

New On Video & DVD

The Seeker Based on Susan Cooper's 1973 Newbery Award-winning fantasy novel, *The Dark Is Rising*, director David L. Cunningham's 2007 film follows the adventures of young protagonist Will Stanton (Alexander Ludwig), who discovers that he is an immortal being connected with an ancient struggle between good and evil. Aided by fellow "Old Ones," including Miss Greythorne (Frances Conroy) and Merriman Lyon (Ian McShane), Will, an American transplant in England, must face off against shadowy forces bent on world domination, most notably represented by the black-clad Rider (Christopher Eccleston). Taking a different approach to Cooper's revered novel, *The Seeker*, actually drawn from the second book in *The Dark Is Rising* sequence, will certainly raise the eyebrows of ardent fans of the series, particularly given screenwriter John Hodge's considerable alterations to the original story. (For example, Will is American instead of British.) For those unattached to Cooper's story, however, *The Seeker* will likely prove to be an enjoyable escapist film, with Conroy, McShane, and Eccleston adding credibility to a largely unknown cast that is anchored by the likable Ludwig. *The Seeker* will undoubtedly entertain those looking for a diverting fantasy movie. *Fox*

Dennis the Menace *Trouble, Trouble Everywhere* Lovable troublemaker Dennis the Menace travels the world, managing to find himself in hot water along the way in this collection from the popular animated series that follows the Mitchell family on several exciting vacations. The seven episodes feature Dennis chasing kangaroos in Australia, getting mixed up in an Italian heist and coming eye-to-eye with an angry bull in Spain. But wherever he goes, Dennis always manages to have fun. Includes the episodes "Dennis in Venice," "Mayan Mayhem," "The Big Candied Apple," "A Royal Pain," "Dennis and the Kangaroo Cavalry," "Dennis Plasters Pamplona," and "Black and Blue Hawaii." *Fox*

Experiment A man and a woman, both afflicted by severe cases of amnesia, meet in Prague and try to figure out who they are. This disturbing feature from director John Hopkins (*TORMENT*) follows the frightened couple as, unbeknownst to them, they take part in a potentially deadly experiment conducted by a shadowy underground group. *MTI*

Dead Cool When his mom (Imogen Stubbs) decides to move in with her new boyfriend (Anthony Calf) and his wacky family, 15-year-old David (Steven Geller) can't help but wish that his father (James Callis) -- who died in a car crash six years earlier -- could come back and stir things up in his newly blended brood. Rosanna Arquette also stars in this satirical take on family relationships from writer-director David Cohen. *MTI*

Ice Age: The Meltdown In this computer-animated sequel to *ICE AGE*, prehistoric creatures face a new problem: their icy world is melting. Manny (voiced by Ray Romano), seemingly the last woolly mammoth on Earth, and his pals--a saber-toothed tiger named Diego (Denis Leary) and a sloth named Sid (John Leguizamo)--are perfectly content in their ice-covered valley. When con artist Fast Tony (Jay Leno) claims that their home will soon be underwater and the world is about to end, they think he's kidding. But to everyone's surprise, the shady fast talker is right. Manny, Diego, and Sid soon discover that the valley will flood in days. Following the advice of a vulture (Will Arnett) who is hoping for the worst, a bevy of animals begin to make their way to the end of the valley in search of a boat that will save them from the flood. En route, sad sack Manny is startled when he encounters another woolly mammoth, Ellie (Queen Latifah). As happy as Manny is to see another one of his kind, there's a problem: Ellie is convinced that she's a possum like her hyperactive brothers, Crash (Seann William Scott) and Eddie (Josh Peck). And to make matters worse, the melting of the ice has released some ferocious sea creatures that had literally been frozen in time. Will Ellie finally realize that she's a gigantic woolly mammoth and not a pint-sized possum? Is it really the end of the world? Can Manny and the rest of the animals in the valley survive the impending flood? And will Manny be able to leave the past behind now that he knows he's not alone? Saber-tooth squirrel Scrat and his quest for an acorn once again provide additional comic relief throughout the film. *Fox*

Legend of the Black Scorpion After murdering his brother the emperor, taking over the throne and marrying the recently widowed Empress Wan (Ziyi Zhang), Li (You Ge) dispatches a group of assassins to kill Prince Wu Luan (Daniel Wu). Having survived the attack, Wu Luan sets out to avenge his father's death. Teaming with the empress, Wu Luan plans to strike during a lavish banquet Li is throwing for his ministers. This stunning Chinese film is based on Shakespeare's "Hamlet." *Genius*

13: Game of Death A put-upon Thai man who just lost his job gets what seems like the chance of a lifetime when he's told he's been picked to take part in an online reality show where completing 13 challenges will win him a multi-million-dollar prize. But as the prize money mounts, the challenges become more intense and more twisted. Is he playing the game...or is it playing him? Bizarre psychological thriller stars Krissada Terrence, Achita Wuthinounsurasit. *Weinstein*

The Secret Things of God In this fascinating release, author and psychologist Dr. Henry Cloud analyzes Rhonda Byrne's New Age bestseller "The Secret" from a Judeo-Christian perspective. Offering up an exploration of the complex relationship between God and mankind, Dr. Cloud presents insight into how you can find true joy and inner peace within your life. *Fox*

