



Michael Giltz, ContributorBookFilter creator

DVDs: Best DVDs of 2017/Holiday Gift Guide

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Sure, streaming movies and TV shows is all the rage. But it's still fun to open up a gift and discover a big fat boxed set of your favorite series or movie. You can proudly display it and say, "Yes, I'm the sort of person who loves 'Buffy!'" You can watch it anytime and indulge in all the extras. And you DON'T have to figure out where it's streaming and whether it's worth \$6 or \$10 a month for this app or access to that site just so you can deep dive into "Upstairs Downstairs" or watch the latest iteration of "Star Trek." So here are some last minute gift ideas for your family, your friends and yourself. I've combined picks from my favorite titles of the year with elaborate boxed sets anyone will be impressed by. With forty boxed sets and single titles to choose from, keep scrolling and I GUARANTEE you'll find something for everyone on your list. Happy Holidays!

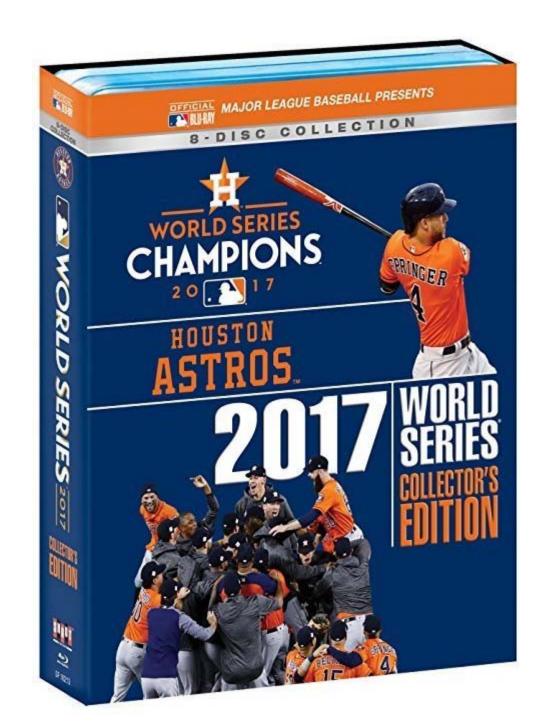


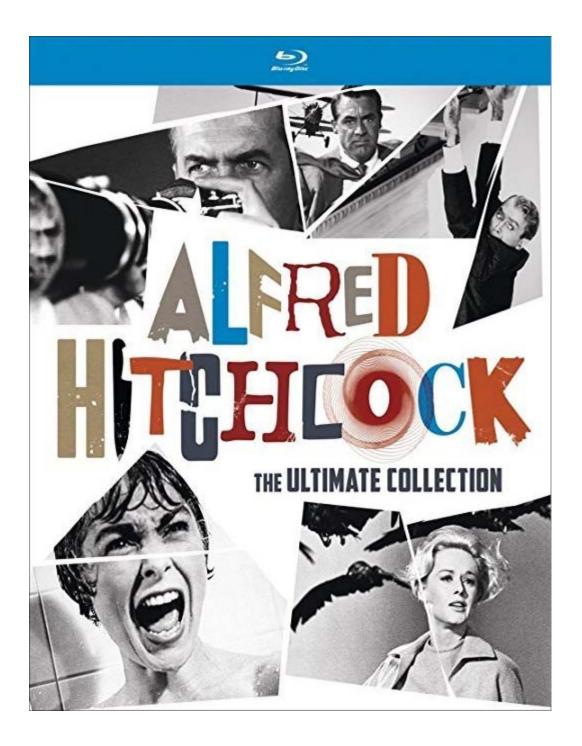
KINO

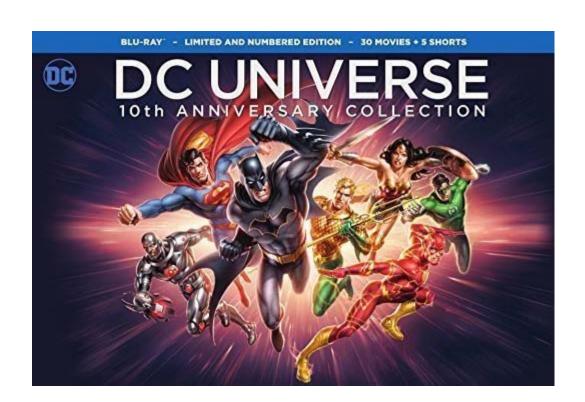


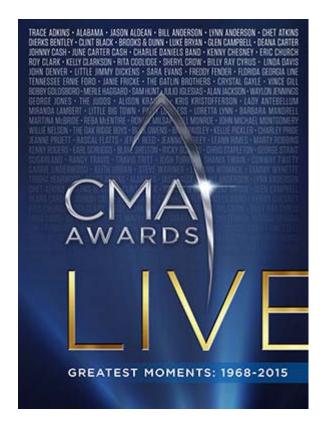
THE SILENT FILMS













FRITZ LANG: THE SILENT FILMS (\$149.95 BluRay; Kino Classics)

HOUSTON ASTROS 2017 WORLD SERIES COLLECTOR'S EDITION (\$79.97 BluRay; Shout! Factory)

ALFRED HITCHCOCK: THE ULTIMATE COLLECTION (\$99.98 BluRay; Universal Studios Home Entertainment)

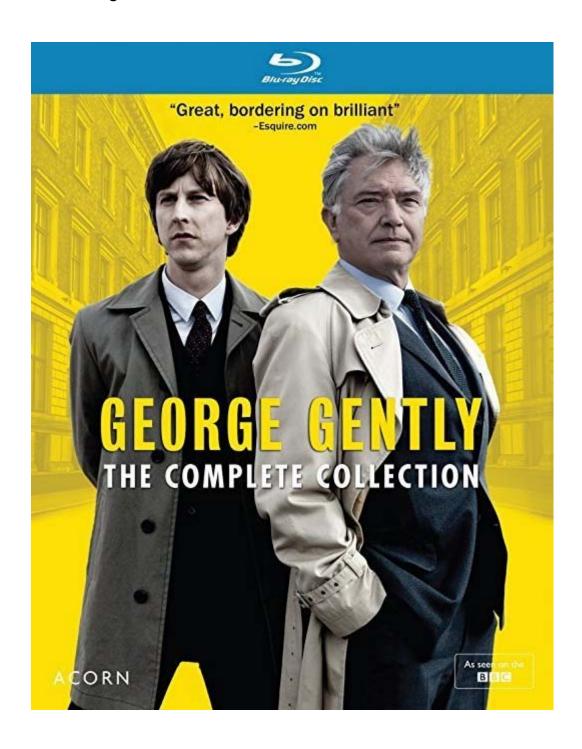
DC UNIVERSE TENTH ANNIVERSARY COLLECTION (\$299.99 BluRay; Warner Bros.)

