

New On Video & DVD

Bee Movie Touted as Jerry Seinfeld's first major project since the 1998 end of his long-running eponymous TV series, 2007's computer-animated *Bee Movie* stars the popular comedian as the voice of Barry B. Benson, a young bee eager to explore the world outside of his hive. As he discovers how people live in New York City, he befriends a human florist, Vanessa Bloome (Renee Zellweger), and becomes outraged at the selling of honey, leading to a lawsuit and, of course, plenty of Seinfeldian misadventures. Helmed by directors Steve Hickner and Simon J. Smith (a member of the *Shrek* creative team), *Bee Movie* lightens Seinfeld's notoriously stinging humor for a family audience, while staying true to its inherent New York-bred quirkiness. This leaves room for the film to feature impressive (if anatomically incorrect) bug-oriented CGI animation and a solid supporting cast that includes Zellweger, Matthew Broderick, John Goodman, Chris Rock, and Ray Liotta (who plays a honey-peddling animated version of himself). *Dreamworks*

The Mist After a vicious storm wreaks havoc in their small town in Maine, artist David Drayton (Thomas Jane) heads out to the town supermarket for some much-needed supplies with his young son, Billy (Nathan Gamble), and his neighbor, Norton (Andre Braugher), in tow. Their trip soon turns to terror when a menacing white mist settles in, leaving this group of locals and out-of-towners fighting for survival against an unknown, bloodthirsty enemy. When the local religious zealot (Marcia Gay Harden) begins to convince the group that the mist is punishment from God, Drayton and his cohorts realize that they may be trapped inside with an enemy just as dangerous as whatever is lurking outside. Tension runs high in this tale as the trapped group faces difficult moral decisions. Should they stay and wait out the terror, or make a break for it and risk suffering a terrible fate? Is the eerie mist the will of God, an experiment from the local military base gone awry, or, maybe, a freak natural disaster? Without modern conveniences and the normal conventions and rules to guide them, the group is easily swayed by the loudest opinion. Will they save themselves at the expense of each other, or work as a team to save everyone? There is a decent amount of blood and gore for horror fans, some deadpan humor and just a hint of politics thrown in for good measure. Thomas Jane is a stoic leading man, but Frances Sternhagen and Toby Jones are more fun as unlikely heroes. Laurie Holden, Alexa Davalos, Bill Sadler and Jeffrey Demunn also star in this creepy tale. *Weinstein/Genius*

In The Valley Of Elah Tommy Lee Jones plays Hank Deerfield, a retired military man investigating the mysterious disappearance of his soldier son, Mike, in this somber mystery-drama from director Paul Haggis (*Crash*). Charlize Theron is the civilian homicide cop in the small town near the base where Mike recently returned from a term of combat in Iraq. When this unlikely pair ends up investigating the mystery together, they encounter some suspicious covering-up from the army. Deerfield gets access to his son's camera phone which contains startling video footage from combat overseas. Using a muted palette of military browns and greens, Haggis shows the same sharp eye for humanistic detail that served him so well in *Crash*, infusing desolate scenes of civilian life--sterile concrete barracks, sleazy strip clubs, homey but empty diners, drugs, fast food joints, and ghostly motels--with vivid detail. Performances are all Oscar-worthy: Jones's craggy, weather-beaten face hiding grief and anguish beneath a steely facade until they threatens to boil over. His mug becomes a symbol for an America with no other choice but to confront its own grave flaws if it's ever to find any answers. Susan Sarandon bring the pain to the surface as the anguished mother waiting at home, and Theron is strong and sure, as a single mother who bravely faces, among other challenges, harassment in the workplace. Josh Brolin is her ex, the chief of police, and Jason Patric and James Franco are among the impassive faces of the military. *Warner*