Wings 6th Season Brothers Brian (Steven Weber) and Joe Hackett (Tim Daly) and best friend Helen (Crystal Bernard) return to the trials and tribulations of operating a small airport in Nantucket, Mass., in Season 6 of this popular situation comedy. With new guest stars popping aboard, Sandpiper Air once again flies high on laughs. The sixth season is the final one for cast member Thomas Haden Church and the first for Amy Yasbeck. Disc 1 includes the following episodes: "Whose Wife Is It Anyway?," "Twisted Sister," "The Shrink," "The Spark and How to Get It," "The Waxman Cometh," "Is That a Ten-Foot Sandwich or Are You Just Glad to See Me?" and "All's Fare." Additional Actors: Douglas Rowe, George Plimpton, Dedee Pfeiffer, Dendrie Taylor, Bill Wiley, Roberta Hanley, Jonathan Frakes. Disc 2 includes the following episodes: "Miss Jenkins," "If It's Not One Thing, It's Your Mother," "The Wrong Stuff," "Insanity Claus," "She's ... Baaack!," "Have I Got a Couple for You" and "Fools Russian." Additional Actors: Peggy Lipton, Soupy Sales, Marty York, Debbie Reynolds, Robert Culp, Louis Mustillo, Dann Florek, Valerie Mahaffey, Amy Van Nostrand, Jerry Penacoli, Natasha Pavlovich, Gregg Berger, Renata Scotto. Disc 3 includes the following episodes: "Let's Call the Whole Thing Off," "Remembrance of Flings Past (Part 1)," "Remembrance of Flings Past (Part 2)," "Gone But Not Fygoten," "Ex, Lies and Videotape" and "Portrait of the Con Artist as a Young Man." Additional Actors: David Kaufman, Patrick Mickler, Wendy Worthington, Lesley Boone, Sheila Kelley, Zachary Charles II, Michael J. Pollard, Jack Kehler, Julie Sanford, Farrah Forke, Caroline Aaron, Richard McGonagle. Disc 4 includes the following episodes: "The Love Life and Times of Joe and Helen," "A House to Die For," "Nuptials Off," "Et Tu, Antonio?," "Boys Just Wanna Have Fun" and "Here It Is: The Big Wedding." Additional Actors: Jill Pierce, Gilbert Gottfried, Olivia Hack, Jennifer Elise Cox, Christopher Daniel Barnes, Paul Sutera, Charles Cioffi, Maurice Godin, Fabiana Udenio, Anne Tremko, Sara Ballantine, Bruce Gray. *CBS/Paramount*

Kite Runner is a fascinating historical epic set in 20th-century Afghanistan. In 1978, Amir (Zekiria Ebrahimi) and Hassan (Ahmad Khan Mahmoodzada) are young boys living in Kabul, where Hassan and his father, Ali (Nabi Tanha), work as servants for Amir and his father, Baba (Homayoun Ershadi). Amir and Hassan make an excellent team in kite competitions, with Hassan having a gift for running down kites, but after one contest, he is bullied by Assef (Elham Ehsas), who does unspeakable things to him as Amir watches from a distance and then runs away, not helping his friend. As the Russians and then the Taliban take over Afghanistan, Baba and Amir escape to America, where they make a new home in San Francisco. But even as he graduates from college and meets a beautiful young woman, Soraya (Atossa Leoni), who is also from Kabul, Amir (now played by Khalid Abdalla) is haunted by his cowardice and can't turn down an opportunity to try to make things right when it is offered by his father's old friend Rahim Khan (Shaun Toub)--even if it means risking his life.

Paramount

The Haunting of Rebecca Verlain A killer wipes out all members but one of the Verlain Commune on an idyllic Christmas Eve. The lone survivor is Rebecca (Natacza Boon), who falls into a long coma. When she awakes two years later, she finds her mind blocked from the tragedy. As her memories slowly resurface, she begins to understand that the spirits of her lost family have unfinished business. *MTI*

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Solomon and Sheba Yul Brynner stars as the legendary figure of the Bible in King Vidor's only contribution to this popular 1950s genre. When aged King David (Finlay Currie) has a vision from God telling him that Solomon should succeed him as ruler of the Israelites, David heeds His word. This angers his martial brother, Adonijah (George Sanders), who threatens to wrest the throne from his younger brother. Israel thrives under the reign of the wise king, and its success creates uneasiness among the powerful kingdoms of the region. The pharaoh conspires with Sheba (Gina Lollobrigida), granting her access to the Red Sea that she might besiege Solomon with her charm, thereby luring the ruler to his doom. Solomon is dazzled by the queen's beauty and quickly falls under her sway. As the king's attention is turned away from the Lord and the welfare of his people, the country begins to deteriorate. The Lord finally expresses his displeasure with the prevailing atmosphere of licentiousness by destroying the Temple of Jehovah. The chastened Solomon grasps the error of his ways, and a transformed Sheba decides to convert to Judaism. *Solomon and Sheba* is an undeniably entertaining camp value that makes it worth watching. *Fox*

Kings Of Sun In this historical adventure saga, Balam (George Chakiris) is the son of the ruler of the Mayan people; when his father is killed in battle, Balam succeeds his father as King and leads his followers out of Mexico to a coastal region. The Mayan's new home, however, is already the province of a hostile Indian tribe led by Black Eagle (Yul Brynner), who leads a raid against the Mayan's camp. Balam is severely injured, but Black Eagle's wife Ixchel (Shirley Ann Field) tends to his wounds, and eventually the two leaders agree to settle their differences and coexist in peace. Hunac Ceel (Leo Gordon), Balam's old nemesis, is not so forgiving. He has followed the Mayans to their new home, where he and his troops mount a furious attack, with the Indians and the Mayans leading a united front against the invaders. *Kings of the Sun* also features Richard Basehart, Brad Dexter, and Barry Morse. *Fox*

