

## The Crystal Ball - March 6 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, March 05 2009 7:00 PM -

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Back after a week off due to post Oscar decompression and no theater or DVD releases worth anything, The Mitch Man gets back into the saddle for his regular Friday night column, The Crsytal Ball. In it ... Mitch previews all the week's releases at the cinemas and on DVD, and also lets us know about all the latest Hollywood scoop and big upcoming projects that are being worked on. This week's releases of note are "The Watchmen" at the theaters and "Australia" and "Milk" on DVD.



And we're back!

Post Oscar work got in the way of me putting together a Crystal Ball last week. Personally, it didn't break my heart because I really had nothing worthwhile to tell you, as it was hard to get all worked up about the release of the Jonas Brothers movie and a horrible second &quot;Streetfighter&quot; movie that was so bad (how bad was it?) that the studio only released it to about 1,000 theaters.

They must have known what was going to happen, as it only garnered a 4% positive on Rottentomatoes.

But we're back this week, as we have a major blockbuster being released today. Don't know if you've heard about it or not, though.

## News and Rumors

~ Eddie Murphy is said to be the driving force behind a biographical movie about the great Richard Pryor. Great idea! Until I read that Eddie plans to portray Pryor himself. Sucky idea! No way it can work

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with the mugging, smug, egotistical jackass playing the role.

Find an unknown who looks a lot like Pryor...or else hire Don Cheadle.

That man can do anything.

~ Something to frighten the hell out of the tinfoil hat wearing conspiracy nuts. Tom Cruise's next project is now said to be "The 28<sup>th</sup>

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Amendment", a political thriller in which the U.S. President (Cruise? Bwah!) discovers the existence of a secret cabal that runs the government and wants him dead.

No truth to the rumors that Rush Limbaugh will be playing himself as the chief villain.

~ Steve Carell's next excuse for excessive mugging will be in a project where he will also serve as producer. "Hi-T" will be a comedy about a man dealing with uncontrollable mood swings after an injury forces him to take testosterone injections. So many potential jokes here...none of them at or below a PG-13 Rating.

~ I thought this was a Mickey Mouse movie? Nicolas Cage and Jay Baruchel (Kevin Sandusky in "Tropic Thunder") will star in "The Sorcerer's Apprentice"; Baruchel will star as an average college student who is reluctantly recruited to work for a sorcerer, played by Cage.

Alfred Molina will be the evil sorcerer they must battle.

(with Nic Cage involved...it may just BE a Mickey Mouse movie).

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~ I'm going to save the best for last. A teaming of Leonardo DiCaprio and director extraordinaire Christopher Nolan. They will team up for a sci-fi film called &quot;Inception&quot;, which is currently being described as &quot;a contemporary sci-fi action film set within 'the architecture of the mind'&quot;.

OK..a little more specifics would be appreciated, guys.

## Stupid Remakes and Sequels

~ Jim Carrey and Jake Gyllenhaal will star in a remake of the ancient Broadway Musical &quot;Damn Yankee&quot;, where a middle aged baseball fan sells his soul to the Devil to turn into a Grady Sizemore-esque centerfielder who can lead his team to the pennant over the hated Yankees. So are they going to keep it based in 1955 and use the Washington Senators?

If they modernize it, who should be the rival?

This one just looks like a disaster to me.

~ A remake of &quot;Total Recall&quot;. This one defies belief.

## This week's new movie releases:

**Only one film coming out in wide release this week...but it's a biggie**

## Watchmen

Starring: Billy Crudup, Jackie Earle Haley, Malin Akerman

Plot: Set in an alternate vision of the year 1985, the murder of an ex-superhero causes a vigilante named Rorschach to reunite with his surviving old colleagues to unveil a conspiracy that could lead to catastrophic consequences.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: This is going to absolutely KILL at the box office. Early buzz is mostly positive...but the ones that are negative absolutely hate it. Se  
ems like some people don't like the idea that these superheroes are not necessarily well rounded, decent people.

Of course, that was the whole point of the book.

Director Zack Snyder, who also made "300", vowed to stay as close as possible to the iconic Alan Moore graphic novel, but that may not be enough for die-hard fans.

I chose not to read the novel prior to seeing this movie...and I'll give you my opinion in a review later this weekend.