Introducing The Dwights This Australian coming-of-age comedy/drama features *Secrets And Lies* star Brenda Blethyn as Jeannie, a semi-monstrous mom who gave up a promising career as a British comic to move Down Under and marry a one-hit wonder country singer. One of her two sons is mentally handicapped (Richard Wilson); the other is a sensitive kid named Tim (Kham Chittenden), whose sexual maturity has been waylaid by his clingy mom's fear of being abandoned again (her husband--understandably--left her). He's got to look after his brother and drive Mom to her local club gigs as she attempts a comeback. Complications arise when Tim meets Jill (Emma Booth), a girl cute and bright enough to be worth standing up to his mother for. Director Cherie Nowlan stages the ensuing family fracas in the style of Australia's and England's past working-class comedy hits, like Muriel's Wedding and *Life Is Sweet*. This suits the larger-than-life talents of Blethyn just fine: over the top is her natural habitat and here she inhabits it body and soul. The broad comic strokes are nicely balanced by some subtle shading in the sensitive romance between Tim and his Jill. Chittenden is very likeable, and his sensitivity makes a nice foil for the histrionics on display. Still, it's Blethyn's show all the way (she also wrote much of her own stand-up material), and fans of her work in the films of Mike Leigh will be happy with the warm, improvisatory feel of much of *Introducing The Dwights*. *Warner*

PTU: Police Tactical Unit Johnny To directs this Hong Kong action film noir that takes place one dangerous night on the streets where the police tactical unit (PTU) are assigned to patrol. With shadowy alleyways, dingy restaurants, and seedy video game arcades setting the scene for the constantly violent action, PTU is a street war between police and underground thugs. Sergeant Lo (Lam Suet) cruises on his own, while groups of other police officers scan the streets, beating and brutalizing punk kids who report directly to the major thugs Ponytail, Bald Head, and Eye Ball. Lo's main problem is that he has lost his police-issue handgun and he badly wants it back. He follows any leads available trying to find it, even if it means betraying his fellow officers and making a deal with the thugs. A brutal film that nonetheless has moments of absurd comic relief--Lo slips on a banana peel while in pursuit of punks not once but twice--PTU is another solid contribution to To's entertaining repertoire of Hong Kong action flicks. *Weinstein/Genius*

Walk the Line Extended Cut Primarily the story of the love that grew between country stars Johnny Cash and June Carter during the early years of Cash's career, *Walk The Line* is the result of intense collaboration between director James Mangold, co-writer Gill Dennis, Johnny Cash, and June Carter Cash. Though both Cashes died in 2003, they oversaw the script's development for seven years. Mangold and Cash's insistence that the film's stars would actually sing paid off. Witherspoon's singing (as June) is lovely, and Phoenix's contains the raw energy and soul that defined Cash's sound. Even as a child on a cotton farm in Depression-era Arkansas, Cash shows a strong interest in music, escaping from his no-frills life and strict father (Robert Patrick) through hymns and listening to the radio. When his brother dies in a freak accident, young Johnny feels responsible, and worries that he will never live up to his brother's goodness. The film follows Cash through his first marriage with Vivian Cash (Ginnifer Goodwin) and into the early stages of his touring career alongside such musicians as Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, Roy Orbison, Elvis Presley, and most importantly, June Carter. As Cash's success grows, so does his relationship with drugs, alcohol, and Carter, putting a strain upon his family life. From his initial audition with Sam Phillips of Sun Records on through his legendary 1968 concert at Folsom Prison, Cash is transformed from a hesitant singer riddled with demons to a man whose uniquely bold style would make music history. *Walk The Line* never attempts to paint a full picture of Cash's prolific career, but instead focuses on the passions that drove his music and on the woman who gave him strength. With magical performances by Witherspoon and Phoenix, a haunting and inspiring American romance is brought beautifully to life. *Fox*

Jesus, Mary and Joey Here's a charming romantic comedy about overcoming the odds and finding love and fulfillment where it's least expected. When Joey falls for the girl everyone called "Scary Mary," he reevaluates his relationship not only with women but with God. While this puts him at odds with his family, something soon happens that forces everyone to take a different look at their lives and their spirituality. *Monarch*

Missing In Mig Alley Through archival footage, expert commentary and eyewitness accounts, this installment of "Nova" chronicles the Korean War story of the 30-plus U.S. and British pilots who went missing in MiG Alley, a perilous corridor between Korea and China. Veteran pilots describe flying through the airspace, and previously sealed Soviet archives reveal new data about missing fliers, giving closure to some families decades after their loved ones disappeared. *WGBH Boston*