War Heroes II Movie Collection Casablanca Express (1989) This actioner involves Nazi soldiers hijacking a train carrying England's prime minister. Commandos (1973) A combined force of Italian and American commandos are ordered to attack and take over an air base in North Africa with only two days to do it. The Italian film, dubbed into English, is also known as Sullivan's Marauders. Desert Victory (1943) If, while watching such cable services as A&E and the History Channel, you happen to see filmclips of the WWII African campaign against Germany's Erwin Rommel, chances are good that the footage was culled from *Desert Victory*. This Academy Award-winning British documentary traces the struggle between the opposing forces of generals Rommel and Montgomery, from the defeat at El Alamein to the ultimate British victory at Tripoli. The film made quite an impact upon its first release due to its heavy reliance on captured German newsreel footage. The man responsible for *Desert Victory* was David McDonald, who gave up a lucrative commercial career for the duration to concentrate on factual films. McDonald followed *Desert Victory* with the equally well-received *Burma Victory* (1945) This third feature film version of Joseph Conrad's tragic romantic drama (the best of which remains John Cromwell's 1940 adaptation) is the one that sticks closest to the original story of a reclusive, hard-hearted fellow living on a private island in the Dutch East Indies who must protect his home, and the woman he comes to love, from two brutish villains. The story is told by a sea captain and begins at a turn-of-the-century hotel in the port town of Surabaya where the Dutch entrepreneurs come to drink and wind down while listening to an all-female orchestra led by creepy conductor Sam Giancomo (Simon Callow). The joint is owned by an unpleasant, bigoted German named Schomberg (Jean Yanne) who constantly pesters the conductor to sell him Alma (Irene Jacob), the prettiest girl in the band. Eventually Sam relents, causing the frightened Alma to beseech taciturn patron Axel Heyst (Willem Dafoe) to help her escape. At first Axel refuses, but then has a change of heart and takes her with him to his lonely island where she will live with himself and his valet Wang (Ho Yi). Initially, Axel wants nothing to do with Alma, but things change and they become lovers. Meanwhile, the vengeful Schomberg plots revenge. He gets a chance to enact it with the arrival of the villainous Mr. Jones (Sam Neill) and his henchmen who turn Schomberg's bar into a gambling house. Seeing that Jones is ruthless and avaricious, Schomberg casually mentions that there is an untapped fortune lying in an abandoned mine located on Axel's island. *Gung Ho!* (1943) Accepted in 1943 as standard wartime propaganda, *Gung Ho* can be seen today as an outrageous exercise in raging machismo. Randolph Scott plays Thorwald, a marine colonel assigned to assemble a crack squadron of fearless jungle fighters for the all-important raid on Japanese-held Makim Island (which in real life was recaptured only a few weeks before the film's release). Thorwald seems determined to select the dregs of the earth for this mission: most of his squadron is comprised of misfits, barroom brawlers, borderline psychos and outright murderers. It is suggested that these sociopaths are the only men truly qualified for the mission at hand, and by film's end the squadron members—living and dead—are lauded as true-blue patriots. Once one gets past the questionable premise, *Gung Ho* is a fairly exciting WWII melodrama, with a particularly thrilling climax. *Pacific Inferno* (1985) With 1985's *Pacific Inferno* action star Jim Brown made a triumphant return to movies. Or did he? If you read the copyright date carefully, you'll discover that this US-Philippine coproduction was actually shot in 1977. The plot has us believe that General Douglas MacArthur ordered that \$16 million in silver be sent to the bottom of Manila Bay before the Philippines were overtaken by the Japanese in 1942. Navy divers Brown and Ric Van Nutter are among several POWs ordered to retrieve the money. Brown is all for escaping, but the duplicitous Van Nutter plans to abscond with the booty. Thus, Brown is alone in his efforts to round up local guerillas to help his fellow divers get away. Among the resistance fighters is buxom Wilma Reading, whose role consists of falling out of her blouse at the slightest provocation. Less attractive is "special guest star" Richard Jaeckel, who plays a soldier of fortune named Dealer.

Memphis Belle (1944) Filmed in color, *The Memphis Belle* has long been held up as a "model" wartime documentary. In a terse, exciting 41 minutes, the film assembles footage from several allied bombing missions into one single representative flight of the famed Flying Fortress known as *The Memphis Belle*. Though both the crewmen and the filmmakers take considerable pride in the fact that the *Belle* has completed 25 successful missions, there's no phony heroism, no grandstanding, no flag-waving. As calm-voiced narrator Ed Kern explains, the *Belle* has a job to do, and it does it, and that's all. The danger facing these Flying Fortresses is underlined, but never overemphasized, by brief glimpses of those doomed ships that didn't make it back. *Memphis Belle* was directed by William Wyler, who also flew several missions with the crew, manning the camera himself at considerable risk. *Kamikaze* (1986) A short and strange storyline emboldens this thriller with sci-fi overtones by Didier Grousset. Albert (Michel Galabru) is an electronics genius who gets the ax from his company and then goes over the edge. At first he packs off to his attic, turns on the television, and opts for vegetating. But he gets a little irritated by what he sees on TV and is especially miffed at some inept announcers. So his solution is to invent a "ray gun" that can travel through the TV screen and the camera in the studios and kill the idiots, one at a time. A detective (Richard Bohringer) starts to figure out how the murders are happening and develops a scheme to eliminate the unknown, attic assassin.

