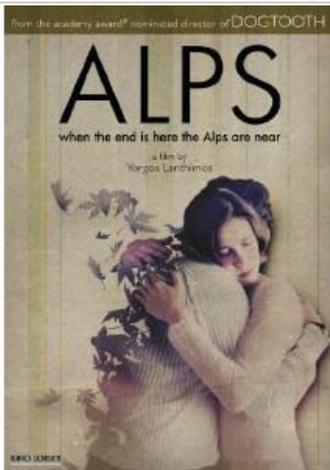


DVDs: "Beasts Of The Southern Wild" Set Loose Before Oscars

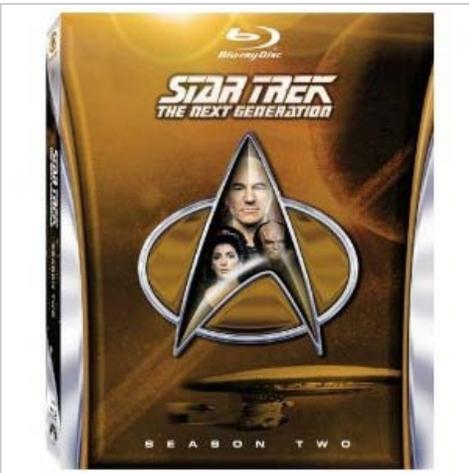
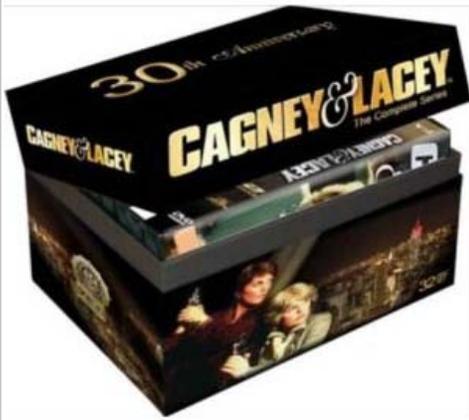
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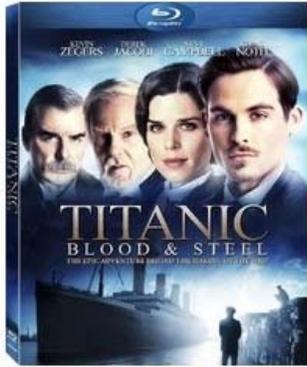
BEASTS OF THE SOUTHERN WILD (\$39.99 BluRay; FOX Searchlight)
ALPS (\$29.95 DVD; Kino Lorber)
THE DARK KNIGHT RISES (\$35.99 BluRay combo; Warner Bros.) -- *Beasts Of The Southern Wild* is the indie success story of the year and a genuinely compelling directorial breakthrough for Benh Zeitlin. I will be fascinated to see if he can build on this compelling, eccentric tale of a community of outcasts in the bayou country led spiritually by the little girl Hushpuppy. It has a distinctive vision and draws strong performances from a group of non-professionals for the most part and has a terrific score to boot. Look for this to be an Oscar Cinderella story as well. *Alps* is the nutty follow-up to the Oscar-nominated *Dogtooth* for Yorgos Lanthimos that proves the talent there is real: it's the very strange story of an unusual support group for people grieving over the loss of a loved on. And *The Dark Knight Rises* wraps up the Batman trilogy in noisy, overblown fashion. Yes, it's the best string of Batman movies yet, but I was not won over, with only the middle one holding my attention. (I know, I'm an idiot.) If any of these movies was going to get an Oscar nod for Best Picture it was the middle film so don't look for this to bring recognition for Christopher Nolan's work the way *The Lord Of The Rings: The Return Of The King* did for that trilogy. On the other hand, the BluRay looks great and by turning on the subtitles you can finally understand what the hell Bane is saying in the film.