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## New DVD Releases for Tuesday, March 10

I'm also including those that came out on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, since I missed last week.

[\*\*Australia\*\*](#) - Baz Lurhman's over-the-top epic of the Land of Oz is over-long, over-wrought, and over-done...but there are still some magnificent scenes in this movie and fantastic cinematography. To me, half of the 3 hour long film was good enough to rate as a 3 or 3 1/2, and the other 90 minutes stunk down to Derek Anderson levels.

***Beverly Hills Chihuahua*** - Talking dogs! How Cute! Bah, Humbug.

OK, seriously, this is said to be an excellent family film that the parents will laugh at just as much as the kids.

Has it been a great year for dog movies or what?

***Soul Men*** - Not the best way for Bernie Mac to go out. It's not that this buddy film with Bernie and Samuel L. Jackson playing old singing partners was bad...it just was said to be totally unoriginal and uninspiring.

Such a pity.

***Milk*** - Sean Penn's amazing performance as the first openly gay man elected to office in the United States was definitely Oscar worthy (but not as good as Frank Langella in "Frost/Nixon"...OK, I'll stop beating that dead horse now). Beyond Penn, there were also excellent performances from James Brolin, James Franco, and Emile Hirsch. A film well worth renting.

***Role Models*** - As far as the "stupid and gross guy comedies" go, this Apatow-Lite film isn't too bad.

Features Paul Rudd and Seann William Scott playing two idiotic energy drink salesmen whose wild actions force them into court ordered duties in a Big Brother program.

***Transporter 3*** - Jason Statham is back behind the wheel, creating mayhem and dead bodies wherever he goes.

No different from the other two.

***Cadillac Records*** - Semi-true story of the sex, violence, and rock and roll in the 1950s Chicago, featuring the lives of music legends such as Muddy Waters (Jeffrey Wright), Leonard Chess (Adrian Brody), Chuck Berry (Mos Def), and Etta James (Beyonce Knowles).

***Rachel Getting Married*** - Anne Hathaway's Oscar nominated performance carries this little film, as she plays a human wrecking ball of an woman, bound and determine to steal the spotlight away from her sister's wedding as she battles her addictions and demons.

## Calendar Watch

Next week: *The Last House on the Left*, *Miss March*, *Race to Witch Mountain*

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

[Duplicity](#) - March 20 - Clive Owen again, this time teaming with Julia Roberts as corporate spies looking to pull a con job of their own. Directed by Tony Gilroy (&quot;Michael Clayton&quot;).

[The Soloist](#) - April 24 - Jamie Foxx and Robert Downey Jr. as a street living mentally disturbed man who is also a virtuoso cellist. Downey Jr. plays the down and out reporter who discovers and befriends him.

[X-Men Origins: Wolverine](#) - May 1 - 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 - 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 - Tom Hanks and Ron Howard follow-up to &quot;The DaVinci Code&quot;

[Terminator: Salvation](#) - May 22 - Christian Bale as John Conner as the franchise moves into the apocalyptic future.

[Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen](#) : - June 26 - The next chapter of Robots In Disguise!

*Public Enemy* - July 1 - Johnny Depp as John Dillinger. Co-starring Christian Bale, and directed by Michael Mann

[Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince](#) - July 17 - 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 - Denzel Washington, John Travolta, and James Gandolfini in a remake of the classic 1974 film about a hijacked subway car.

[9](#) - September 9 - Tim Burton's latest animated strangeness, with Elijah Wood and Jennifer Connelly voicing characters fighting aliens in a post apocalyptic world.

*Shutter Island* - October 2 - Martin Scorsese working once again with Leonardo DiCaprio in this mystery set in 1954.

[2012](#) - November 13 - Roland Emmerich's ("The Day After Tomorrow") tale of global cataclysm and

the struggle of the survivors.

*The Lovely Bones* - December 11 - Peter Jackson's latest, about the ghost of a young, murdered girl watching over her family and friends' reactions to the event. Mark Wahlberg and Rachel Weisz star.

*Avatar* - December 16, 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.

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

*The Road* - (unannounced 2009) - 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.

*Nottingham* - (unannounced 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.

*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. Kevin Kidd

(Rome) is said to be playing the title role.

*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part I* - 2010 - The start of the End for the boy wizard and his battle against He-Who-Should-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 "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.