

The Crystal Ball - November 14 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, November 13 2008 7:00 PM -

It has been four long, LONG months since there has been a blockbuster coming out that had all of us here at TheClevelandFan excited to get to the theater. That last one, of course, was "The Dark Knight" back in early July, and it was a movie that certainly didn't disappoint. It's finally that time again...and all the other studios agree with the potential, as no other studio had the guts (or stupidity) to put another movie out this week to compete against the Next Big Thing: Quantum of Solace. Mitch looks at the world of film for us in this week's Crystal Ball.



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This is just the start of the Holiday Blockbuster schedule, as the next two weekends will bring us "Twilight", "Bolt", "Australia", and "Four Christmases";

News and Rumors

~ Charlize Theron and Nicole Kidman will portray a married couple in the upcoming movie

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"The Danish Girl". A gay themed movie? Not quite. They will tell the true story of Danish artists Einar and Greta Wegener.

Kidman will play Einar, the husband (you read that right) who is encouraged by Greta to adopt a female guise after he stands in once for a female model for a painting.

As Harvey Korman said in "Blazing Saddles"....Kiiinnkkkkyyyyy.

~ This is still very much in the rumor stage...but if it's true, it will be HUGE. Steven Spielberg and Will Smith working together for a remake of the classic and revered 2003 Korean film "Oldboy"?

I guess after the success Martin Scorsese had with adapting a Chinese film into his Oscar winning shot in "The Departed", Hollywood's bigger names are looking East for their inspiration.

For those unfamiliar, "Oldboy" is about a man who is kidnapped and wakes up 15 years later to be inexplicably released with no knowledge of who his captors are/were.

It ends with one of the most shocking twists in recent film history...but no idea if Spielberg's version would stay true to that.

~ Not too sure about this one. Sylvester Stallone will star with Jason Statham and Jet Li in "Expendables". The movie concerns a team of mercenaries on a mission to overthrow a South American Dictator (and I'm sure any reference to Venezuela's Hugo Chavez will be purely intentional).

Sly in a jungle with big guns?

How original!

~ Remember when Christian Slater was the Next Big Movie Superstar? Now? His high profile/high cost TV show "My Own Worst Enemy" is cancelled after less than ten episodes. Mak
e your own "worst enemy" joke here.

~ This little blurb only makes it here because of its relevance to Cleveland sports. Tawny Kitean, known only for raising the blood pressure of teenaged boys in the 80s for slithering on a

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car in Whitesnake videos and for attacking a certain Indians pitcher with a shoe...has come out and insists that she's still close to ex-husband Chuck Finley.

"With friends like that..."

Stupid Remakes and Sequels

~ Brett Ratner, the hack behind the "Rush Hour" movies (notice a bit of a bias here?) will direct a remake of "Conan". It will open on the battlefield where Conan is born and tells the origin story that the studio hopes will be a franchise.

No rumors yet regarding who would try to top Ah-nuld the Governator's iconic interpretation of the title role.

This week's new movie release:

Quantum of Solace

Starring: Daniel Craig, Olga Kurylenko, Mathieu Amalric

Plot: Picking right up where "Casino Royale" left off, James Bond sets his sights on the organization behind Vesper Lynd's betrayal, putting him on a collision course with a ruthless businessman who is brokering a deal to take control of one of the world's most precious resources.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: This opened last weekend in Europe, and has been raking in money hand over fist. But is it any good? I'll be checking it out tonight, so you'll get my opinion in a few days...but the early buzz is that it IS good...but not quite as good as "Casino

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Royale". Hiko stated after viewing that last film that he was only disappointed that he knew that there was no way the next film could be as good.

Looks like he may be right, but that doesn't mean that they didn't still make a kick-ass movie.

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New DVD Releases for Tuesday, November 18th

[WALL-E](#) - As mentioned in my review, this is the best movie I've seen so far from 2008. And yes, I do mean that it's even better than "The Dark Knight" (although I know of many fanboys on the boards that think I need to be shot for stating that). A beautiful film from Pixar that will amaze you with its heart and its brain in telling a simple story of a lonely robot cleaning up the remaining mess on an abandoned Earth, whose life is turned around the day a sleek female probe shows up.

[Tropic Thunder](#) - Well done satire that skewers the hell out of a pompous group is one of my favorite guilty pleasures.

I normally cannot stand Ben Stiller, but he hits one out of the park as both the star and the director of this film about a group of pampered "Hollywood Acting Types" taken out into the jungle to film a movie, unknowingly getting involved in a real battle.

Robert Downey Jr. steals the film as an Australian "method actor" who goes to extreme measures to play an African-American character.

The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2 - I would hazard to guess that there are no more than three people who read TheClevelandFan who actually watched this movie without being forced to it by their 12 year old daughters.

For those of you who HAVE daughters but got lucky and didn't have to go to the theater...here's the great thing about DVDs...you can rent them for your kids and then go out and work on the car while they are viewing it!

Calendar Watch

Next week: [Twilight](#), *Bolt*

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

[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 Day the Earth Stood Still](#) - December 12th - Keanu Reeves in a remake of the classic 1951 sci-fi film.

[The Spirit](#) - December 25th - Frank Miller's next comic book adaptation, done in the same style as "Sin City";

[Valkyrie](#) - December 25th - Evidently some good editing has been performed on this film once destined for the scrap heap. Very positive buzz about Tom Cruise's performance as the German colonel who attempted to assassinate Hitler.

We shall see.

Oscar Contenders - Movies that will have limited

releases by the end of the year, and if they are any good...you'll see them in January

[Milk](#) - Sean Penn as the first openly gay man elected to public office in San Francisco in 1977, only to be assassinated the following year.

Cadillac Records - A chronicle of the rise and fall of Chess Records, the label founded by Leonard Chess (Adrian Brody), that featured Etta James (Beyonce Knowles), Chuck Berry (Mos Def), and others.

[Doubt](#) - The principal (Meryl Streep) of a Catholic school in the Bronx grows suspicious of a priest (Philip Seymour Hoffman) who might have molested a student.

[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 Wrestler - Mickey Rourke is picking up early Oscar buzz in this character study of a professional wrestler nearing the end of his performing days.

Revolutionary Road- 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.

[Defiance](#) - 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

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

[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.

[The Soloist](#) - March 13, 2009 - Rober Downey Jr. and Jamie Foxx star about a talented musician who is now living on the streets.

The Road - 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.

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!

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.

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.