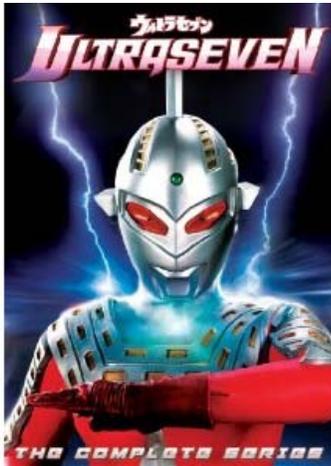
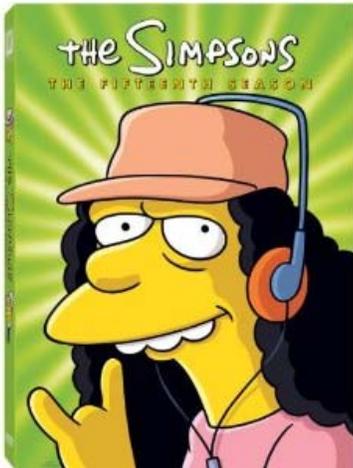
CAGNEY & LACEY: THE COMPLETE SERIES (\$169.99 Limited Edition or \$139.99 DVD; VEI/Millennium Media)
STAR TREK THE NEXT GENERATION SEASONS ONE AND TWO (\$129.99 each on BluRay; Paramount/CBS)
TITANIC BLOOD AND STEEL (\$29.97 BluRay; Lionsgate)
THE SIMPSONS FIFTEENTH SEASON (\$49.98 DVD; FOX)
ULTRASEVEN COMPLETE SERIES (\$49.97 DVD: Shout)
WORLD WITHOUT END (\$75.99 BluRay; Sony)
EASTBOUND & DOWN THIRD SEASON (\$39.98 BluRay; HBO)
ANGRY BOYS (\$39.98 BluRay; HBO) - Here's a roundup of TV fare. Finally!



One of TV's most celebrated shows gets the full boxed set treatment it richly deserves. *Cagney & Lacey* was a groundbreaker in so many ways and now it can be appreciated in a compact but handsome boxed set that fits neatly on your shelf and offers each season in individual cases that can be displayed on their own. You get it all with the deluxe version: the TV movie with Loretta Switt, the road-not-taken first season with Meg Foster, the post-series TV movies and of course the heart of the matter, all those episodes with Tyne Daly and Sharon Gless are partners on the force. Against the odds, they survived and so did the show. Some elements have dated this more than others of its era but their performances keep this a must-see. Now how about *Hill Street Blues*? *Star Trek: The Next Generation* probably hit higher highs than the original, though of course it wouldn't exist without that groundbreaker. Season One and Two are out now on BluRay. Both are in the shadow of the original series, with season one filled with a laughable number of episodes that seem to involve following in the footsteps of Kirk and gang. Season Two starts to find its way but it's season three in which the show really came into its own. As for the BluRays, Season One had some audio quirks but those have been fixed and it looks pretty smashing. Season Two, oddly, does not, especially in the effects scenes (which are trickier to remaster). Apparently they've farmed out the work on the even numbered seasons so the shows can come before everyone stops buying BluRays ad DVDs completely. (The studios all believe the clock is ticking on DVD sales.) Why there should be a rush on a series that began 25 years ago is beyond me, but perhaps it's cheaper? The BuRay still looks essentially better than the DVD but what should have been unqualified cause for celebration is muted a tad. If you think you've seen your fill of movies about Titanic, how about an old-fashioned miniseries about the building of the ship that ends with its launch instead of that iceberg? *Titanic Blood and Steel* is probably not great history but it's pleasingly retro right down to its ten plus hours of running time and Kevin Zegers has the handsomest metallurgist in history. I guess the time has passed to stop complaining that *The Simpsons* should have ended years ago; we need to accept they'll keep churning them out and that each season will have at least a few choice episodes. Still, that's a far cry from its heyday when entire seasons were grand. Here we jump back eight years to season 15 and it's already faded. I've always been an *Ultraman* fan myself, but the more serious follow-up *UltraSeven* is also beloved by fans of silly, peace-loving Japanese sci-fi shows. The disclaimer on the box lets you know this isn't beautifully restored, just a chance to



see most of the episodes of a cult favorite for the first time in ages. Ken Follett's *Pillars Of The Earth* is one of the most popular and beloved books of all time; the miniseries based on it could have been a champ. It wasn't, but it satisfied fans. The book sequel *World Without End* was no match for the original but still, not bad. The TV miniseries sequel, however, has dropped the ball even further, making the phrase "diminishing returns" sadly appropriate. HBO's sports show *Eastbound & Down* chugs along quietly; much like *Arliss* it has a small but devoted fan base that keeps it alive. Aussie Chris Lilley is a male Tracey Ullman, a striking talent who creates shows around a panoply of characters. His last show *Summer Heights High* had the focus of one high school while this more discursive series *Angry Boys* is all over the map, literally. Still when he scores it's worth the wait.



