

The Crystal Ball - August 15 Releases

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After a ferocious run of movie reviews for us early this summer, we hit a dead spot this last month. A dead spot that ends this week as SIX new movies come out, providing a little something for everyone. "Tropic Thunder", "Star Wars: The Clone Wars", "Mirrors", "Vicky Cristina Barcelona", "Henry Poole Is Here", and "Fly Me To The Moon". Mitch previews them all in our Friday night staple here at The Cleveland Fan ... The Crystal Ball.



Time to get back into the theater this week, with SIX new movies coming out, providing a little something for everyone.

News and Rumors

~ This is extremely disappointing. The money grubbing powers that be at Warner Brothers have decided this week to delay the release of "Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince" from November of this year until July 2009, in order to prop up what looks to be a relatively lame summer schedule. This will make it two years between the last movie and this one. At this rate, by the time they do the two part "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows', Daniel Radcliffe may have children of his own.

~ Sorry to say this for all of you out there going nuts about a new poster making the rounds showing that the next Batman movie will be about the Riddler. The poster was made by a fan, not the studios. Now that doesn't mean that the next one won't be about the Riddler (and Johnny Depp has been rumored for the part), but there is absolutely nothing beyond rumors at this point.

~ A couple of new casting notes for Quentin Tarantino's WWII film "Inglorious Bastards"; Mike Myers and Simon Pegg ("Hot Fuzz") will join Brad Pitt, Eli Roth and Natassja Kinski. I'm not sure about Myers playing a British general...but I'll try to hold off judgment for now.

~ Two Tom Cruise notes. The great couch jumper reportedly turned down the lead in the spy thriller "Edwin A. Salt", about a CIA operative being wrongfully accused of being a Russian spy. Angelina Jolie will now take the role, which will obviously be renamed. Cruise will instead star in a comedy called "Food Fight", playing a snobby NY chef who ends up working at a school cafeteria. Great decision there, Tom.

This week's new movie releases:

Tropic Thunder

Starring: Ben Stiller, Jack Black, Robert Downey Jr.

Plot: While filming a big budget war movie, a group of self absorbed actors unwittingly get caught up in a real-life conflict

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: Major buzz on this one, not the least of which has come from the outrage of the use of the word "retard" in the film...which is really just a send-up of shallow actors who love to take on handicap roles just to get awards. Supposed to be one of the sharpest satires about the Hollywood culture in some time, including a hilarious send-up from Tom Cruise, of all people.

I'll let you know in a few days, as I plan on getting to it this weekend.

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Star Wars: The Clone Wars

Starring: the voices of Matt Lanter, Nika Futterman, Tom Kane

Plot: Filling the gap between "Attack of the Clones" and "Revenge of the Sith", this animated tale chronicles the on-going intergalactic battle involving the Jedis of the Republic and the battle droids of the Trade Federation

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: This one is not faring well when it comes to buzz. Maybe the most diehard fanboys will love this, but for everyone else that likes Star Wars, they are being advised to wait until Lucas's "Clone Wars" TV show comes out.

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Mirrors

Starring: Kiefer Sutherland, Paula Patton, Amy Smart

Plot: An ex-cop and his family are the target of an evil force using mirrors as a gateway into their home.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: Kiefer really should use his popularity and clout to pick some better projects. This one is getting (rightfully) killed by the critics, and expect the fans to stay away in droves, as the plot and script are said to be so bad that even those that really like horror films will not be able to watch this one.

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Vicky Cristina Barcelona

Starring: Rebecca Hall, Scarlett Johansson, Javier Bardem, Penelope Cruz

Plot: Two girlfriends on a summer holiday in Spain become enamored with the same painter, fully unaware that his ex-wife is about to re-enter the picture

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: Woody Allen does a fun, breezy comedy? I'll believe it when I see it, but the early buzz on this does seem to be very good. Then again, the infamous threesome seen between Cruz, Johansson, and Bardem might attract the voyeurs (I've heard it isn't all that titillating). There are lots of people who wouldn't see a Woody Allen movie at gunpoint, so there is no sense in talking to that crowd. For me, I'm hoping Woody is as good as he was making "Match Point", as opposed to his last two disasters; "Scoop" and "Cassandra's Dream".

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Henry Poole Is Here

Starring: Luke Wilson, George Lopez, Radha Mitchell

Plot: A man abandons his fiancée and family business to spend what he believes are his remaining days alone, until the discovery of a "miracle" by a nosy neighbor ruptures his solitude and restores his faith in life.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: Another movie that might have been better served going straight to a "movie-of-the-week" on the Lifetime Network. A very uneven comedy-drama as Luke Wilson sleepwalks through another film. I'm surprised it's being released on 500 screens nationwide. Look for it to be on 50 screens by next week, and on DVD by the end of September.