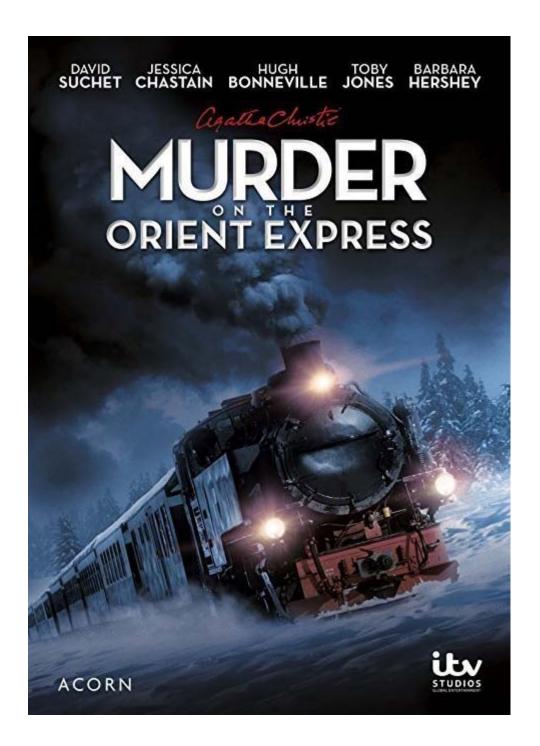
CMA AWARDS LIVE: GREATEST MOMENTS 1968-2015 (\$119.96 DVD; TimeLife)

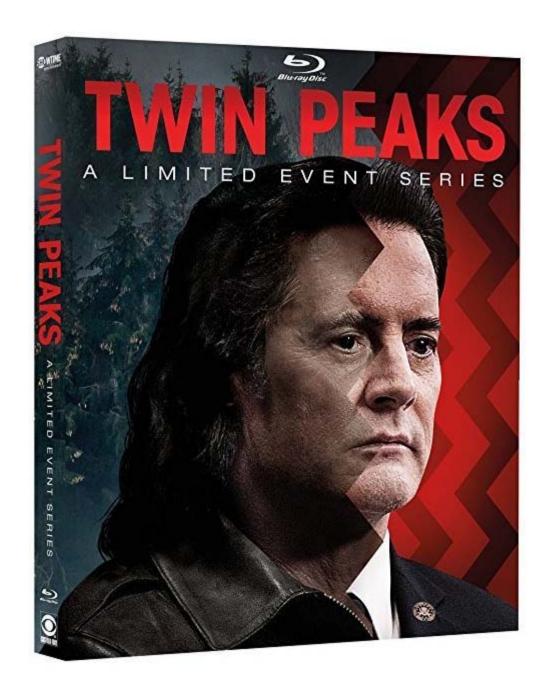
100 YEARS OF OLYMPIC FILMS: THE CRITERION COLLECTION (\$399.95 BluRay; Criterion)

Here are six sure-fire boxed sets. The Fritz Lang release captures the silent era of one of the all-time greats in a gorgeous box featuring his major silent films in excellent new prints. Baseball fans will enjoy the collector's edition of the Fall Classic where the Houston Astros triumphed. Even people (like me) who aren't fans of the team know this was a great World Series. Alfred Hitchcock began in the silent era (like Lang) and is by many lights the purest filmmaker ever. He's also one of the most entertaining so a collection of his films will please darn near anyone. DC Universe is a remarkable collection of animated films that have popped up on TV, sometimes theaters and often straight to BluRay — they are superior to DC's live action super hero movies in every possible way. No wonder fans love them. Country music fans will gobble up the ten DVD CMA Awards Live, which presents highlights from country's biggest night for the past 50 years. And if you've got a hardcore sports/Olympics/film fan and want to make their eyes bug out, give them the hugely impressive 100 Years Of Olympic Films. Ranging from the early 1900s right up to the present, this elaborate labor of love from Criterion shows the amazing breadth and ingenuity of filmmakers given a daunting task: capture the Olympics in all its human drama and glory. I've only seen

advance DVDs, but the prints look amazing, the quality even 80 and 90 years ago is remarkable and you can be sure Criterion did it right.







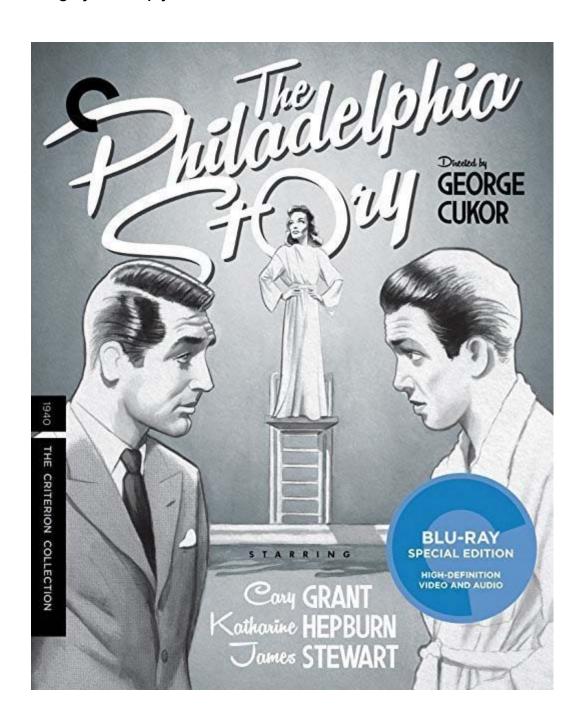
GEORGE GENTLY: THE COMPLETE COLLECTION (\$149.99 BluRay; Acorn Media)

