

The Crystal Ball - June 12 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, June 11 2009 7:00 PM -

It was an interesting week at the box office last weekend, as we had our first surprise hit in the raunchy comedy "The Hangover", and our first big flop as Will Ferrell's "Land of the Lost" tanked with the critics and the public. Mitch is back to talk about that, along with news about The Hobbit films, a new cast member for Season 8 of "24", and what's coming out this week at the theaters and on DVD. It's Friday, so it's time for The Crystal Ball.



So what happened during my week off? The biggest news was that in the same week, we had our first surprise hit, and our first bomb.

"The Hangover" shocked everyone, ending up as the number one movie for the week, just edging out "Up", who held the crown the week before. It has been getting raves from the critics, and the audiences have given it a very high CinemaScore rating of "A";

and things may keep getting better for it, as word of mouth, along with a higher screen count, may keep it at the top this week over "The Taking of Pelham 1 2 3";

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On the flip side, that sound you heard was Will Ferrell's girly like scream as "Land of the Lost" TANKED, pulling in less than \$20 million, and some of the worst reviews of the year.

Seems like I'm not alone in being fed up with Ferrell's one-note (as of late) performances as a doofus man-child making a fool of himself.

New trailers are out this week for ["The Road"](#) and the latest Scorsese/DiCaprio collaboration ["Shutter](#)

[Island"](#);

due out in October, and both look great.

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News and Rumors

~ The biggest news to me has to be the commitment of Hugo Weaving to reprise his role as the Elf Lord Elrond in the upcoming "Hobbit" movies to be produced by Peter Jackson and directed by Guillermo del Toro. Weaving joins Ian McKellen and Andy Serkis reprising their roles as Gandalf and Gollum.

~ As noted on our bulletin boards, Katee Sackhoff, who is most known for playing Kara "Starbuck" Thrace in the updated "Battlestar Galactica" has been signed to play a CTU analyst in the next season of "24". Sackhoff's character will be involved with Freddie Prinze Jr.'s character...and she'll also have some secrets of her own.

Do I smell a mole?

Or just someone they would use as misdirection from whom the mole really is?

~ Julia Roberts, Javier Bardem, and Richard Jenkins will be starring in "Eat, Pray, Love", based on the memoir of Elizabeth Gilbert. Roberts will be portraying Gilbert, with Bardem playing the man she meets and falls in love with on the final leg of her journey of self-discovery that began with the end of her marriage.

Action junkies are retching already.

~ "Brokeback Mountain" co-stars Jake Gyllenhaal and Anne Hathaway will be re-uniting in "Love and Other Drugs", for director Ed Zwick ("The Last Samurai", "Blood Diamond"). The story is based off a non-fiction book called "Hard Sell: The Evolution of a Viagra Salesman".

Gyllenhaal will play the salesman, with Hathaway playing a Parkinson's disease sufferer who has a relationship with him.

~ My interest is piqued on this one: Helen Mirren and Joe Pesci are set to star in "Love Ranch", playing an older married couple who open the first legal brothel in Nevada.

Not exactly the type of retirement investment that my wife Clarissa would probably go along with.

Stupid Remakes and Sequels

~ Bradley Cooper, one of the stars of the aforementioned hit "The Hangover", has just been announced as being cast as Lt. Templeton "Faceman" Peck in the Joe Carnahan directed bomb-in-the-making "The A-Team". It has also been rumored that they want Liam Neeson to play the role of Col. Hannibal Smith, with Common as B.A. Baracus and Woody Harrelson as Howling Mad Murdock.

Given that Carnahan is a complete hack whose last movie sucked rotten eggs ("Smoking Aces"), I don't see Neeson or Harrelson going within a mile of this.

This week's new movie releases:

The Taking of Pelham 1 2 3

Starring: Denzel Washington, John Travolta, James Gandolfini

Plot: Armed men hijack a NYC subway train, holding the passengers hostage in return for a ransom, and turning an ordinary day's work for a dispatcher into a face-off with the mastermind of the crime

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: I'm not sure who needs a hit more; John Travolta or director Tony Scott. And I'm not sure they are going to get one here, as the reviews have been very mixed.

Denzel can make just about anything worth watching, but there are a lot of critics that think Tony Scott has ruined this film by going overboard on the action, making it pale to the 1974 original.

But at least it's a film aimed more at adults, so that's enough to get me there.