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Fly Me to the Moon - 3D

Starring: the voices of Trevor Gagnon, Philip Bolden, David Gore

Plot: Three flies hitch a ride on the Apollo 11 mission.

The BeerBuzz: Did you see "Flushed Away"? (And if you did, you are in a very small minority)...well, this is the

same thing, only in space. You get the 3D thing in this one...which may not be a good thing either. Keep the tequila ready for you at home if your kids force you to take them to this. Try to talk them into seeing "Kung Fu Panda" or "WALL-E" again instead.

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DVD Releases for Tuesday, August 19th

I guess August is a great month to attack your Netflix Queue...because there hasn't been squat coming out this month that anyone should rush out and rent. This week is no exception.

Hannah Montana/Miley Cyrus: Best of Both Worlds Concert Tour - If you think I'm going to pimp this just because the star shares the same name as the author of this article...you're wrong.

But that doesn't matter. If you have a daughter between the ages of 5 and 12, you're going to have to buy this. Accept it, and move on.

Prom Night (Unrated) - Teenagers get hacked up at a prom. And the "unrated" means that you get even more gore than you got at the theater!

Street Kings - Keanu Reeves as a cop set up to be the fall guy. With Forest Whitaker and Hugh Laurie. The co-stars don't matter, as this movie stinks. When you put Cedric the Entertainer and Jay Mohr in an action drama, you know you are courting disaster.

Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day - An out-of-work London governess (Frances McDormand) finds her world turned upside down when she goes to

work for a ditzy American actress and singer (Amy Adams). Supposedly better than it sounds...my wife already has plans to see it.

Calendar Watch

Next week; *Death Race*, *The House Bunny*, *The Longshots*, *The Rocker*

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

[*Righteous Kill*](#) - September 12th - 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 12th -

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 26th - 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 26th
- Spike Lee's tale of a a battalion of black American soldiers who became trapped in a Tuscan village during WWII.

[The Express](#) - October 3rd - A must for Browns fans, the biographical tale of Syracuse running back Ernie Davis, the first African-American to win the Heisman Trophy.

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

Max Payne - October 17th -
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 24th

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

London gangsters. Gerard Butler, Thandie Newton, Tom Wilkenson, and Jeremy Friggin' Piven star.

Changeling - October 31st
- Clint Eastwood's latest Oscar potential, with Angelina Jolie as a Prohibition era mother who begins to think that

the kidnapped son who
was returned to her might
not really be hers.

[*Quantum of Solace*](#) -

November 7
th

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

"Casino Royale"

[Australia](#) - November
14th - Baz

Luhrmann's epic tale set
in WWII Australia. With
Nicole Kidman and
Hugh Jackman. Think
"Gone with the

Wind" with
kangaroos.

The Road - November
28th - 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
th

- Keanu Reeves in a remake of the classic 1951 sci-fi film.

Twilight - December 12th - the adaptation of the popular book series

concerning a
relationship between
a non-blood drinking
vampire and a
teenaged girl.

Defiance -

December 12

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 ("American

Beauty")
directs the
"Titanic"
stars in their
on-screen reunion.

The Spirit -

December 25

th

- Frank Miller's
next comic book
adaptation, done in
the same style as
"Sin
City".

Watchmen - March 6, 2009 - The screen version of what is arguably graphic novelist Alan Moore's greatest work.

**Blockbusters on
the Distant
Horizon (movies
that would seem
to be big hits...as
soon as they get
made or
released).**

*X-Men Origins:
Wolverine* - May 1,
2009 - Hugh
Jackman goes it
alone as the
adamantium
enhanced
anti-hero. With
Liv Ullmann 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 "The
DaVinci
Code"*

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 - Jul

y 1, 2009 - Johnny
Depp as John
Dillinger.
Co-starring
Christian Bale,
and directed by
Michael Mann

*Harry Potter and
the Half-Blood
Prince* - July 2009
- The sixth of J.K.
Rowling's seven
books, setting the
stage for the two
part conclusion in
2010 and 2011.

*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 - Oc
tober, 2009 -
Martin Scorsese
working once

again with
Leonardo
DiCaprio in this
mystery set in
1954.

Nottingham - Nove

mber, 2009 -
Ridley Scot 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 - Decembe
r 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 I - 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 16th
President (Liam
Neeson)

The Hobbit - 2010
- Guillermo del
Toro directs and
Peter Jackson will
produce the
prequel to
"Lord of the
Rings". 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.