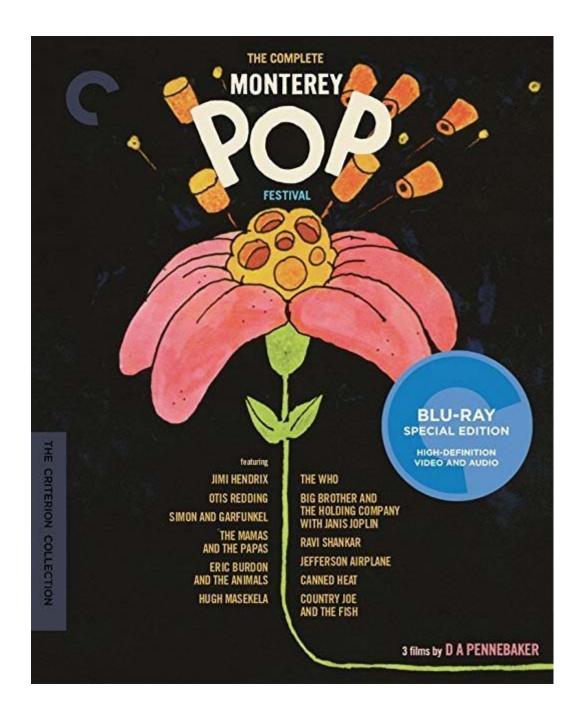
AGATHA CHRISTIE'S POIROT: MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS (\$19.99 DVD; Acorn Media)

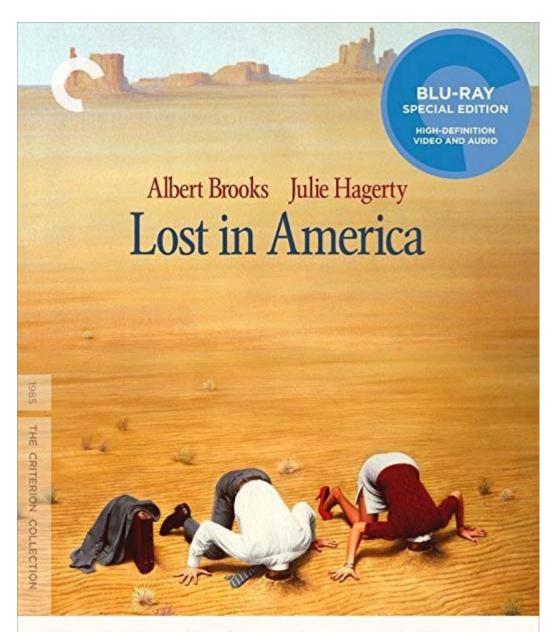
TWIN PEAKS: A LIMITED SERIES EVENT (\$64.99 BluRay; Showtime/Paramount)

The British period mystery series *George Gently* has been a quiet treasure for years. Now you can enjoy the complete collection, which features marvelous lead performances and a solid track record. Certain seasons were so great you couldn't help wishing it would maintain those heights. But stepping back, it's clear this is a very good show any mystery buff will enjoy. *Murder On The Orient Express* was a real find for me: David Suchet's TV series delivered the best adaptation possible of Agatha Christie's puzzle of a

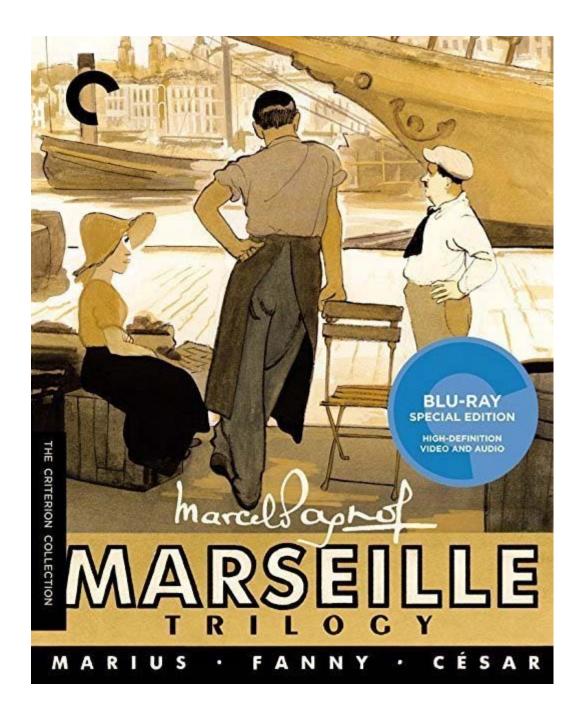
book. The delectable story is such a tease it is best enjoyed once as a book; it's not truly great and is more fun for the twist than the writing. But placed into context of Suchet's Poirot, the series made the most of it and added more intriguing drama than Agatha Christie ever imagined. Finally, there's the new season of *Twin Peaks*, perfect for those who loved it, those who missed it and as an ideal way to drive someone on your naughty list simply nutters.

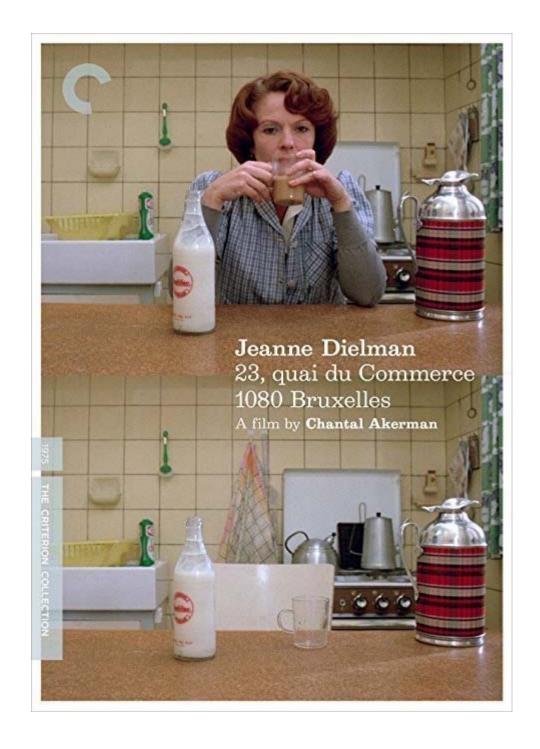






Written by Albert Brooks and Monica Johnson • Directed by Albert Brooks





THE PHILADELPHIA STORY (\$39.95 BluRay; Criterion Collection)

