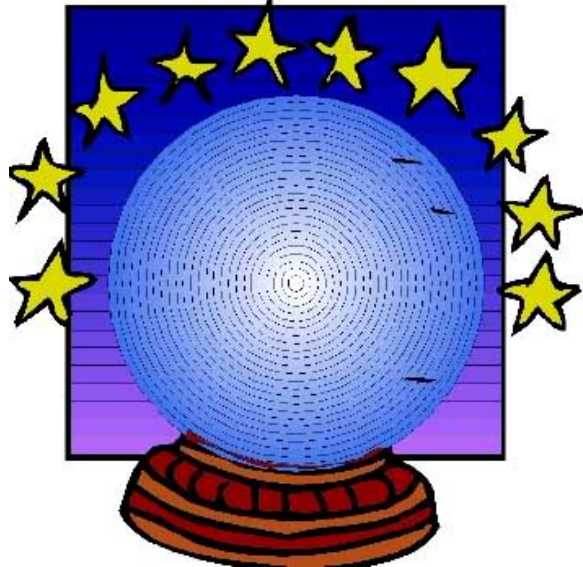


The Crystal Ball - September 12 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, September 11 2008 7:00 PM -

It's time to head into another great time to be a movie fan: The Fall Releases. No major blockbusters this week, just a lot of dramas angling for awards and critical acclaim...along with a few off-beat comedies. And even though October tends to be the better month, last year wasn't too shabby in September, as it gave us "3:10 to Yuma" and "Eastern Promises". Hopefully we'll find a few gems in this batch as well. Mitch fills us in on this weeks releases at the theaters and on DVD.



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I have two movies I plan on reviewing out of this week's releases. Given the big OSU/USC game Saturday night, and the Browns/Inbreds on Sunday night...looks like I'm hitting the matinees.

News and Rumors

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~ Rumors are flying that the Governator, Ah-nuld Schwarzenegger, will have his face digitally added to the body of a Terminator in director Mc G's "Terminator Salvation: The Future Begins", starring Christian Bale. It seems Arnold was also onset recently, adding some voice-overs, which can only fuel the speculation.

~ The newest Will Smith blockbuster has been announced. The Fresh Prince will star in "The Last Pharaoh", to be penned by Randall Wallace, the man who wrote "Braveheart". Smith will play Taharqa, the pharaoh who battled Assyrian invaders in ancient Egypt, starting in 667 B.C.

~ Speaking of Will Smith, there are also stories out that he has been offered the lead role in the upcoming Marvel movie "Captain America". I'm not sure about this one...but I do love the fact that some movie makers are willing to go with this type of unconventional casting.

~ A "Dr. Who" movie? Evidently so...but at least it's being fronted by the man responsible for the television series, writer Russell T. Davies.

The movie, set to open in 2009, has earmarked current TV Dr. Who David Tennant, along with Catherine Zeta-Jones as the Timelord's assistant.

~ Robert De Niro recently walked out of his role in the upcoming crime drama "Edge of Darkness" over creative differences. The movie was to be a coup for having De Niro co-star opposite Mel Gibson's return to acting as a cop investigating the murder of his daughter.

In De Niro's place, Ray Winstone has been tabbed to step into the supporting role of an operative sent to clean up the evidence.

~ Interesting television note: I have never watched "The Apprentice"...one, because I really hate reality TV; and two, because Donald Trump is one of the most loathsome creatures on the planet (as is the dead furry creature that lives on the head of The Donald).

Nonetheless, I was completely amused that The Donald's people had to "respectfully decline" the desire of Paul McCartney's money and publicity grubbing ex-wife, Heather Mills to be on "Celebrity Apprentice".

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It seems Heather demanded that her contract be written so she was guaranteed a spot in the final.

Evidently, there has finally been a line that Trump won't cross.

Stupid Remakes and Sequels:□ Sony has locked up Sam Raimi and Tobey Maguire for "Spider-Man 4" and "Spider-Man 5". The fourth film should be out in 2009, and it is speculated that it will focus on The Lizard, played by Dylan Baker in his human form of Dr. Curt Connors in the third film.

This bit of news goes into the "Stupid Remakes and Sequels" category, given how much of a letdown the third movie was compared to the second.

And then we have Brett Ratner, the hack responsible for the Rush Hour movies, saying he wants to develop a movie based on the "Guitar Hero" video game. Gag.