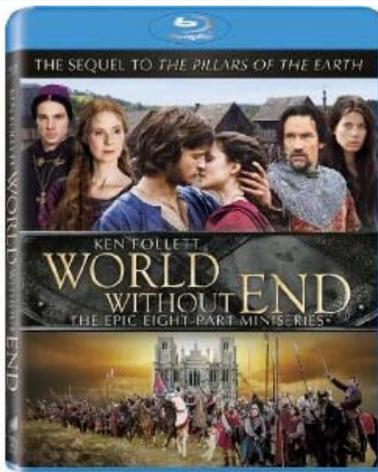
FINDING NEMO ULTIMATE COLLECTOR'S EDITION (\$49.99 BluRay combo; Disney-Pixar)

UP ULTIMATE COLLECTOR'S EDITION (\$49.9 BluRay combo; Disney-Pixar)

THE POINT (\$14.95 DVD; MVD) -- I'm not quite sure why *Finding Nemo* exploded the way it did, but it's a charming, strong feature from Pixar and includes excellent voice work by Albert Brooks and an indispensable Ellen Degeneres. *Up* however is on an entirely different level. Yes, that early "home movie" recounting the marriage of our hero will absolutely break your heart but it's only one of many high points in this thoroughly original movie. *Squirrel!* And *The Point* is a 1970s relic that celebrates nonconformity but it has Ringo Starr narrating this animated tale and winning songs written and performed by Harry Nilsson. It should not be such a rare item as it's been over the years given the talent involved.

AI WEIWEI: NEVER SORRY (\$29.98 BluRay; Sundance Selects)

DREAMS OF A LIFE (\$24.99 DVD; Strand) -- Ai Weiwei is the Chinese artist and activist who is a shaming counterpoint to China's recent winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, Mo Yan. In contrast, Ai Weiwei is outspoken and brave as he pushes the boundaries of



what is acceptable in his country. This documentary captures him at a key moment and is on the short list of movies that can be nominated for the Oscar by voters. *Dreams Of A Life* focuses on a startling news story: how did a normal 38 year old woman die in her apartment and then sit there undiscovered for three years with none of her family (she had three sisters) or disparate friends realizing what had happened? I'm not sure the best way to approach this story but the constant reenactments was not the way to go and it undermines an intriguing mystery.

HARD CORE LOGO 1 AND 2 (\$29.95 BluRay; VSC)

SHELBY LYNNE RESERVATION ROAD DELUXE EDITION (\$49.99 CD/DVD combo; Everso Records) -- *Hard Core Logo* is the cult Canadian mockumentary about a reformed punk band that's imploding all over again. If *Spinal Tap* were deadly serious it would be like this. The unnecessary sequel is also included. Shelby Lynne's *Reservation Road* is one of those deluxe reissues of an album that is more than just an attempt to cash in and make fans buy an album all over again to get a few new tracks. Here you get the album with five bonus tracks. You also get a CD Live At McCabe's, a terrific show which is no surprise to anyone who has seen her in concert. The real rarity if the DVD concert film shot at the Union Chapel in London. It's pretty bare bones, just a few cameras and Lynne with her guitar holding an audience spellbound. It's intimate and powerful. I wish the audio wasn't so barebones (the sound makes me feel like I'm sitting in the last row even though the visuals are up close). But Lynne proudly says they didn't do any post-work on the audio (unlike most "live" concert albums), so this is a rare non-bootleg which truly captures what it was like to be in the room that night.