THE COMPLETE MONTEREY POP FESTIVAL (\$69.95 BluRay; Criterion)

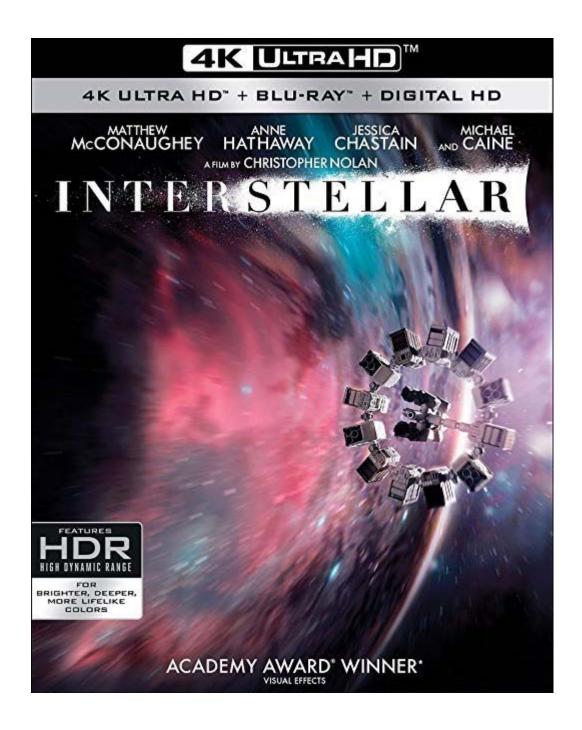
LOST IN AMERICA (\$39.95 BluRay; Criterion Collection)

MARSEILLE TRILOGY (\$99.95 BluRay; Criterion)

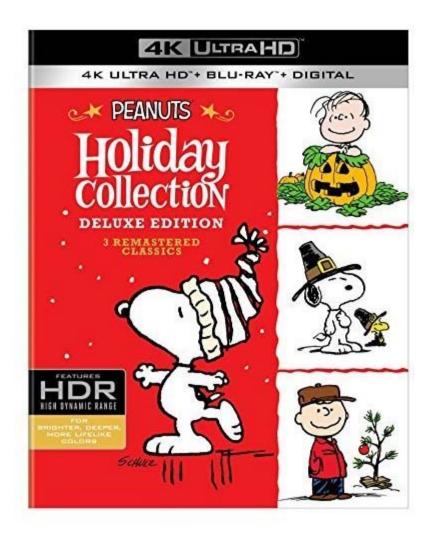
JEANNE DIELMAN 23, QUAI DU COMMERCE 1080 BRUXELLES (\$29.99 DVD; Criterion

One thing is clear. If you have a real movie buff on your list, can't go wrong with anything from the

Criterion Collection. Truly. Whether it's the romantic comedy peak of *The Philadelphia Story*, the comprehensiveness of *The Complete Monterey Pop Festival*, the repeatability of Albert Brooks's *Lost In America*, the still-under-appreciated joy of Pagnol's *Marseille Trilogy* or the towering masterpiece that is Chantal Akerman's *Jeanne Dielman*, Criterion is sure to present the work with care and include illuminating extras.





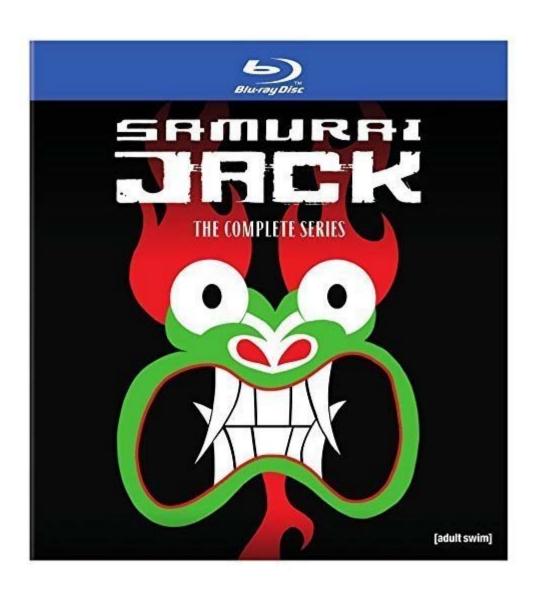


INTERSTELLAR (\$31.99 4K/BluRay; Paramount)

TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY (\$22.99 4K/BluRay; Lionsgate)

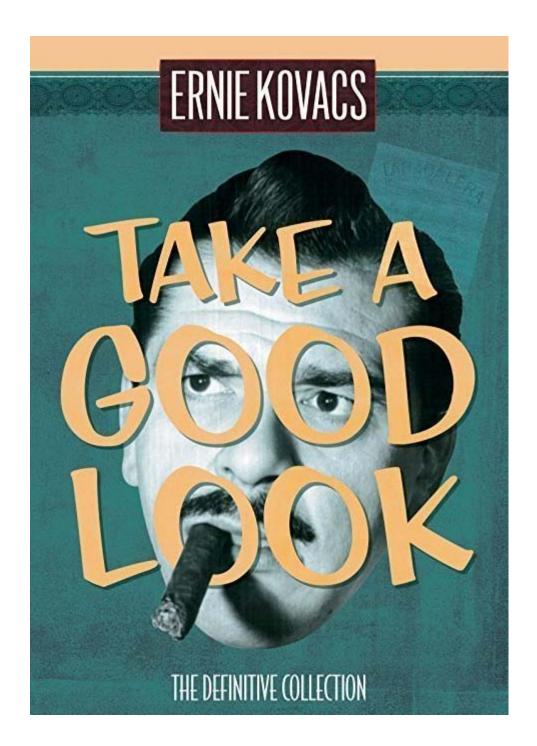
PEANUTS HOLIDAY COLLECTION (\$44.99 4K/HDR/BluRay; Warner Bros.)

