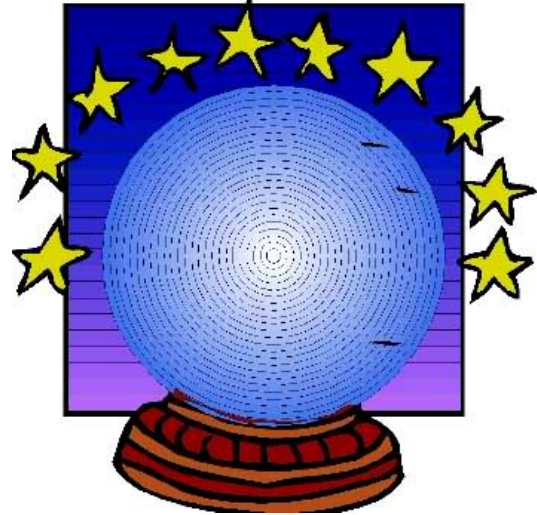


The Crystal Ball - Nov 10 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, November 09 2006 7:00 PM -

"Borat" BLEW UP at the box office last weekend, and is getting all kinds of buzz nationally as one of the years hottest comedies. In "The Crystal Ball" Mitch recaps last weekend at the box office, and previews this one ... which features a new Will Ferrell movie as the most anticipated release. Mitch also previews the DVD releases this weekend (DaVinci Code) and also lets us know what big films will be hitting the theater soon.



\$26 million from only 837 theaters. That showing from "Borat" might go down as the biggest surprise of the movie year. It will expand out this week to at least 2000 theaters, so look for it to maintain the #1 spot for another week despite some intriguing new movies coming out.

News & Rumors:

~ Making a full length feature film about someone who walked across the country and didn't speak for 18 years? BRILLIANT! "Planetwalker" will deal with that very subject, an envirowacko who refused to talk until it was time to defend his PhD thesis about oil spills. No confirmation that his first words were "I'm pretty tired. I think I'll go home now." Following this, the producers will make a full length film about a character watching paint dry.

~ On to a much better concept for a film entitled "Jesus On Line Four", where a Howard Stern type shock jock has the Son of God Himself calling up the DJ. Great idea, but I'd rather have Him show up at one of those military funerals where the idiotic fundamentalist protestors are and have Him kick some ass.

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~ Now this one totally sucks. Not content to leave well enough alone, a sequel to "Inside Man", one of my favorite movies of 2006, has been green-lighted. No news on whether Denzel Washington, Clive Owen, or Jodie Foster will return. I truly hope not. This film ended perfectly, and any attempt to make another "adventure" is certain to be as lame as "Another 48HRS".

~ Robert DeNiro and 50 Cent will team up in the police thriller "New Orleans". DeNiro will play an older cop who thinks his partner died during Katrina. He partners with Mr. Cent to investigate The Truth. I guess I can deal with rappers trying to be actors better than I could actors trying to be rappers. Although the mental image of Al Pacino channeling Eminem is pretty amusing.

~ Kevin Federline; the clock counting your 15 minutes is about down to zero. And we're hoping Jack Bauer gave you that clock, in which case it will splatter your talentless ass all over the wall when it explodes.

~ Check out the new [Spider-Man 3 trailer HERE](#)

This week's new releases:

Title: **Stranger Than Fiction**

Starring: Will Ferrell, Emma Thompson, Dustin Hoffman

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Plot: An IRS auditor suddenly hears voices in his head narrating every move and thought...which turns out to be from an author who is writing a story about him, thinking him to be her fictional character...and one that she plans to kill off.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: Call it "Eternal Sunshine of the Echoing Mind" as Ferrell decides (wisely) to do a Jim Carrey and attempt a more challenging role in an offbeat/weird comedy/drama. Reportedly, Ferrell abandons his normal spaz routine for a much more subtle performance in a very high brow movie. Casting Thompson and Hoffman definitely ups the artsy street cred on this one. The trick will be finding an audience. This could be similar to when Jim Carrey first stepped out of his comfort zone to do an obscure comedy with the underappreciated "The Truman Show". It was too intellectual for the teenaged boys wanting Jim to just talk out of his ass again, while most fans of this type of movie couldn't get into having a slapstick type of actor in the lead role.