CATCH ME IF YOU CAN (\$22.98 BluRay; Paramount)

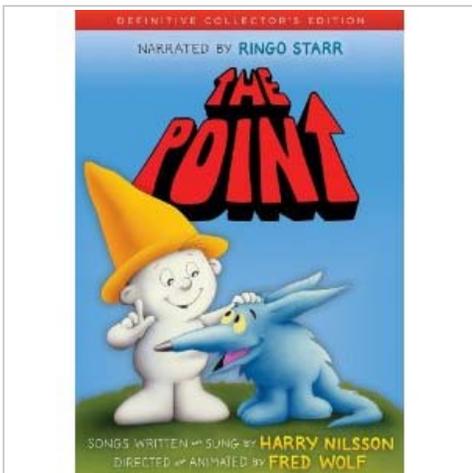
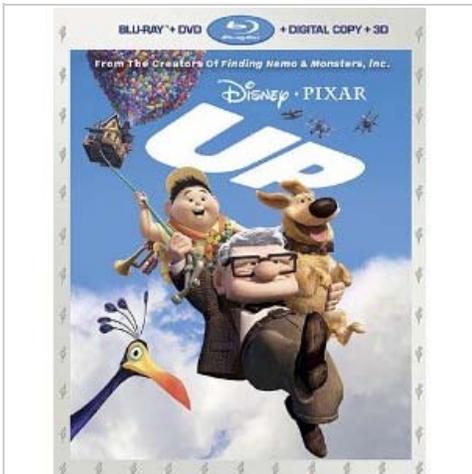
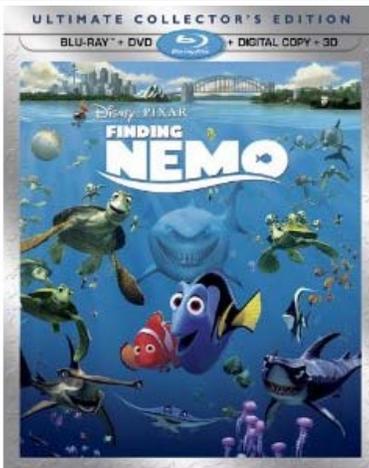
DECASIA (\$34.98 BluRay; Icarus)

THE WATERDANCE (\$20.95; Sony)

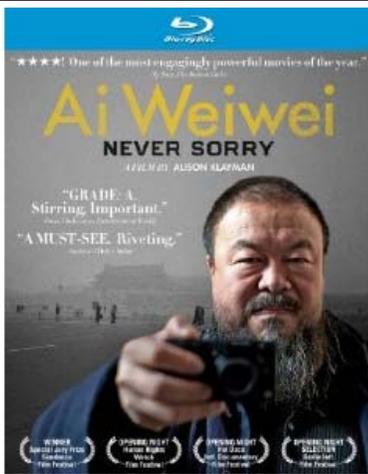
FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA 5-FILM COLLECTION (\$39.99 BluRay; Lionsgate)

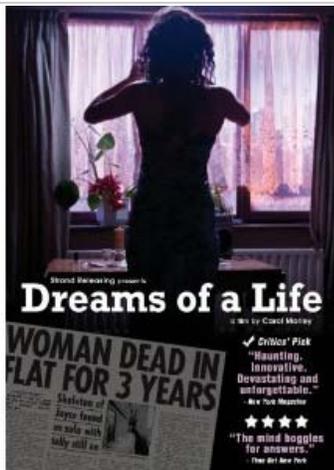
SUDDENLY (\$19.98 BluRay; Image)