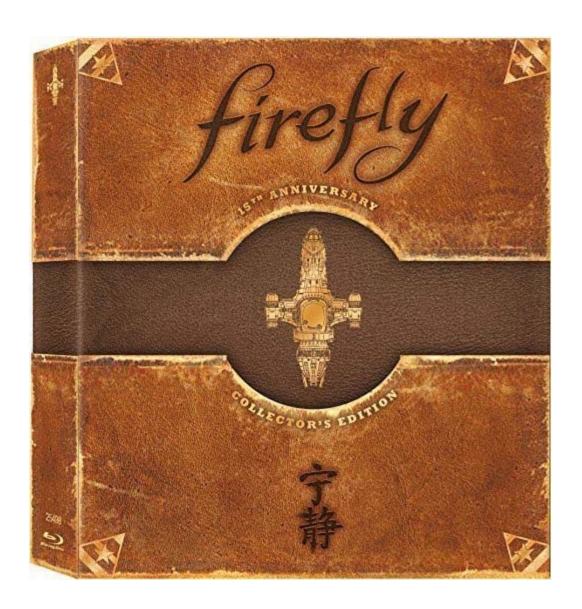
Anyone got a 4K TV and player in your life? Maybe they're getting one for Christmas? They're going to want to show it off! Christopher Nolan's *Interstellar* has its flaws but by god it's eye-popping. *Terminator 2* has ALWAYS set the standard for picture and sound wow on new formats and this much-anticipated movie is finally, truly coming out on 4K the day after Christmas. Pre-order and give them one treat they really won't see coming. And 4K doesn't have to mean big spectacles. The beautifully remastered, classic TV specials of the Peanuts wow in any format but they deserve 4K too.

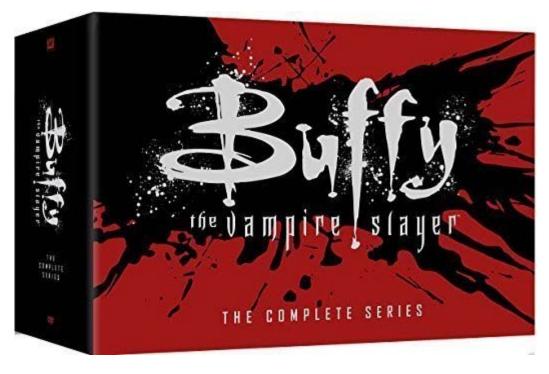




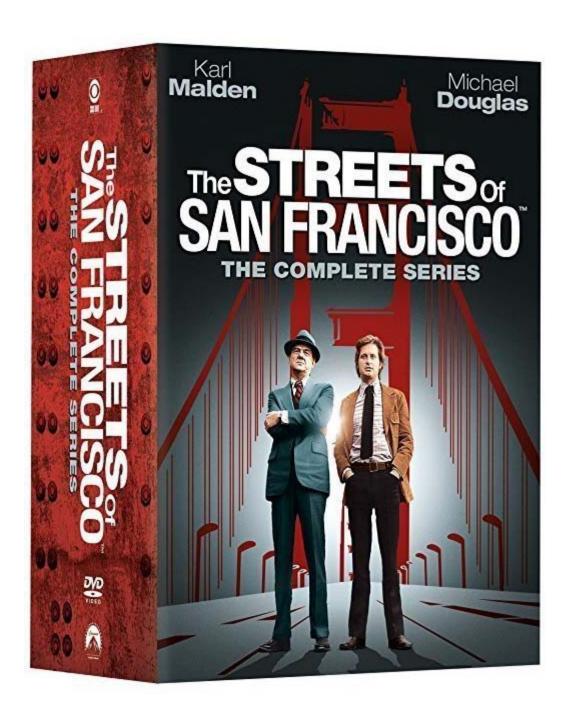


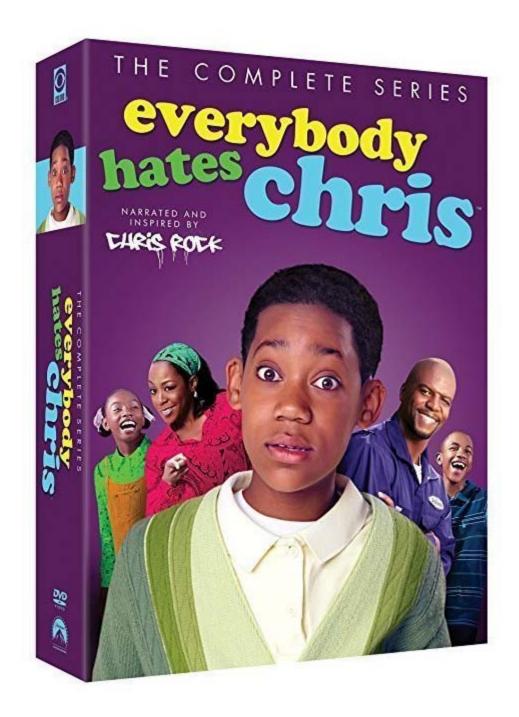












SAMURAI JACK THE COMPLETE SERIES (\$112.99 BluRay; Warner Bros.)

ROWAN & MARTIN'S LAUGH-IN: THE COMPLETE SERIES (\$249.95 DVD; TimeLife)

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE — THE COMPLETE SERIES (\$144.99 DVD; Paramount)

ERNIE KOVACS: TAKE A GOOD LOOK (\$69.97 DVD; Shout! Factory)

FIREFLY COMPLETE SERIES 15TH ANNIVERSARY (\$29.99 BluRay; 20th Century Fox)

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER COMPLETE SERIES (\$199.99 DVD; 20th Century Fox)

A TOWN CALLED PANIC: THE COLLECTION (\$24.97 BluRay; Shout! Factory)