A sequel to the "Sex and the City" movie? I think the [Breakfast Burrito](#) has just put on his spelunking gear and is ready to go.

This week's new movie releases:

Burn After Reading

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Starring: Brad Pitt, Frances McDormand, George Clooney

Plot: A disk containing the memoirs of a CIA agent ends up in the hands of two unscrupulous gym employees who attempt to benefit from the discovery.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: The Coen Brothers have decided to follow up on the uber-somber "No Country for Old Men" by going back to one of their fortes; a screwball comedy with a very biting black edge. Very good early buzz on this one...but like "Fargo" and NCfOM, don't expect this movie to be for everyone. Still, you have an amazing ensemble cast, and when you team them with the Coens, I expect good things.

I'll let you know, as I'll be seeing it tomorrow.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Righteous Kill

Starring: Robert De Niro and Al Pacino

Plot: Two veteran NYPD detectives work to identify the possible connection between a recent murder and a case they believed they solved years before.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: A possible serial killer with connections to a police department? No, it's not Geriatric Dexter, it's two of the most renowned actors of all time sharing screen time together for

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only the second time in their illustrious careers ("Heat" being the first).

That being said, this one is getting quite the mixed bag of early buzz.

Is it a case that it's not a good movie?

Or is it just because most critics would expect nothing less than 100% brilliance with this cast?

I'll let you know next week.

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The Family That Preys

Starring: Kathy Bates, Alfre Woodard, Sanaa Lathan

Plot: Faced with a series of secrets and scandals that are threatening to tear their respective families apart, two old friends embark on a cross-country road trip in hopes of finding a way to end the drama.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: We have a Tyler Perry movie with no Medea...that alone is interesting. In any case, Perry seems to have a lot more hits that misses, so don't be surprised if this ends up being the Number 1 movie of the week.

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The Women

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Starring: Meg Ryan, Eva Mendes, Annette Bening

Plot: A happily married woman finds her world shaken when she discovers that her husband in cheating on her with a shopgirl. Crying, divorce, an revenge follows.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: No men at all were used in this film. And I doubt very seriously that any men will be found in the theater...and probably not that many women either, as this movie sucks.

It attempts to grab just a bit of the disposable income used by so many women this summer in seeing "Sex and the City" and "Mamma Mia!", but it makes those two films look like Oscar contenders in comparison.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

DVD Releases for Tuesday, September 16th

It's BOMB week at the Video Store!

Speed Racer - Don't miss your chance to see what all the apathy was all about. Biggest bomb of the Summer as the Wachowski Brothers showed that they could foul up something other than just sequels of "The Matrix"; Cotton Candy for the screen...all visual and just about as substantial.

88 Minutes - For all of the people that might be disappointed with Al Pacino in "Righteous Kill", there is this complete mess of a movie to make it all look better. Pacino plays a forensic psychiatrist marked for death by an unknown madman.

This movie was trashed as one of the worst in 2008.

Of course, that was before anyone saw "The Happening" or "Disaster Movie";

Made of Honor - Completely predictable romantic comedy with Dr. McDreamy (Patrick Dempsey) playing a hound dog who suddenly realizes that the Perfect Woman is his best friend. Of course, he realizes this right before she comes back from a trip to Scotland with her new Scottish fiancé in tow.

Guess how it ends?

The Love Guru - - Mike Myers makes his first live-action appearance in front of the cameras since "The Cat In the Hat", and this movie was every bit as rotten as that Dr. Seuss debacle. Offensiv

e and dumb are two of the nicer adjectives used for this film.

Calendar Watch

Next week: *Tyler Ghost Town, Igor, Lakeview Terrace, My Best Friend's Girl*

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

[*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.

[Appaloosa](#) - October 3rd - Viggo Mortensen, Ed Harris, and Renee Zellwegger in a Western about two lawmen defending a town against a ruthless rancher (Jeremy Irons).

[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 14th - The next James Bond film, picking up shortly after the events ending "Casino Royale";

[Australia](#) - November 26th - 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 12th - 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 12th - 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 19th - 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 25th - Frank Miller's next comic book adaptation, done in the same style as "Sin City".

[The International](#) - February 13, 2009 - Clive Owen and Naomi Watts in a thriller about an Interpol investigation of a world-wide bank funding murder and corruption. And you thought Wachovia was bad?

[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 Live Schreiber as Sabertooth, and Ryan Reynolds as Deadpool.

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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 - July 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 - October, 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 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.