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There Will Be Blood Is a masterly, unflinching examination of a consummately evil man. Daniel Plainview (via a transcendent performance by the great Daniel Day-Lewis) is, as he likes to remind those around him, an oil man: he finds it, he drills for it, and he makes money from it. Following a tip from a visitor named Paul Sunday, whose family sits atop a veritable ocean of oil, Plainview travels to the town of New Boston, California, with his young son. Sunday's preacher brother Eli (both roles are played by the excellent Paul Dano) grudgingly accepts Plainview's ambitions under the condition that he help fund the town church. As Plainview's plans come to fruition, a series of events begin to fracture the insular world he has constructed for himself, pitting Plainview against Sunday and forcing him to become even more vindictive and ruthless. *Paramount*

Bobby Deerfield Sydney Pollack directs this romantic European drama starring Al Pacino as Bobby Deerfield, a crippled self-absorbed champion Grand Prix race driver who is accustomed to facing death each time he drives. When Bobby falls for a terminally ill Italian aristocrat named Lillian Morelli, played wistfully by Marthe Keller, the common ground they find brings out heretofore unknown feelings in each. The two loners discover they have run headlong into a love that slowly erodes and changes both their perspectives. Pollack's gripping, intense film includes some exciting footage of actual Formula One drivers: Carlos Pace, Tom Pryce, James Hunt, Patrick Depaillier, and Mario Andretti. *Sony*

Bats Human Harvest Bats feast on the human race in this terrifying horror sequel to the horror feature *Bats!*. The Belzan forest in Chechnya serves as a setting for a battle between several soldiers and the blood-sucking bats they encounter while roaming the wooded area. Soldiers operating overseas encounter some highly unusual weapons of mass destruction as an army of genetically enhanced bats is released by a crazed scientist working for the terrorists. Hungry for human flesh, the fearsome predators flap and gnash their way beneath the grunts' flak jackets and drench the battlefield in blood. *Sony*

The Final Season In the early '90s, Kent Stock (Sean Astin) quits his job and puts his wedding plans on hold to take over as coach of the Norway High School baseball team in Iowa. However, his reign only lasts for one season, since it's determined that the town is so small it will combine high schools with a neighboring city. One season or not, Stock must make sure that his players go out on top. Based on a true story. *Sony*

Impulse Claire Dennison (Willa Ford, TV's "Dancing with the Stars") is a beautiful, sensuous woman, desperate to arouse her husband's desires. She devises a fantasy role-play game hoping to put the spark back into their marriage. She sets the scene and her husband takes the bait...or does he? So consumed with desire the passion enravels her, but it's not long before Claire realizes she's playing a dangerous game of seduction with someone so familiar, yet completely unknown. Desperate to end the affair she tells the stranger the game is over, but for him it's just begun. *Sony*

Sweeney Todd The Demon Barber Of Fleet Street With its rivers of blood, this adaptation of the Stephen Sondheim musical isn't for the faint of heart--or stomach. But thanks to the black humor, impeccable production design, and gorgeous music, Tim Burton fans will want to sing after seeing Sweeney Todd. For his sixth collaboration with the director, Johnny Depp stars as Benjamin Barker aka Sweeney Todd, a barber falsely imprisoned by Judge Turpin (Alan Rickman). After leaving prison, he comes back to Victorian London to find his wife poisoned and his daughter held captive. As he plots his revenge, Sweeney joins forces with Mrs. Lovett (Helena Bonham Carter), and while he preys on clients asking for a shave, his new partner turns the bodies into baked goods. But the judge still lives, and the razor-wielding madman wants his vengeance. Though it's a musical, Sweeney Todd has more in common with Italian horror films such as *Suspiria* than it does with *Chicago*. Even the horror-musical hybrid *Little Shop Of Horrors* pales in comparison to the darkness found here.