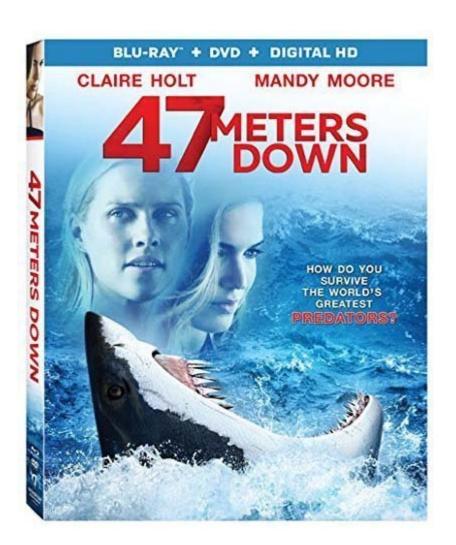
THE STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO COMPLETE SERIES (\$89.98 DVD; Paramount)

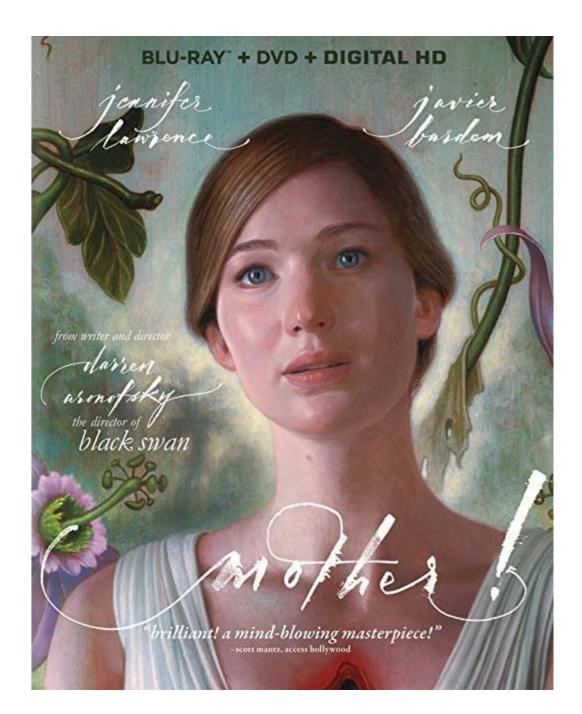
EVERYBODY HATES CHRIS THE COMPLETE SERIES (\$33.99 DVD; Paramount)

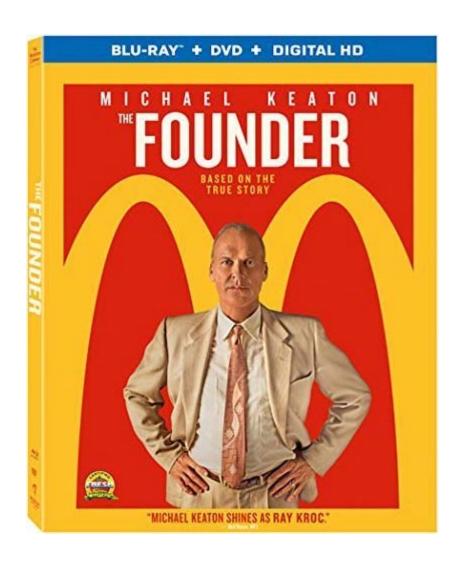
Great collections of TV shows to please everyone and fine fare for the whole family. Samurai Jack is a terrific animated series and the adult fans of Kurosawa will be shocked to find themselves drawn in. Laugh-In is best for those who remember the show when it first aired, but good/bad jokes are forever. Many Trekkies insist Deep Space Nine is the best Star Trek series of all; isn't it time you found out why? Ernie Kovacs was a remarkable TV innovator and fans of Letterman and oddball tv will savor a collection of his truly bizarre game show Take A Good Look. Fans of westerns and sci-fi love Firefly and hey, if we all buy that series again maybe they'll reboot it! And Buffy! It's Buffy. Do I need to say more? A Town Called Panic is an oddball stop-motion TV series ideal for those who miss Pee-wee. The grandparents will enjoy The Streets of San Francisco but it's police drama comfort food for most anyone. And Everybody Hates Chris is a very good sitcom, spot-on family entertainment and who doesn't enjoy another chance to salute Terry Crews. He's excellent here as the dad and a strong man in real life who stood up for men and everyone who have been violated, harassed and taken advantage of with dignity, righteous anger and a refusal to be goaded by the lesser men in Hollywood. Not funny, just true. But the show is funny and true and the price is great!

BLU-RAY" + DVD + DIGITAL A FLAVEN CHRIST OPHER NOLAN 400,000 MEN COULDN'T GET HOME, SO HOME CAME FOR THEM.









DUNKIRK (\$35.99 BluRay; Warner Home Video)

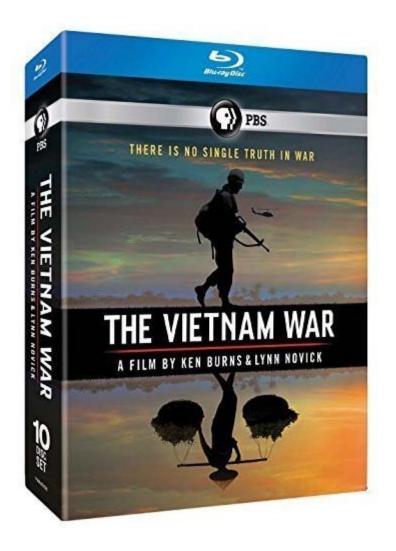
DAWSON CITY: FROZEN TIME (\$34.95 BluRay; Kino Lorber)

47 METERS DOWN (\$39.99 BluRay; Lionsgate)

MOTHER! (\$31.99 BluRay; Paramount)

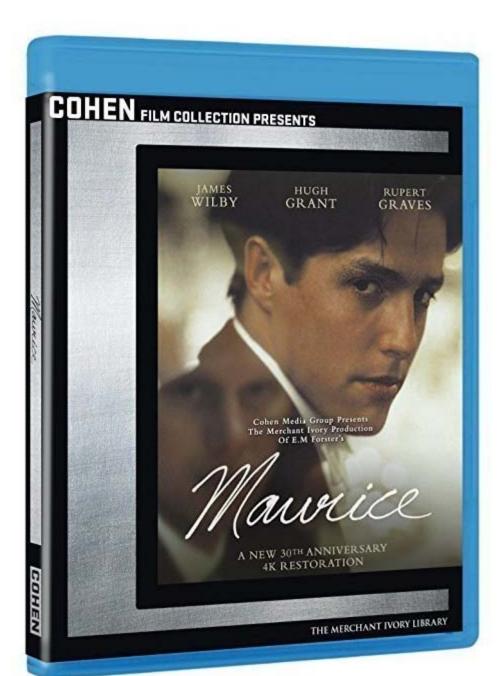
THE FOUNDER (\$19.99 BluRay; Lionsgate)