Title: [A](#) **Good Year**

Starring: Russell Crowe, Abbie Cornish, Albert Finney

[View Trailer](#)

Plot: English Gordon Gecko type corporate shark's life changes when his beloved uncle dies leaving him the deed to a vineyard.

The BeerBuzz: Crowe does a male version of "Under the Tuscan Sun". What the hell is going on with Ridley Scott making something this lame? I can understand it from Crowe...he's trying to rehabilitate his bad-boy image, and after his marriage and birth of his two children, it's quite understandable. But Ridley seems to have lost his touch for the time being with the awful "Kingdom of Heaven" and now this mess. Hope remains, however, as Ridley is currently filming "American Gangster", a 1970s period piece with Denzel and Russell; a story about drug lords smuggling heroin into the US in the body bags of soldiers killed in Vietnam.

As far as "A Good Year" goes...it's more vinegar than wine, and will end up rivaling De Palma's "The Black Dahlia" and Sofia Copolla's "Marie Antoinette" in the category of "Disappointing film from a great director" for 2006.

Title: **Harsh Times**

Starring: Christian Bale, Freddy Rodriguez, Eva Longoria

Plot: After being turned down for a job with the LAPD, a Gulf War vet goes on a drug and booze bender with his best friend on the bad streets of LA

The BeerBuzz: In my review of "The Prestige", I complained about Bale (and Jackman) not being sympathetic at all. Well, that's the case here as well, but it may not matter as Bale is psycho intense unsympathetic in a "Training Day" sort of way. Not a coincidence as director David Ayer also directed that film that garnered Denzel his Best Actor Oscar. Not much is really expected of this film, but I get the feeling it's going to be a sleeper hit. (And what exactly is with me today? This is like the third Denzel reference in this piece).

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Title: **The Return**

Starring: Sarah Michelle Gellar, Sam Shepherd

Plot: A woman has dreams about the murder of a woman she's never met, prompting her to investigate it...which of course endangers her life.

The BeerBuzz: And Sarah Michelle Gellar continues to be the Jamie Leigh Curtis of her generation, appearing in almost every supernatural thriller being made. Regarding the movie, I had a dream about the murder of Art Modell. I then dreamed that I went out to investigate so I would know who to send a lifetime supply of beer to.

Title: **The Queen**

Starring: Helen Mirren, James Cromwell

Plot: A fictionalized account of the reported reactions of the Royal Family to the death of Princess Diana

The BeerBuzz: Now released nationwide. Helen Mirren is the biggest Lead Pipe Lock of the year for an Oscar nomination as Queen Elizabeth.

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Title: **Babel**

The SkinnyBuzz: Previewed on October 27th, it has now been released nationwide. If I can find it in a theater in Greensboro, NC, you can find it wherever you are.

New DVD Releases on Tuesday, November 14th

The DaVinci Code – Excellent mystery and suspense flick and one of the biggest blockbusters of 2006. Hanks is excellent as the author drawn into a tale too incredulous to believe. By the way, there are no attempts to pass this thing off as anything other than a work of fiction, but if your brain is too small to comprehend that fact and you wish to be pissed, please rent one of the movies below...they are both more suited to your mental abilities.

Accepted – Slackers too dumb to get into a good college invent one of their own to fool their parents. Sounds like my kids...except that they lack the motivation and ingenuity to pull off this big of a prank.

John Tucker Must Die – Teenaged girls are shocked! shocked! to find out that a popular jock would actually be playing the field and cheating on them. Later on, they are shocked! shocked! to learn that the sun rises each day in the East.

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Calendar Watch:

Next week: [Casino Royale](#), *Fast Food Nation*, *Happy Feet*, *Let's Go To Prison*

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

[The Fountain](#) : November 22nd – Hugh Jackman as a 16th Century Conquistador who finds the real fountain of youth and spends 1000 years searching for a way to save his love. I like the concept, but the early buzz is that it's going to bomb big time.