Prelude to War (1942) was the first entry in the US War Department's *Why We Fight* series, a group of seven morale-boosing documentaries supervised by Lt. Col. Frank Capra. As brilliantly assembled as any of Capra's "populist" Hollywood films, *Prelude* demonstrates how the diplomatic and political blunders made in the wake of WW1 led inexorably to WW2. Especially culpable are those complacent citizens of the USA who were led to believe that the problems of the rest of the world had no bearing on their lives. While America sleeps, Japan and Germany slowly and methodically build their armies and launch their plans for global conquest. Throughout the film, the lies of fascism and totalitarianism are contrasted with the ideals of Democracy. Unlike most other War Department efforts, the 53-minute *Why We Fight* was shown to both civilian and military audiences. *Generals* (1986) Eight different generals from various countries in Europe come out against the establishment of nuclear bases on the continent in this informative and authoritative documentary. Each general is interviewed in the same non-descript room and each speaks out on the dangers of setting up nuclear sites in Europe. The first part of the documentary chronicles the wartime records of these eight men. Their patriotism cannot be called into question and since some are openly anti-Communist and are certainly not pacifist, their opinions cross the political spectrum. *BCI*

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Walk Hard The Dewey Cox Story Reilly plays Dewey Cox from the age of 14 up to his 70s, singing his way through the decades with all the gusto a 42-year-old actor can bring to the role of a hard-living, guitar-playing musician. As a child, Dewey spent time hanging out with his best friend and big brother, Nate (Chip Horness). But an accident while playing with machetes chops Dewey's brother out of his life, leaving his parents grief-stricken and his dad to proclaim that the wrong son died (a phrase repeated often throughout the movie by Dewey's angry father - played by Raymond J Barry). Nate was an accomplished piano player and Dewey learns soon after his brother's death that he too has an ear for the blues and a talent for playing the guitar. Kicked out of the house by his dad and accompanied by his girlfriend and soon-to-be wife, Edith (Kirsten Wigg), Dewey embarks on a series of adventures that lead him to a record deal with Planet Records run by three Hasidic Jews (Harold Ramis, Phil Rosenthal and Knocked Up alum Martin Starr). Dewey and his band hit the charts with Walk Hard while Dewey's wife starts popping out kid after kid after kid. After their first hit record, things get really crazy. Drummer Sam (Tim Meadows) introduces Dewey to the world of drugs. On the relationship front, Dewey's tempted by the beautiful backup singer, Darlene (Jenna Fischer). As the decades roll past, Dewey flows through the times latching onto whatever's hot in pop culture. He becomes a part of the protest movement (the song in support of midgets is hysterical), travels to India to meet the Maharishi and The Beatles, goes through a bizarre Pet Sounds/Brian Wilson phase, and then transitions into a has-been/TV variety show host by the time he's in his 40s. His life parallels the careers of most celebs, and family doesn't play a key role until the very end. The Bonus Features Walk Hard's 2-Disc DVD release is filled with hours of extra features, none of which should be missed. Every aspect of Dewey's life and the making of Walk Hard is thoroughly covered in the featurettes found on the 2-Disc Unrated DVD. Deleted and Extended Scenes: 9 bits not seen in theaters, including more with 'The Beatles', Line-O-Rama: A batch of alternate takes, Song Performances: 16 songs, The Music of Walk Hard: Setting the tone through song, The Real Dewey Cox: The 'real' man who inspired the film, A Christmas Song from Dewey Cox: Oh yeah, a special holiday treat from the rock and roll legend, Cox Sausage Commercials with Outtakes: Reilly stays in character throughout the featurette, The Making of Walk Hard: Their Oscar hopes, the cast, the characters, and the origin of the film, The Last Word with John Hodgman: One final interview, Tyler Nislon - A Cockumentary: Finding the right penis for the full frontal scenes, Bull on the Loose: It's out there and it's chasing the crew, The Music of Walk Hard: Reilly talks about his musical background, Commentary with Jake Kasdan, Judd Apatow, John C Reilly, and Lew Morton: Definitely worth a listen. *Sony*

Gabriel In the long-standing fight between good and evil, Gabriel (Andy Whitfield), the lone surviving archangel, must engage in an epic last stand against the fallen angels to save the citizens of purgatory. Taking on human form, Gabriel wrestles with earthly emotions -- including a romance with a prostitute (Samantha Noble) -- and launches a fierce battle against purgatory's ruler (Dwayne Stevenson) in this dark actioner. *Sony*

First Knight Special Edition On the way to meet King Arthur, her future husband and ally, Lady Guenevere and her retinue are attacked by Arthur's mortal enemy, the malicious Malagant. Prince Malagant wants possession of Guinevere's land, which lies between Arthur's kingdom and his own. However, the daring Lancelot intercedes and foils the attack. In return, this roaming-sword-for-hire asks for a kiss from the lovely Lady -- a request that Guinevere coldly refuses. They meet again when Lancelot turns up at one of Camelot's public tournaments, and proves to Arthur that he deserves to become the King's first knight. So when Malagant strikes again, kidnapping Queen Guinevere, Lancelot once more serves as her rescuer. But now, Guinevere's reaction is no longer chilly -- and the two proceed to fall in love, betraying Arthur's trust and friendship. *Sony*

Lions For Lambs Robert Redford directs and stars in this provocative ode to political activism. Boasting a powerhouse cast that also includes Meryl Streep and Tom Cruise, the film features three storylines centered on the Iraq war. Cruise is Jasper Irving, a rising Republican senator who has summoned Janine Roth (Streep), the head journalist at a large news corporation, to sell her on the government's new military strategy. It's his hope that she in turn will sell the public on the idea. Meanwhile, a history professor (Redford) is trying to convince one of his more promising students to strive to make a difference in the world. Professor Malley believes Todd Hayes (Andrew Garfield) to be a bright young man, and he wants to know why Todd has become so apathetic about his schoolwork, and, after the two banter back and forth about the nature of activism, Malley tells him about two of his former students, Ernest and Arian (Michael Pena and Derek Luke), both of whom are currently serving in Iraq. Unbeknownst to Malley, at that very moment, Ernest and Arian are engaging in the exact military strategy that Senator Irving is discussing with Roth. Their mission has just gone terribly awry, and the men have fallen into enemy territory. So the senator and journalist argue, the professor and student debate, and all the while the wounded soldiers wait desperately for rescue. These disparate storylines slowly build and converge, culminating in a blaring statement about civic responsibility and social conscience. Cruise and Streep are a delight to watch, and their battle of words gives the most heat to the film. As one might expect, it casts an extremely critical eye at the current state of American politics. *MGM*