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### Imagine That

Starring: Eddie Murphy and his Ego That Ate Hollywood

Plot: A financial executive who can't stop his career downward spiral is invited into his daughter's imaginary world, where solutions to his problems await.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: At least this one won't be as big of a failure as last year's "Meet Dave";. But that's kind of like saying "at least you're taller than a jockey";. This one is strictly for the little kids.

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New DVD Releases

Releases from June 9th and June 16th

[Gran Torino](#) - Surprising mega-hit for Clint Eastwood (\$148 million at the US box-office).

Clint isn't very lovable in this film, playing a widower upset at the world as he sees his former middle-class neighborhood being overrun by Asian immigrants.

Despite his character being bigoted and cranky, Clint does a wonderful job showing the whole man...and how he changes (somewhat) as he gets to understand the people even

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more...and gets drawn into the battle his next-door neighbors are fighting against gangs.

Tremendous movie, one that should have been nominated for Best Picture instead of "The Reader";.

The International - Another action movie for Clive Owen, and you would think with the casting of him and Naomi Watts, that it would have been received much better.

But for whatever reason, audiences rejected it.

I've got it on my Netflix list anyway, and you'll probably get my opinion on the bulletin boards sometime next week.

Knowing - Nicolas Cage had a mini-hit (\$80 million) with this thriller about a mysterious piece of paper found in a time capsule that has predicted cataclysmic events.

Don't expect this one to make much sense, but it is pretty entertaining at least.

The Unborn - Standard horror flick with Megan Fox resembling Odette Yustman playing a girl haunted by the spirit of her twin brother who died while in the womb with her.

Calendar Watch

Next week; [Year One](#) , *The Proposal*

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

- June 12 - Denzel Washington, John Travolta, and James Gandolfini in a remake of the classic 1974 film about a hijacked subway car.

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[Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen](#) : - June 24 - 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

[Bruno](#) - July 10 - Sacha Baron Cohen attempts to recreate the magic he found in "Borat"; this time featuring his flamboyant Austrian fashion reporter character.

[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.

Funny People - July 31 - Adam Sandler in a dramatic comedy from Judd Apatow about a famous standup comedian/actor dealing with a terminal illness, and the changes he goes through when he realizes that he might have a second chance.

[G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra](#) - August 7 - Every year, there is one big-budget movie that bombs. My prediction is that it will be this one.

[Inglourious Basterds](#) - August 21 - Quentin Tarantino directs Brad Pitt in this violent (of course) tale of a group of WWII commandos who conducted high-profile executions/terrorist acts against the Nazis in occupied France prior to D-Day.

[Gamer](#) - September 4 - Gerard Butler as a deathrow inmate who is controlled by top gamers in a video game played out in real life for television. With Michael C. Hall as the bad guy.

[\(9\) - Nine](#) - September 9 - Tim Burton's latest animated strangeness, with Elijah Wood and Jennifer Connelly voicing characters fighting aliens in a post apocalyptic world. Not to be confused with the Rob Marshall musical "Nine" with Daniel Day-Lewis, or the Peter Jackson produced "District 9";.

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[Astro Boy](#) - September 23 - They are really making a full length animated feature about this Japanese Anime chestnut?

[Surrogates](#) - September 25 - Bruce Willis as a cop in a futuristic world where humans live in isolation and interact through surrogate robots.

[Shutter Island](#) - October 2 - Martin Scorsese working once again with Leonardo DiCaprio in this mystery set in 1954.

[The Road](#) - October 16 - 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 Wolf Man - November 6 - Benicio Del Toro and Anthony Hopkins in the retelling of the classic horror tale.

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

[Nine](#) - November 25 - Musical version of Fellini's classic *8 1/2*, about a famous film director and all the women he deals with. Wit
h Daniel Day-Lewis, Penelope Cruz, Nicole Kidman, Kate Hudson, Sophia Loren, and Judi Dench.

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 18 - 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

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at this time.

[Sherlock Holmes](#) - December 25th - Guy Ritchie's interpretation of the famous sleuth, with Robert Downey, Jr. in the lead role

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

The Informant - (limited release in Sept) - Steven Soderbergh's latest attempt at Oscar with Matt Damon as a company-man turned whistleblower against an agri-business giant. Might have touches of Coen Brother-like dark humor.

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. Mickey Rourke and Scarlett Johansson to co-star.

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.

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

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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.

Spider-Man 4 - May 2011 - Tobey Maquire is back as the angst ridden arachnid powered hero.

Thor - June 2011 - 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 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.

The Avengers - 2012 - Iron Man, Hulk, Thor, and Captain America open up a can of whoopass on bad guys everywhere.