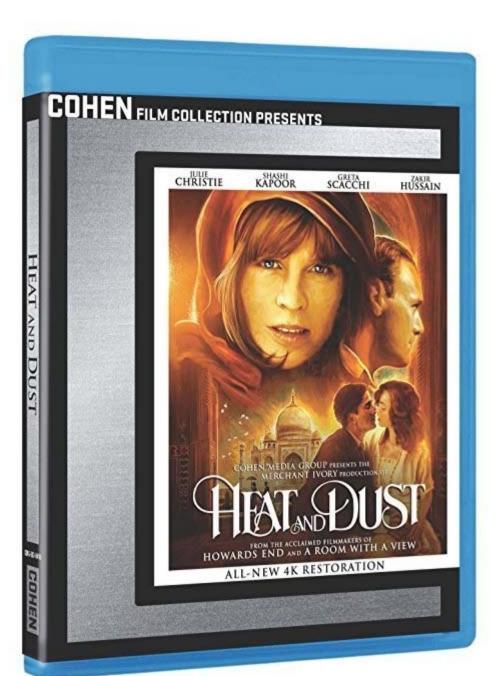
Some of the best films of the year! *Dunkirk* is Christopher Nolan's best film to date and only improves on a second viewing as you appreciate even more how it's put together so ingeniously. *Dawson City: Frozen Time* is yet another "found cinema" gem from director Bill Morrison. *47 Meters Down* is a great B movie for the Quentin Tarantino in your life. *Mother!* is not one of the best films of the year. I was just seeing if you were paying attention. But it's a conversation starter, a test for cineastes or just a way to blow the mind of an unsuspecting relative who sees it and says, "Oh, I like Jennifer Lawrence." Sit back and have fun. And yes, Michael Keaton's *The Founder* contains one of the best performances of 2016 and is a cult classic waiting to be discovered.

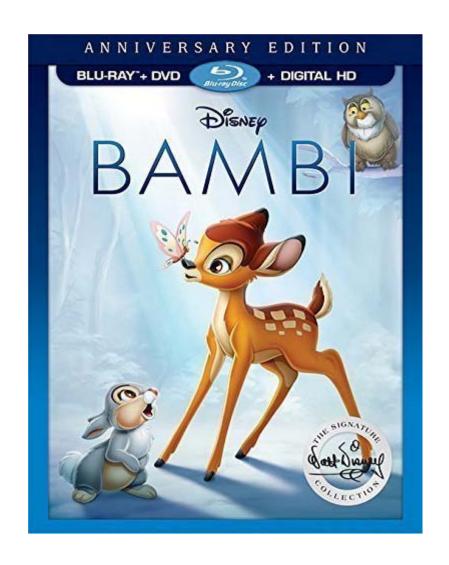


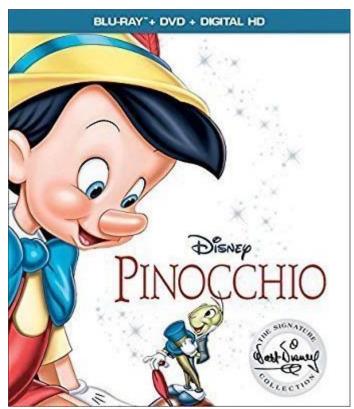
THE VIETNAM WAR (\$129.99 BluRay; PBS)

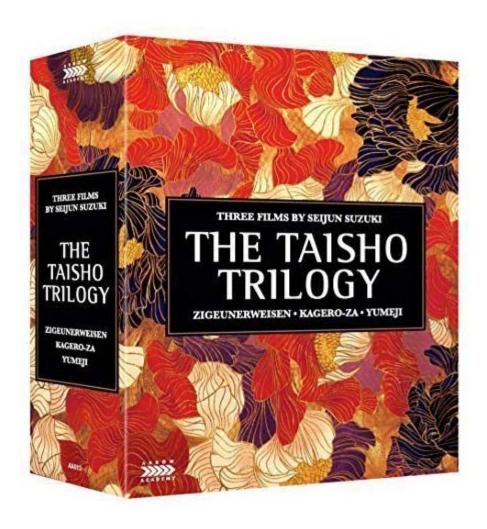
Easy to take for granted, as Ken Burns is these days. But even by his standards, this is a remarkable work about the defining battle for Vietnam, the American soul, journalism and the importance of facts.