Between Travelling to Tijuana, Mexico, in search of her missing sister, a Chicago attorney (Poppy Montgomery) encounters little co-operation from the local police. Finding a detective willing to help her, Montgomery's investigation leads her down a dangerous path beset with a series of bizarre incidents and unexpected encounters. Adam Kaufman, Jose Yenque, Danny Pino also star in this gripping psychological thriller. *Porchlight*

Alvin and the Chipmunks Go To The Movies: Funny, We Shrunk The Adults Alvin and the Chipmunks embark on a trio of zany adventures based on Hollywood comedies in these episodes from their popular animated show. In the first segment, the gang goes back to a time when Alvin was undecided about pursuing a musical career; next, when Alvin's dream of being grown up comes true, he has to learn how to live as an adult; and in the third episode, Simon accidentally shrinks Dave and Miss Miller. *Paramount*

Alvin and the Chipmunk: The Chipmunk Adventure Everyone's favorite trio of animated rodents -- mischief-makers Alvin, Simon and Theodore -- are at it again in their debut feature film. When Alvin enters the threesome in a round-the-world hot-air balloon race that pits them against the Chipettes, the boys could take home \$100,000 if they win. But unbeknownst to the high-flying chipmunks, they've become accomplices in an ingenious jewel-smuggling plot. *Paramount*

X2 X-Men United In X2, the remarkable sequel to X-MEN, picks up shortly after the first film's finale. At the White House, a would-be assassin--the acrobatic, teleporting blue mutant Nightcrawler (Alan Cumming)--menaces the president. Meanwhile, in the Canadian Rockies, Wolverine (Hugh Jackman) searches for answers to his mysterious past at the top-secret facility where he received his metallic skeleton and claws. Back at Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters, Jean Grey (Famke Janssen) and Storm (Halle Berry) instruct students Rogue (Anna Paquin), Iceman (Shawn Ashmore), and Pyro (Aaron Stanford), while Professor Xavier (Patrick Stewart) and Cyclops (James Marsden) pay a visit to the imprisoned Magneto (Ian McKellen). However, Magneto has a secret weapon in the shape-shifting Mystique (Rebecca Romijn-Stamos). Soon allies and enemies alike will unite to defeat the hate-filled military scientist William Stryker (Brian Cox), who wants to rid the world of mutants. When Stryker launches a ruthless two-pronged attack that leaves the school under siege and Xavier and Cyclops captured, Wolverine and the remaining X-Men must spring to action to save their friends and prevent all-out genocide. Even better than its excellent precursor, X2 delves deeper into the X-Men mythology, introducing new characters and touching on essential storylines from the decades-long run of the Marvel comic book series. *Fox*

Partiution In 1947, the same tumultuous year that India and Pakistan were divided into two separate states, a Sikh and former soldier (Jimi Mistry) puts his life on the line to save the life of a beautiful Muslim woman (Kristin Kreuk). In the wake of the heroic rescue, the two strangers find themselves falling in love. But are they destined to stay confined by the strict boundaries of their respective faiths? *Allumination Film Works*

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I Am Legend In *I Am Legend*, Will Smith joins the ranks of Vincent Price (in 1964's *The Last Man On Earth*) and Charlton Heston (in 1971's *Omega Man*) as the star of an adaptation of Richard Matheson's 1954 novel of the same name. Often surprising in its focus on loneliness and loss, this thoughtful, eerie, and restrained sci-fi horror film provides a parade of startling visuals, but never allows special effects to overcome the human element. Smith, in a strong performance very different from his usual persona, is Robert Neville, the lone survivor in a New York City where streets are overgrown and deer gambol among deserted automobiles. Following an epidemic, the Earth's population has been turned into an army of nocturnal zombies. Immune to the virus, military scientist Neville searches for a cure in his Washington Square townhouse. Haunted by visions of his family leaving quarantined Manhattan two years prior, he drives through the city with his German Shepherd, Sam, by day and barricades his home from the monsters nightly. But when Anna (Alice Braga)--another immune stranger--finds him, they will have to fight the onslaught twice as hard. Akiva Goldsman and Mark Protosevich's emotionally-charged script showcases the charisma of Smith, who commands the screen alone for most of the picture (aside Abbey, a talented German Shepherd). Director Francis Lawrence (Constantine) uses music minimally, wisely allowing the eerie cityscapes to remain mostly silent. *Warner*

Becker First Season Ted Danson stars as Dr. Becker, a sharp-tongued physician whose arrogance is only matched by his dedication to his patients. Brash and opinionated, Becker is a specialist in rubbing people the wrong way. But beneath his prickly exterior Becker is really just a softhearted teddy bear--just don't tell him that. Operating a small practice in the Bronx, Dr. Becker's entourage of opponents/associates includes happy-go-lucky neighbor Chris Konnor (Nancy Travis), dependable head nurse Margaret (Hattie Winston), and spoiled-rich-girl Linda (Shawnee Smith). With this wry series Ted Danson finally found success after *Cheers*, and an irascible character who would erase all memory of bartender Sam Malone. This collection presents the series' complete debut season. Disc 1 includes the following episodes: "Pilot," "Take These Pills and Shove 'Em," "Sex in the Inner City," "Tell Me Lies," "My Dinner with Becker," "Man Plans, God Laughs" and "City Lights." Additional Actors: Amy Aquino, Bill Capizzi, Michael Reid MacKay, Peter Siragusa, Carol Ann Susi, James Lorinz, Rosa Blasi, Clayton Landey, Amy Hathaway. Disc 2 includes the following episodes: "Physician, Heal Thyself," "Choose Me," "P.C. World," "Scriptus Interruptus," "Love! Lies! Bleeding!," "Becker the Elder" and "Larry Spoke." Additional Actors: John Cothran Jr., Paul Parducci, Dom Magwili, Roxanne Beckford, Saverio Guerra, Benjamin Ratner, Damon Standifer, Michael Markowitz, Robert Joy. Disc 3 includes the following episodes: "Activate Your Choices," "Limits and Boundaries," "Partial Law," "Saving Harvey Cohen," "Truth and Consequences," "Drive, They Said," "Lucky Day" and "Regarding Reggie." Additional Actors: Bill Cosby, Ray Romano, Saverio Guerra, Kevin James, Douglas Spain, Alice Krige, Jenny Gago, Derek Basco, Lauri Johnson, Davenia McFadden, Kyla Pratt *Paramount/CBS*

