

## The Crystal Ball - September 5 Releases

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It's another dismal weekend for theater and DVD releases, but that all starts to change next week, when there are several intriguing films that hit cinemas all across America. In this week's Crystal Ball, Mitch previews this weeks releases, teases next weeks, and provides our readers with some juicy news and rumors from Hollywood. Amongst them? A "Ghostbusters" sequel, info on the newest HBO Sunday night drama, Michael Phelps on "Entourage", and Anthony Edwards back on "ER".



In my last column, I was griping about how bad the movies coming out last Friday were going to be.

How bad were they?

"College" - 8% approval rating on the Tomatometer on [rottentomatoes.com](http://rottentomatoes.com)

"Babylon A.D." - 7% approval rating

"Disaster Movie" - ZERO percent approval rating.

It just might have been the worst weekend of movies all year...beating out January 25<sup>th</sup>, when "Rambo", "Meet the Spartans", and "How

She Move&quot; debuted.

This week won't be as bad...only because there is only one bomb-to-be being released.

## News and Rumors

~ For those of you fanboys trying your damndest to convince us all that Two-Face Harvey Dent might still be alive...fergedaboutit. Aaron Eckhart, who played the tragic &quot;white knight&quot; in the Batman movie has revealed a conversation with director Chris Nolan, where Eckhart asked if there was any chance of coming back. &quot;No way&quot;, said Nolan. &quot;He's toast&quot;.

~ I am so tempted to put this in the &quot;Stupid Remakes and Sequels&quot; category...but maybe not. Judd Apatow and Seth Rogen are rumored to be working on a script for another &quot;Ghostbusters&quot; movie, set to reunite the original members; Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Harold Ramis and Ernie Hudson. We'll keep our ears open for more news on this one.

~ One television note. This Sunday is the premier of &quot;True Blood&quot; on HBO. It's the tender story of

vampires who have come out from seclusion now that an artificial blood plasma drink called "TruBlood" has been introduced; meaning they no longer have to suck on the necks of humans. Anna Paquin stars as a human waitress with a secret of her own and a crush on a 187 year old cutie vampire. It may sound a little dumb...until you realize it's created by Alan Ball, the man behind "American Beauty" and "Six Feet Under". I'll let you know what I think next week.

~ I lied...I'm about to give a second television note. Half-dolphin Michael Phelps not only will appear on an episode of "Entourage", he may even become a semi-regular on the show...playing himself, but perhaps getting involved with Ari, who is trying to steal him from another agent.

~ There is another TV show coming out this week that I'm interested in seeing. "Fringe" is the latest invention of J.J. Abrams, he of "Lost", "Alias", "Cloverfield", and the upcoming "Star Trek" reboot. It's about an FBI group working to uncover the causes of a rash of unexplained phenomena. No...really...it's not a ripoff of "X-Files" (and my dog doesn't bite).

~ Last TV note...look for a guest appearance from Anthony

Edwards on &quot;ER&quot; later this year. Nope, Dr. Mark Green is not back from the dead...but he will be appearing in a flashback scene. Rumors are still about that this may also lead to a commitment from George Clooney to make an appearance as well.

**Stupid Remakes and Sequels:** Two new &quot;Riddick&quot; films are in the works, according to star Vin Diesel. Why not? Just because &quot;Chronicles of Riddick&quot; sucked rotten cheese and no one watched it is no reason not to make another two or three.

**This week's new movie release:**

## **Bangkok Dangerous**

Starring: Nicolas Cage, Charlie Yeung, Shahkrit Yamnarm

Plot: A hitman in Bangkok to pull off a series of jobs falls for a local woman and bonds with his errand boy.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: A remake of an earlier Hong Kong film...at least it's still the same directors this time, as the Pang Brothers try to go mainstream Hollywood with Nic Cage and his greasy hockey-hair. Alas, there is a reason that the studio dumped the movie into this kiss-of-death release date that conflicts with the opening of the NFL season: It sucks. Just once, we could perhaps have a short movie where the hitman DOESN'T take that final job (that always goes wrong), and he lives happily and boringly ever after.

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***DVD Releases for Tuesday, September 9<sup>th</sup>***

**Baby Mama** - Relatively harmless chick comedy with Tina Fey as a Type A

personality career woman desperate to have a baby...so desperate that she hooks up with a White Trash surrogate played by another SNL regular, Amy Poehler. Some extremely funny moments make it all worth a look.

**The Forbidden Kindgom** - Another Jackie Chan movie that makes no sense at all. Just a chance to get Jackie and Jet Li in a movie together to do some wild martial arts moves (and just ignore what Li said earlier about never doing another martial arts movie...money talks). More of a kids film than a true action flick...so don't be fooled.

**Itty Bitty Titty Committee** - I normally don't preview movies that were only released in LA and NY...and therefore nowhere else

because they sucked...but the title of this one makes it mandatory. A heart warming film about a recent high school graduated lesbian and he introduction to radical feminism in the form of a group trying to tell the women of the world how bad plastic surgery is for them. Oooooookkkkaaayyyyyy (at least the director, Jamie Babbit, is from Shaker Heights).

## **The Big Lebowski (10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Limited Edition)** -

The Dude Rules!

## ***Calendar Watch***

Next week (Damn...we finally have some good movies coming out!); [Right](#)

## [eous Kill](#)

,  
[Burn After Reading](#)  
, *Tyler Perry's The Family That Preys*,  
*The Women*

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

[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.

[The Express](#) - October 3<sup>rd</sup> - 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 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>t</sup>

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- 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.

*Changeling* - October 31<sup>st</sup>  
- 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  
26<sup>th</sup> - Baz

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

Wind&quot; with  
kangaroos.

*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  
th

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

*Twilight* - December 12<sup>th</sup> - 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  
refuges 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  
&quot;Titanic&quot;  
stars in their  
on-screen reunion.

*The Spirit* -

# December 25

th

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

*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 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.