novelist Alan Moore's greatest work.

*X-Men Origins:*  
*Wolverine* - May 1,  
2009 - Hugh Jackman  
goes it alone as the  
adamentium  
enhanced anti-hero.  
With Live Schreiber  
as Sabertooth, and  
Ryan Reynolds as  
Deadpool.

*Star Trek* - May 8, 2009 - J.J. Abrams and a young cast reboot the franchise, going back to Kirk and Spock's days at Starfleet Academy.

*Angels and Demons* -  
May 15, 2009 - Tom  
Hanks and Ron  
Howard follow-up to  
&quot;The DaVinci  
Code&quot;

*Terminator 4* - May

22, 2009 - Christian Bale as John Conner as the franchise moves into the apocalyptic future.

*Transformers 2* - June 26, 2009 - The next

# chapter of Robots In Disguise!

*Public Enemy* - July  
1, 2009 - Johnny  
Depp as John  
Dillinger. Co-starring  
Christian Bale, and

directed by Michael  
Mann

*The Taking of Pelham*  
123- August 7, 2009 -  
Denzel Washington,  
John Travolta, and  
James Gandolfini in a

remake of the classic  
1974 film about a  
hijacked subway car.

*Shutter Island* - Octob  
er, 2009 - Martin  
Scorsese working  
once again with

Leonardo DiCaprio in  
this mystery set in  
1954.

*Nottingham* - November,  
2009 - Ridley Scott  
and Russell Crowe  
together again in a

retelling of the Robin Hood legend, this time through the eyes of the Sheriff of Nottingham (Crowe). With Sienna Miller as Maid Marion.

*Avatar* - December 18, 2009 - James Cameron's sci-fi/CGI extravaganza. The C.I.A. should take lessons about secrecy from Cameron, as he's keeping info about this film very much to

himself at this time.

*Iron Man 2* - May, 2010 - Right on the heels of the success of the first one, Marvel is quick to get Robert Downey Jr.

back into his titanium  
suit.

*The Chronicles of  
Narnia: The Voyage  
of the Dawn Treader -  
May, 2010 - The  
series goes off in a bit*

of a different  
direction, as those of  
you who love the  
books already know.

*Thor* - June 2010 -  
Another Marvel  
superhero...but the

Nordic God is about as bland personality-wise as Superman, so we'll see how it goes.

*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part*

/ - 2010 - The start of  
the End for the boy  
wizard and his battle  
against  
He-Who-Shall-not-Be  
-Named

*Lincoln* - 2010 -

Steven Spielberg  
directs the  
biographical film of  
the 16<sup>th</sup>  
President (Liam  
Neeson)

*The Hobbit* - 2010 -

Guillermo del Toro  
directs and Peter  
Jackson will produce  
the prequel to  
&quot;Lord of the  
Rings&quot;. Ian  
McKellen will return  
as Gandalf

*Fantastic Voyage* -  
2010 - Roland  
Emmerich  
(“The Day After  
Tomorrow”;  
“10,000  
B.C.”) remakes  
the classic 1967  
movie about a  
miniaturized sub and

crew operating on a  
scientist from inside  
his brain.

*The Avengers* - 2011  
- Iron Man, Hulk,  
Thor, and Captain  
America open up a

can of whoopass on  
bad guys  
everywhere.

*Harry Potter and the  
Deathly Hallows:  
Part II* - 2011 - The  
end of the line for

what will be beyond  
doubt the most  
profitable series in  
the history of film  
making.

*The Hobbit 2* - 2011  
- del Toro and

Jackson again, this time covering the time between the end of Tolkien's book, "The Hobbit" and the start of LOTR.