[Déjà Vu](#) : November 22nd – Denzel Washington in a Tony Scott time travel adventure.

[Bobby](#) : November 22nd - Mix of fictional and historical regarding those in attendance at the Ambassador Hotel on the day of the assassination of Senator Robert F. Kennedy.

[Apocalypto](#) : December 8th – Mel Gibson's latest controversial movie filmed entirely in a dead language, this one focusing on the decline and fall of the Mayan Civilization.

[Blood Diamond](#) – December 8th – Leonardo DiCaprio, Jennifer Connelly, and Djimon Hounsou have various reasons to search for a priceless diamond in Sierra Leone.

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[Eragon](#) – December 15th – Swords and Dragon fantasy with Jeremy Irons. The inner geek in me is looking forward to it. But then again...lame attempts to rip off Tolkien will totally draw my wrath.

[Rocky Balboa](#) – December 22nd – I'll admit it...the trailer makes it look much better than Rocky IV or Rocky V.

[The Good Shepherd](#) – December 22nd – Robert Di Niro directs Matt Damon, Angelina Jolie and himself in a tale of the early years of the CIA.

[We Are Marshall](#) – December 22nd – Another uplifting movie with football as the backdrop...this one about the attempts to rebuild the Marshall football program after the tragic 1970 airline crash that killed 75 players, coaches, and staff.

[Dreamgirls](#) – December 25th – Big budget adaptation of the Broadway musical with Beyonce, Jamie Foxx and Eddie Murphy.

[The Good German](#) – December 25th –Oscar contender from Stephen Soderberg starring George Clooney, Cate Blanchett, and Tobey Maguire in post WWII Berlin.

[Children of Men](#) – December 25th - New release date for the futuristic Clive Owen and Julianna Moore film about a world where women can no longer get pregnant, dooming mankind.

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2007 Attempts at Blockbusters (most dates are nothing more than educated guesses at this point).

Zodiac – Jake Gyllenhaal and Robert Downey, Jr star in the tale of the Bay Area serial killer (January)

Letters From Iwo Jima – Clint Eastwood’s follow-up to “Flags of Our Fathers”, showing the Battle of Iwo Jima from the perspective of the Japanese. (February)

Hannibal Rising – Tale of how the young Hannibal Lecture became the cretin we all know and love (February)

[*Ghost Rider*](#) – Nicholas Cage turns into a motorcycle riding superhero with a flaming skeleton head. (February)

The Number 23 – Mystery Thriller with Jim Carrey and Virginia Madsen. (February)

Shooter – Political thriller with Mark Wahlberg as a sniper trying to stop an assassination. (March)

Reign Over Me – First major fictional piece dealing with the effects of 9/11 on the families, starring Adam Sandler (against type) and Don Cheadle (March)

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[300](#) – Frank Miller adaptation of the Frank Miller graphic novel about 300 Spartans defending Greece from the entire frickin’ Persian Empire. Filmed in the same style as “Sin City”. (March)

Grind House – Two one-hour short horror stories, one from Robert Rodriguez, the other from Quentin Tarantino. (April)

[Spider-Man 3](#) – The webslinger versus Venom and Sandman. (May)

Shrek the Third – Justin Timberlake as young King Arthur. Gulp (May)

Pirates of the Caribbean: At the World’s End – Captain Jack goes for the hat trick (May)

Ocean’s Thirteen – Will someone please stick a fork in this franchise? (June)

Fantastic Four: The Rise of the Silver Surfer – No way does this film get completed by this date (June)

Live Free or Die Hard – John McClane strikes again (probably with his walker) (June)

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix – My wife and daughter will be there the first day

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(July)

The Bourne Ultimatum – Superspy Jason Bourne (Matt Damon) is back and looking for his roots (August)

Beowulf – Robert Zemeckis gets all medieval on us with a motion capture (like “Polar Express”) adaptation of the epic poem (November)