Matlock Season One There are TV lawyers and then there's *Matlock*. Folksy yet aggressive, Harvard educated but still down to earth--Andy Griffith's portrayal of the clever Southern attorney is one of the all-time classic icons of television legal dramas. Fans who have followed the show for all of its nine seasons will be thrilled to revisit how the program began. They'll also be surprised at how much the show changed over the years, while some things remained the same throughout its storied run. From his simple gray Ford to his predilection for hot dogs, *Matlock* came across as both a personable and humorous character whose \$100,000 fee was always worth the dough. Along with Tyler Hudson (Kene Holliday) and *Matlock's* daughter Charlene (Lori Lethan), the first season established the format that the show would follow throughout its time on the air. The cases no one could solve, the clients no one could help, and the scandals no one could uncover are all deftly handled by *Matlock* and his team. For those who have never seen the show, this collection will clarify the program's immense popularity, while longtime fans will get to take a trip back in time and be reminded of why the fell in love in the first place. Includes the following episodes: "Diary of a Perfect Murder," "The Judge" and "The Stripper." Additional Actors: Robin Thomas, James V. Christy, James McEachin, Richard Newton, Al Ruscio, Lawrence Pressman, Michael Durrell, Dick Van Dyke, Kit McDonough, Kerrie Keane, Judith-Marie Bergan. Disc 2 includes the following episodes: "The Affair," "The Seduction," "The Don (Part 1)" and "The Don (Part 2)." Additional Actors: Ted Lehman, Jeff Conaway, Theresa Saldana, Carolyn Seymour, Jimmy Keegan, Tommy "Tiny" Lister, John Beck, Nancy Stafford, Ron Karabatsos, William Conrad, Joe Penny, Doran Clark, Sean McGuirk, Alan Campbell, José Ferrer, Sheree North. Disc 3 includes the following episodes: "The Sisters," "The Cop," "The Angel" and "The Professor." Additional Actors: Gail O'Grady, Gene Ross, Conchata Ferrell, Lee Paul, Andrew Bloch, Asher Brauner, Charles Cyphers, Robert Donner, Kari Lizer, Kip Gilman, Scott Valentine, Don Porter, Nicholas Cascone, Henry G. Sanders. Disc 4 includes the following episodes: "Santa Claus," "The Chef," "The Author" and "The Rat Pack." Additional Actors: Pat Hingle, Barry Jenner, Andrew Masset, Grainger Hines, Cathryn Damon, Ray Reinhardt, Louise Caire Clark, Brion James, Guy Stockwell, Kay Freeman, Charles C. Stevenson Jr., Gregory Itzin, James V. Christy, Desi Arnaz Jr., Timothy Busfield, Gary Grubbs. Disc 5 includes the following episodes: "The Nurse," "The Convict," "The Court-Martial (Part 1)" and "The Court-Martial (Part 2)." Additional Actors: Jason Wingreen, Lise Cutter, Jo De Winter, Robert Walden, Lee Purcell, Robert Pine, Nick Cassavetes, Georg Stanford Brown, June Smith, Dana Elcar, Barry Corbin, Glynn Turman, Diane Franklin, Wendy Phillips. Disc 6 includes the following episodes: "The Therapist," "The People vs. *Matlock*" and "The Photographer." Additional Actors: Steve Bond, Sarah Douglas, Susan Seaforth Hayes, Alan Blumenfeld, Richard Kuss, Dakin Matthews, Arthur Rosenberg, Julie Sommars, Nick DeMauro, Billy Bob Thornton, Scott Burkholder, Loyita Chapel. Disc 7 includes the following episodes: "The Reporter" and "The Doctors." Additional Actors: Sean McGuirk, David Carpenter, Chris Cote, Robert Harper, Caryn Richman, Daniel Roebuck, Norman Fell, Jean Speegle Howard. *Paramount/CBS*

That 70's Show 8th Season Fondly commemorating and gently poking fun at the trends, fashions, and attitudes that made the decade of the 1970s so distinct, *That 70's Show* chronicles the rites of passage of a group of teens growing up in the Wisconsin suburbs. Eric Forman (Topher Grace) lives with his parents, his no-nonsense dad, Red (Kurtwood Smith), and his somewhat loopy mother, Kitty (Debra Jo Rupp), and hangs out with his sometimes girlfriend, Donna (Laura Prepon), cheerleader Jackie (Mila Kunis), hunky Kelso (Ashton Kutcher), conspiracy theorist Hyde (Danny Masterson), and clueless exchange student Fez (Wilmer Valderrama). The show revolves around the ever-shifting social dynamics of the teens and their families, and despite the silliness of the sitcom situations, the show touches on serious issues (absent fathers, marital problems), and at times creates a surprising poignancy. Laugh along with the final season of one of TV's grooviest comedies. Everyone's lives seem to be changing, as Fez (Wilmer Valderrama) and Jackie (Mila Kunis) face relationship troubles, Kelso (Ashton Kutcher) faces a tough decision and Red (Kurtwood Smith) and Kitty (Debra Jo Rupp) face an empty nest. One of the biggest stars of the 1970s, Mary Tyler Moore, appears as talk show host Christine St. George. *Fox*