FRITZ LANG THE EARLY WORKS



(\$39.95 DVD; Image) -- Steven Spielberg's *Catch Me If You Can* has been overshadowed by his more "serious" work, but it's Spielberg in full command, with Tom Hanks very good and Leonardo DiCaprio as movie star sexy as he'd ever be as the con man on the run. Frothy pleasure with one of the great opening credits. *Decasia* is a landmark work that turns deteriorating film stock into a mesmerizing work of art, aided by Michael Gordon's great score. It's a welcome debut on BluRay (if ironic) and director Bill Morrison's short *Light Is Failing* is a welcome bonus. If you were thinking of seeing that film where Helen Hunt has sex with a physically challenged man, you were probably thinking of *The Sessions*, which might get Oscar nods. But the 1992 indie film *The Waterdance* is a very good, unheralded gem that covers some of the same territory in a very different manner. Hunt and Eric Stoltz are excellent and Wesley Snipes does some of his best work. Coppola's 5-Film collection has two masterpieces, two misfires and one redux: you get the original *Apocalypse Now* and the absolutely brilliant work *The Conversation*. Those are the masterpieces. You also get *One From the Heart*, a bold misfire with a great soundtrack from Tom Waits and Crystal Gayle; and *Tetro*, a gorgeous looking but meandering bit of nothing from a few years ago. (I wondered why star Alden Ehrenreich -- a heretofore unanticipated combination of Matt Damon and DiCaprio -- hadn't broken out and lo and behold he has about four movies coming out in 2013.) Finally you also get the extended version of *Apocalypse Now* which is interesting once but for various reasons not to be preferred. Frank Sinatra is good in *Suddenly*, a clever B movie about thugs waiting to assassinate the President that doesn't have the pow it once did when such an idea was shocking enough on its own. It's trim and fun but some of the details are hokey. The DVD contains a 15 minute short that pays trippy homage to New York City, though I'm not quite clear why it's here. And I'm still working my way through Fritz Lang's silent epics around the Nibelungen mythology and here are three more early works, lesser material but still of interest given Lang's stature.



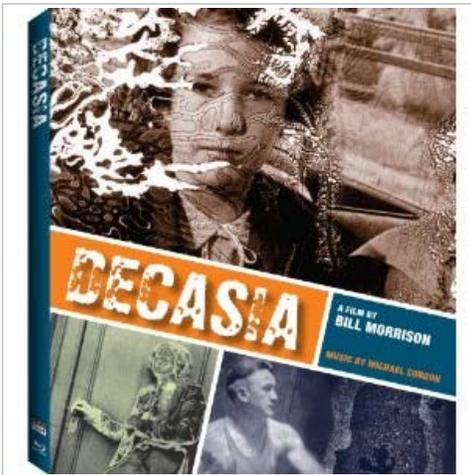
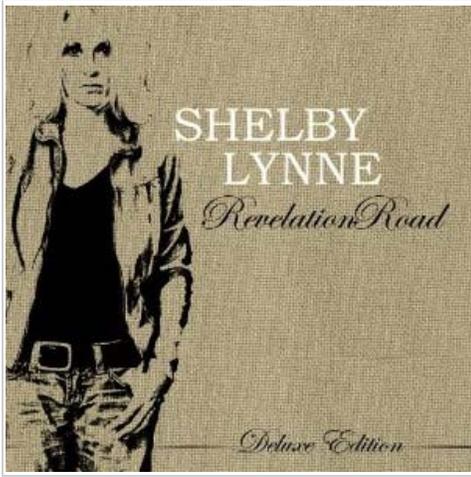


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CHOICE COLLECTION

"THE WATERDANCE" IS KIND OF A MIRACLE, AN ENTERTAINING, PROVOCATIVE, PERCISELY FUNNY AND NOTABLY SENSUAL FILM."

eric stoltz
wesley snipes
william forsythe
holen hunt



(WINNER: Academy Award 1992, Best Actor - Eric Stoltz)

THE WATERDANCE

Sometimes, life happens by accident

© 1992 Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. All Rights Reserved. TM & © Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. is the proud presenter of THE WATERDANCE. A Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. Production. Directed by Eric Stoltz. Starring Eric Stoltz, Wesley Snipes, William Forsythe, Helen Hunt, and John Goodman. Music by John Williams. Screenplay by Eric Stoltz and John Goodman. Story by Eric Stoltz and John Goodman. Produced by Eric Stoltz and John Goodman. Executive Producers: Eric Stoltz, John Goodman, and John Williams. Distributed by Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. A Time Warner Company. Home Video Release Date: 1992. PG-13. Some Material May Be Inappropriate for Children Under 13.



FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA

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EARLY
WORKS



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THE
WANDERING
SHADOW
•
FOUR
AROUND
THE
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