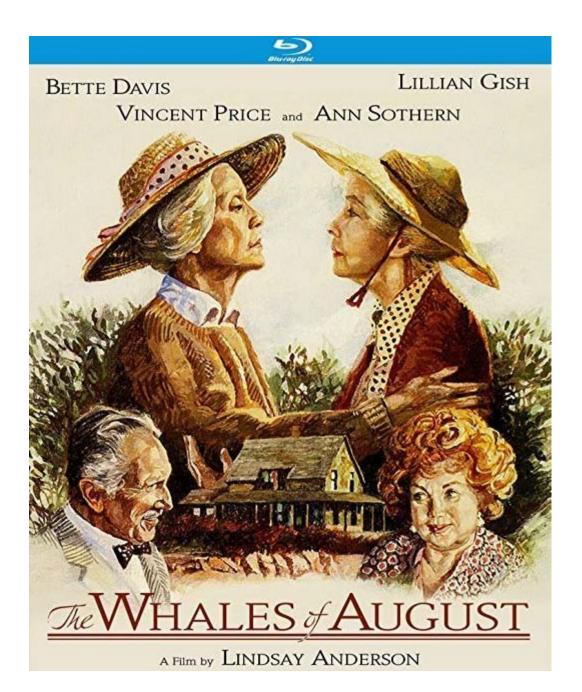


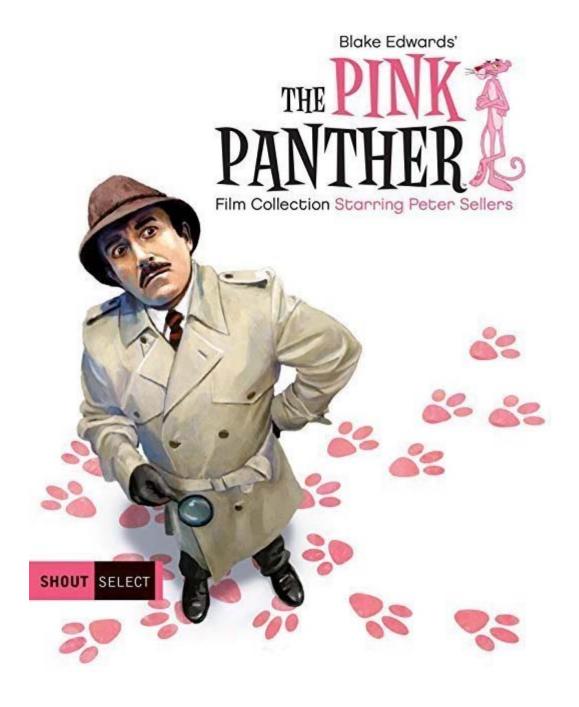












MAURICE 30TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION (\$30.99 BluRay; Cohen Film Collection/Sony Pictures)

HEAT AND DUST (\$34.99 BluRay; Cohen Film Collection/Sony Pictures)

BAMBI SIGNATURE COLLECTION (\$24.96 BluRay; Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment)

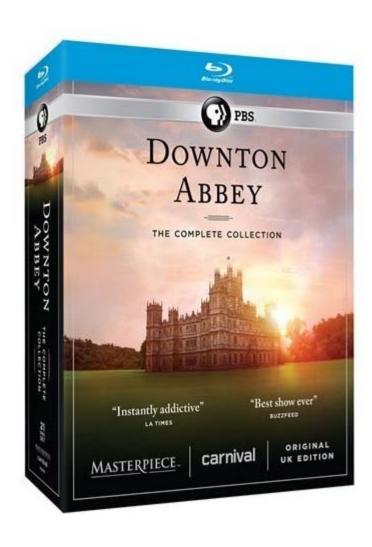
PINOCCHIO SIGNATURE COLLECTION (\$39.99 BluRay; Disney)

THE TAISHO TRILOGY (\$99.95 BluRay; Arrow Academy)

THE WHALES OF AUGUST (\$29.95 BluRay; Kino Classics)

BLAKE EDWARDS' THE PINK PANTHER FILM COLLECTION (\$99.99 BluRay; Shout! Factory)

It's never too late to catch up with classics like these. James Ivory (riding high with his script for *Call Me By Your Name*) and Ismail Merchant teamed up for countless distinguished films, including their earlier gay gem *Maurice* and *Heat and Dust*, a period film that came before their commercial heyday. I would be hard pressed to name my favorite Disney animated film (especially if that included all of Pixar) but I might well settle on *Bambi*. Or *Pinocchio*. Both are offered in gorgeous new prints and filled with extras. Meanwhile, the *Taisho Trilogy* is proof that I still have a lot to learn about Japanese cinema. Films capturing great artists in the twilight of their career have a special pull for film buffs, no matter the actual quality of the movie. Hence our fondness for *On Golden Pond* and *The Whales Of August*, a lovely valentine for Lillian Gish, Bette Davis, Vincent Price and Ann Southern. And sure the quality varies to a crazy degree, but the Blake Edwards' *Pink Panther Collection* is still laugh out loud funny most of the way.





EXPERIENCE THE HISTORY • THE FASHION • THE HOUSE

DOWNTON ABBEY: THE COMPLETE COLLECTION (\$129.99 BluRay; PBS)

DOWNTON ABBEY: THE EXHIBITION (\$30 for adults; \$28 seniors; \$15 for kids)

It's sad but true: at some point, you have to go outside. Put the BluRay player remote down and brave the sun. Perhaps you live in New York City or are visiting. Perhaps you already own *Downton Abbey* on DVD or BluRay. Perhaps you also find yourself watching the marathons on PBS despite yourself. If so, the traveling show Downton Abbey: The Exhibition is perfect for you. Self-guided tours are about \$30 though they also offer special party events, dining and the like. Located on 57th Street in Manhattan, you can explore multiple floors that offer stories about the show, history lessons about the time period, rooms set up to look like the servant's dining hall and the like, of course a display of the gorgeous outfits created for the main characters and worn on the show and naturally lots and lots of clips from the series. You may not get puckish commentary from handsome devil Allen Leech as he joins you on a stroll through the exhibit the way a press tour enjoyed. But then isn't the point of privilege to make sure others are envious of what you enjoy without a blush? Happy holidays!

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It's easy, it's fun, it's empowering.

Here's a nonpartisan site that will allow you to easily access your state's voter registration site.

Are you in New York? You can register online right here.

If you don't register and vote, you don't get to complain.

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what new titles just hit the store in your favorite categories, like cookbooks and mystery and more? Head to BookFilter! ItĠs a website that lets you browse for books online the way you do in a physical bookstore, provides comprehensive info on new releases every week in every category and offers passionate personal recommendations every step of the way. ItĠs like a fall book preview or holiday gift guide Ŏ but every week in every category. HeĠs also the cohost of Showbiz Sandbox, a weekly pop culture podcast that reveals the industry take on entertainment news of the day and features top journalists and opinion makers as guests. It's available for free on iTunes. Visit Michael Giltz at his website and his daily blog.

Note: Michael Giltz is provided with free copies of DVDs and Blu-rays with the understanding that he would be considering them for review. Generally, he does not guarantee to review and he receives far more titles than he can cover; the exception are elaborate boxed sets, which are usually sent with the understanding that they will be reviewed. All titles are available in various formats at varied price points. Typically, the price listed is merely the suggested retail price of the format reviewed and you'll find it discounted via retailers, not to mention available on demand, via streaming, physical rentals and more.