Atonement On a sultry summer day in 1935, an upper-class British family prepares for a dinner party at their country estate. The players: Briony Tallis (newcomer Saoirse Ronan), a precocious preteen writer; her older sister Cecilia, Cambridge graduate and femme fatale; Robbie Turner (James McEvoy), the housekeeper's mensch-y son, who carries a torch for Cecilia; and various visitors and family members. A series of misperceptions, fueled by the summer heat and Briony's childish hurts and fevered imagination, lead to a dramatic false accusation that lands Robbie in jail. We meet all three characters five years later in the thick of World War II, as foot soldier Robbie prepares for the Dunkirk evacuation and the two estranged sisters train as nurses in London. Director Joe Wright deserves high praise for translating Ian McEwan's highly internalized, multilayered tale of guilt, redemption, and the power and limits of the artistic imagination, into a sumptuous visual feast that not only conveys the intricate plot points of the novel, but dives headfirst into the emotional subtleties that make the story so wrenching. Whether any of the characters' actions are ultimately atoned for by the end of the film is a matter of perception, but Wright's sympathetic eye ensures that every player gets a fair trial. The young director favors long, lingering close-ups that trace every flicker of feeling--Ronan's luminous blue eyes clouding over with righteous gravity; the tremors of hurt and anger and love in McEvoy's sensitive face; the defiant jut of Knightley's jaw as it melts into tender affection. The honey-drizzled look of the first two thirds of the film contrasts achingly with the tension and seriousness of the action unfolding (and the grim intensity of the wartime sections), and the scenes on the beach at Dunkirk include some of the most masterly camera work of any recent film. *Atonement* is a powerful story, retold in a way that even diehard fans of the book will appreciate. *Universal*

New On Video & DVD

Reservation Road A wrenching drama based on the novel by John Burhnam Schwartz, *Reservation Road* is the story of two men whose lives are torn apart by a tragic accident. Ethan Learner (Joaquin Phoenix) and his wife Emma (Jennifer Connelly) are consumed with grief after their son Josh (Sean Curley) is struck by a hit and run driver. The man behind the wheel was Dwight Arno (Mark Ruffalo), a divorcee who was racing to get his own son back in time in accordance with a custody agreement. A lawyer himself, Dwight is all too familiar with the consequences of his actions. Unsure of what to do, he panics, then conceals his car in his garage. Lucky for him, the police can't find any leads, and the case quickly turns cold. Time passes, and Emma wants her family to heal and get on with their lives, but Ethan has become consumed with finding his son's killer. In a bizarre coincidence, he shows up at Dwight's office seeking legal advice about how to catch and prosecute the perpetrator. The guilt is eating away at Dwight, and he makes a plan to turn himself in, but not before he has a proper goodbye with his own son. When an image suddenly jars Ethan's memory of the accident, he begins to piece things together, causing him to quickly seek his retaliation, which results in a gripping and emotional stand-off. Joaquin Phoenix and Jennifer Connelly are excellent as the grieving parents, both offering a painfully realistic portrait of grief. Mark Ruffalo is equally impressive as the tormented and conflicted Dwight. While the film works nicely as both thriller and family drama, it at times has an emotional intensity that can be almost difficult to watch. Yet, all tear-jerking elements aside, director Terry George has crafted a smart and complex tale of loss, and the long, difficult road to healing. *Universal*

Murder, She Wrote Season 8 There's little doubt that Jessica Fletcher's name belongs in the fictional detectives' Hall of Fame with such legends as Sherlock Holmes, Miss Marple, and Nancy Drew. Played by Angela Lansbury, the writer-detective was the center of *Murder, She Wrote*, a mystery series that ran for more than a decade. Usually set in the sleepy hamlet of Cabot Cove, this eighth season takes Jessica for forays into New York City. There she teaches a class in criminology and, of course, educates the local police in solving whodunits. Lansbury earned 12 Emmy nominations (one for each season) for her smart and warm portrayal of Jessica, but she was never rewarded for her efforts. This collection presents every episode from the show's eighth season. The bad guys don't stand a chance when writer and amateur sleuth Jessica Fletcher (Angela Lansbury) is on the case in this eighth season of the popular TV drama. She competes with an ex-cop (Wings Hauser) to solve a series of campus murders, takes a computer course that winds up being more exciting than expected and investigates the case of a young ballerina who died during a performance. Guest stars include Jameson Parker and Chad Everett. Disc 1 includes the following episodes: "Bite the Big Apple," "Night Fears," "Unauthorized Obituary" and "Thicker Than Water." Additional Actors: Alexander Folk, William Windom, Roxie Roker, Wings Hauser, Bobby Hosea, Tim Choate, Bradford Dillman, Barbara Bain, Sam Behrens, Louis Herthum, Luke Askew. Disc 2 includes the following episodes: "Lines of Excellence," "Judge Not," "Terminal Connection," "A Killing in Vegas" and "The Committee." Additional Actors: Alan Fudge, Carmine Caridi, David Ciminello, William Lucking, William Atherton, Randy Brooks, Olivia Cole, Jameson Parker, Chad Everett, Douglas Barr, David Soul, Howard Keel, Norman Lloyd. Disc 3 includes the following episodes: "The List of Uri Lermontov," "Danse Diabolique," "The Witch's Curse" and "Incident in Lot 7." Additional Actors: Len Cariou, Richard Beymer, Brian McNamara, Theodore Bikel, Mitchell Ryan, Ernie Lively, Marisa Berenson, Ed Nelson, Carol Androsky, Ron Glass, Paula Prentiss, Michelle Johnson. Disc 4 includes the following episodes: "The Monte Carlo Murders," "Tinker, Tailor, Liar, Thief," "Ever After," "To the Last Will I Grapple With Thee" and "Programmed for Murder." Additional Actors: Ian Ogilvy, Patrick Bauchau, Dina Merrill, Lloyd Bochner, Trevor Eve, Kenneth Danziger, Kate Mulgrew, Marj Dusay, Marcia Cross, George Hearn, Mark Rolston, Judith Hoag. Disc 5 includes the following episodes: "Day of the Dead," "Angel of Death," "Badge of Honor" and "Murder on Madison Avenue." Additional Actors: Miriam Colon, Austin Pendleton, Darren McGavin, Doran Clark, Maria Mayenzet, Ken Kercheval, Sondra Currie, Noble Willingham, Tony Becker, Daniel Davis, Barbara Babcock, Shannon Fill. *Universal*