Previous Burton-Depp pairings have veered toward the macabre, but this reaches a glorious new level. Though they've made excellent films apart, their partnership has produced some of their best work, including *Edward Scissorhands*, *Ed Wood*, and now *Sweeney Todd*. Depp demonstrates his rock-band roots as the antihero of the title with another amazing performance, while Bonham Carter is both hilarious and heartbreaking as the eager Mrs. Lovett. But credit also belongs to production designer Dante Ferretti, director of photography Dariusz Wolski, and, of course, Burton, for showing a sooty London that is just as dark as the film's subject matter. Source composer Sondheim should also be recognized for the haunting songs that threaten to stick in viewers' heads, but the film as a whole also deserves to be remembered for its beauty and brutality. *Paramount/Dreamworks*

Perry Mason 50th Anniversary Barbara Hale reprises her role as sleuth-like secretary Della Street to host this anthology of the long-running detective television series, starring Raymond Burr as genius defense attorney Perry Mason. Five episodes in this collection are notable for featuring early appearances by legendary movie stars: "The Case of the Treacherous Toupee" with Robert Redford, "The Case of the Envious Editor" featuring James Coburn, "The Case of the Counterfeit Crank" with Burt Reynolds, "The Case of Constant Doyle" starring Bette Davis in the title role, and "The Case of the Bountiful Beauty" with Ryan O'Neal. The *Perry Mason 50th Anniversary Edition* also features seven additional episodes and the 1985 made-for-television movie *Perry Mason Returns*. In *Perry Mason Returns* the TV movie that finds the legal eagle (Raymond Burr), now a judge, stepping down from the bench to defend former secretary Della Street (Barbara Hale) when she's accused of murder. *Paramount*

Animal Planet Growing Up Wildcats Originally broadcast on the Animal Planet television network, this wildlife series chronicles the births and early years of wild animals raised in refuges and orphanages. This program dedicated to various big cat species including Siberian tigers Sarge and Lily; cheetah cubs Cayla, Cane, and Ceiran; black leopard Eddy; and four young African lions. Four episodes "Growing Up Wild"--"Growing Up Lion," "Growing Up Tiger," "Growing Up Cheetah," and "Growing Up Black Leopard"--are included in this collection, offering up-close views of cubs in a San Antonio animal orphanage, a Texas wildlife refuge, South Africa's Congo Wildlife Ranch, and in the African wild. *Genius*

The Cutting Edge Chasing The Dream After his skating partner is injured, handsome ice skater Zack (Matt Lanter) asks hockey player Alejandra "Alex" Delgado (Francia Raisa) to join him on the ice. The new partners set their sights on the internationals, but it won't be easy, especially when love gets in the way. Alex transforms with training, and the pair learns to anticipate each other's moves, but their relationship off the ice threatens to destroy their chances of winning. *Fox*

Inside Nearing the end of her pregnancy, Sarah (Alysson Paradis) spends the Christmas holiday mourning the recent death of her husband. A terrifying ordeal begins when a psychotic visitor (Beatrice Dalle) forces her way inside Sarah's house with a plan to cut the unborn child out of her body. Heavy with shock, suspense, and gore, this brutal French thriller co-stars Nathalie Roussel, Jean-Baptiste Tabourin. *Weinstein/Genius*

Fog City Mavericks The Filmmakers of San Francisco What's in the water in San Francisco? Whatever it is, it attracts some of the world's most accomplished filmmakers! This revealing documentary offers a series of interviews with Clint Eastwood, Francis Ford Coppola, George Lucas, Chris Columbus, producer Saul Zaentz, and other Bay Area talents, with clips from classics like "The Godfather," "Star Wars," "American Graffiti," "Toy Story," "Lost in Translation," and more. *Anchor Bay*

Kiltro Mash up the spaghetti Western with the martial arts genre and what do you get? You get this wild, stunt-packed adventure in which Chilean hero Zamir (Marko Zaror) comes to the rescue of his new girlfriend and her father, the owner of a martial arts academy, who has been targeted by a villainous fighter with a personal grudge. Caterina Jadresic, Miguel Angel De Luca also star. *Magnolia*

Shrooms The phrase "bad trip" takes on a double, sinister meaning in this drug-fueled horror movie from director Paddy Breathnach (Blow Dry). A group of college students depart America for the Emerald Isle in the hopes of enjoying one of Ireland's less-advertised merits: its magic mushrooms. The friends camp out in the middle of the forest, but the hallucinogens give them more than just strange visions. Paranoia begins to take over as they realize they're not alone in the woods. *Magnolia*