

The Crystal Ball - October 17 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, October 16 2008 7:00 PM -

It's Friday night, which means it's time once again for The Crystal Ball. This week, Mitch previews the new movie releases this weekend, headlined by "Max Payne" and "W". He tells us about the DVD releases for the week, which include "The Incredible Hulk". And also fills us in on all the latest Hollywood news and rumors, which this week includes nuggets on a remake of Michael Douglas's classic "Wall Street", inspired by the real events of late. And also the latest sci-fi project from Ridley Scott, he of "Alien" and "Blade Runner".



I was recently lamenting online regarding the complete lack of high quality, serious movies so far in 2008. Now we have had two exceptional movies this year in the form of "WALL-E" and "The Dark Knight", but other than that? Som
e pretty decent popcorn flicks, and a whole lot of disappointments.

I was thinking about this due to just having seen "Body of Lies", which I will review in a day or two. I'll give you a heads-up...it ain't that great.

By this time last year, we had seen "3:10 to Yuma" and "Eastern Promises". By this time in 2006, I had watched "World Trade Center" and "The Departed".

Does that mean that 2008 is going to be an inferior year, or are studios just waiting longer to release the quality? After all, my Top from 2007 is littered with films that were not seen by me until December or later due to limited releases. "Juno", "Michael Clayton", "Sweeney Todd", "There Will Be Blood", and "No Country for Old Men" all fell under that category.

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We've got a few potentials coming up with "Changeling", "Australia", "Revolutionary Road", "Defiance", and "Frost/Nixon"...but I'm a bit concerned at this point.

News and Rumors

~ Terrence Howard is out and Don Cheadle is in as Lt. Col. James "Rhodey" Rhodes for Iron Man 2. According to the studio, Terrence wanted too much money to portray Tony Stark's best friend, who is earmarked for a larger role in the second film.

I take that with a little grain of salt, as the studio executives them come out with a statement about how they really had been wanting to work with Cheadle for some time.

Hmmm.

Personally, I think this will make a stronger movie, as Cheadle is one of the best actors out there.

~ I wish I could find a place for this in the "Stupid Remakes and Sequels" portion...but since it is neither, I guess it goes up here: A biography of the life of Herve Villechaize ("Tattoo" from "Fantasy Island"). Yep...a full length movie of a guy that killed himself because even he realized that having a "career" that only involved yelling out "Da Plane!

Da Plane!" isn't much to write home about...but evidently is enough to write a movie about.

~ Another sequel that get's noted here. Due to the recent economic hardships hitting the U.S. and most of the industrial world, 20th Century Fox is looking to fasttrack a sequel to "Wall Street", bringing back Michael Douglas as barracuda Gordon Gekko as he leaves prison and enters a financial world more turbulent than the one he remembers.

~ Ridley Scott is looking to direct his first sci-fi movie since "Alien" and "Blade Runner" with "The Forever War". It is based on a novel by Joe Haldeman, telling the story of a soldier who battles an enemy in deep space for only a few months, but then returns home to a planet he doesn't recognize some 20 years later.

Stupid Remakes and Sequels.

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- Zac Efron, of "High School Musical" fame (and little else) looks to be taking on the Kevin Bacon role in a remake of "Footloose". Reach for Roll-Aids.

- Speaking of rotten 1980s quasi-musicals, the casting has been made for the remake of "Fame", featuring a cast of nobodies, with one possible exception if Thomas Dekker (John Conner in "The Sarah Connor Chronicles") signs on.

- Good news from this department! According to Richard Donner, the creator of the Lethal Weapon franchise, there will NOT be a "Lethal Weapon 5" ...as Mel Gibson evidently decided that it wasn't bloody enough for him. The bad news is that you know some idiot will come out and try to "reboot" the franchise at some point with different actors.

This week's new movie releases:

Max Payne

Starring: Mark Wahlberg, Mila Kunis, Beau Bridges

Plot: A DEA agent whose family was slain as part of a conspiracy teams with an assassin out to avenge her sister's death.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: The buzz is very bad for this one. Simply put, video games adapted into a screenplay are not exactly considered "Gone with the Wind" by most critics.

That aside, they still have their audiences, as seen from the money made by the Tomb Raider and Resident Evil movies.

Wahlberg is still a big draw, so expect this to be #1 at the box office this week.

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W.

Starring: Josh Brolin, Elizabeth Banks, Richard Dreyfus

Plot: The life and times of the 43rd President of the United States

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: A biopic of a sitting president in the last three months of his administration, during a time when Bush's approval ratings are at historic lows. Oh, yeah...add to it the fact that this movie also involves the Iraq War, which has been box office poison to movies.

WTH was Oliver Stone thinking?

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Sex Drive

Starring: Josh Zuckerman, Clark Duke, Amanda Crew

Plot: A high school senior "borrows" his brother's beloved '69 GTO and recruits his best friends on a road trip from Chicago to Knoxville to hook up with a girl he met online.

[View Trailer](#)

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The BeerBuzz: Another movie trying it's best to be another "Superbad". Oh...it's bad, alright.

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The Secret Life of Bees

Starring: Dakota Fanning, Jennifer Hudson, Queen Latifah

Plot: A young girl flees her abusive household with her friend, to be taken in by an eccentric trio of beekeeping sisters.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: Bees! Buzz! Sorry...couldn't resist. Nothing much to see here, although it'll get some audience by mothers taking their 10 - 14 year old daughters.

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DVD Releases on Tuesday, October 14

[The Incredible Hulk](#) - Better than Ang Lee's mess with Eric Bana...but not by a whole lot. Better CGI graphics...but not by much.

Better plot...but not by much.

However, it does have Edward Norton playing Bruce Banner, and that alone makes it worth renting.

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Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed - Ben Stein's attempt to be the Michael Moore of the Right, and do a completely slanted "documentary" about the whole "Evolution vs. Intelligent Design" argument. What Ben failed to realize is that Michael Moore is sooooo 2002.

Seriously...has anyone even seen MM lately?

Anyone?

Bueller?

The Strangers - Scott Speedman and Liv Tyler as a young couple staying in a remote vacation house that are terrorized by three unknown assailants. Probably all mortgage bankers looking for a new gig.

Calendar Watch

Next week: [Pride and Glory](#) , *High School Musical 3*, *Saw V*

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

[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";

[The Soloist](#) - November 21st - Rober Downey Jr. and Jamie Foxx star about a talented

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musician who is now living on the streets.

[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".

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[Frost / Nixon](#) - December 26th - Ron Howard's latest Oscar attempt, adapting the stage play of the disgraced president's attempt to re-habilitate his image on David Frost's TV show, and Frost's attempt to drag out the truth from Tricky Dick

[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. An
d 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.

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!

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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 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 - 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.

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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.