Gangsters The Ultimate Film Collection: Gangster fans will savor this collection of four films that helped redefine the genre. Brian DePalma's *Scarface*, written by a young Oliver Stone, takes Howard Hawk's 1932 classic into the drug-fueled violence of 1980s Florida. DePalma's informal update on the character, *Carlito's Way*, also starring Al Pacino, follows an aging gangster as he faces a new generation of thugs. Undeservingly criticized as a lesser *Goodfellas*, 1995's *Casino* offers up bountiful rewards for anyone who looks beyond casting. A fascinating hybrid of the western and gangster genres, Scorsese's *Las Vegas* opus finds old-school gangsters in the developing frontier where cowboys (er, mobsters) are being replaced by businessmen. Finally, reaching the cycle's inevitable conclusion, Ridley Scott's *American Gangster* offers a crime film steeped in the flimsy entrepreneurial ethics that any business school graduate could appreciate. American Gangster British director Ridley Scott may not seem a logical choice for this truly American crime drama, but the filmmaker does an excellent job. The film is based on a true story and set in 1968 Harlem, where Frank Lucas (Denzel Washington) is a driver for Bumpy Johnson, one of the top figures in the city's criminal world. When Bumpy dies, Lucas swoops in, taking over his predecessor's empire and expanding it over the next few years with his sale of a particularly potent brand of heroin. Meanwhile, New Jersey cop Richie Roberts (Russell Crowe) begins to investigate the New York drug world and discovers that there's a new power in town. Thanks to screenwriter Steve Zallian, as well as Washington and Crowe, *American Gangster* creates a convincing portrait of two men who are neither entirely good nor entirely bad. Washington plays Lucas as a man who buys his mother a palatial home but doesn't hesitate to beat his brother's head against a window. Crowe's Roberts may turn in a million-dollar find, but he cheats on his wife., *Scarface* is splattered with so much adrenaline and blood it's a virtual Hawaiian shirt of machismo. A Cuban hustler who immigrates to Miami in the infamous 1980 refugee boatlift wills his way to the top of a cocaine cartel by being more violent than anyone else can possibly imagine--the same drive that leads him to the top ultimately causes his downfall. Brian De Palma's blood-and-sun-drenched saga of a Cuban deportee's rise to the top of Miami's cocaine business has become something of a popular classic since its release; it's been referenced in rap songs and subsequent gangster movies and quoted the world over. Despite this lovefest with the dialogue, the film's brutal violence and lack of positive characters still make it controversial and disliked by certain critics. Al Pacino stars as Tony Montana, whose intelligence, guts, and ambition help him skyrocket from dishwasher to the top of a criminal empire but whose eventual paranoia and incestuous desire for his kid sister (Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio) prove his undoing. Michelle Pfeiffer plays Tony's neglected coke-addicted trophy wife, and Steven Bauer is his concerned friend. F. Murray Abraham, Robert Loggia, and Paul Shenar are some of Tony's sleazy business partners and potential killers., *Casino* Martin Scorsese, one of America's most influential filmmakers, returns to the world of mobsters, greed, and excess that he explored so compellingly in 1990's *Goodfellas*. Set in the 1970s and reveling in the minute details of how Las Vegas casinos operate, the film chronicles the rise and fall of casino manager Ace Rothstein (Robert De Niro). As the king of his domain, Ace efficiently runs the business and regularly sends lots of cold cash to his bosses. Helping him keep the casino's employees and customers honest is his best friend, Nicky (Joe Pesci), a violent sociopath. Although Ace aims to run a relatively respectable casino, the volatile Nicky wants to take over the entire gambling mecca, and when Ginger McKenna (Sharon Stone), a seasoned Vegas hustler, enters the picture, Ace and Nicky's friendship is complicated even further. As drugs and alcohol become a bigger part of Ginger's life, all three are eventually brought down by their own greed and blind ambition. & *Carlito's Way* Notorious Puerto Rican heroin dealer Carlito Brigante (Al Pacino) is released from jail on a technicality thanks to the manipulations of his sleazy lawyer buddy (Sean Penn). All he wants is to keep his nose clean and earn enough money to start a business in the Bahamas--and maybe rekindle romance with his old flame, played by Penelope Ann Miller. Instead he finds himself back in trouble as a result of old-world codes of honor and misguided loyalties. It all takes place in 1975 Manhattan, in and around a nightclub Carlito manages, so there's plenty of classic disco music pulsing on the soundtrack. John Leguizamo plays one of the younger generation of hoodlums out to prove something. Viggo Mortensen and Luis Guzmán star as a couple of Carlito's buddies from the old days. Brian De Palma, who directed Pacino a decade earlier in *Scarface*, makes this seem almost like that film's sequel. As expected, there's plenty of elaborate tracking shots and suspenseful set pieces, most memorably a pulse-pounding chase through Grand Central Station. It's adapted from two novels by New York Supreme Court Judge Edwin Torres based on his childhood in East Harlem. *Universal*