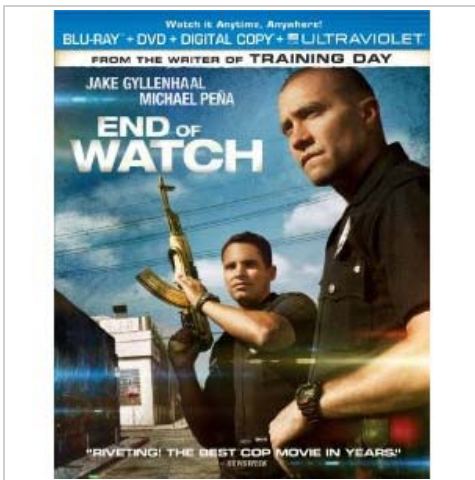


DVDs; Woody, Spike and Wim Wenders Keep 'Em Coming

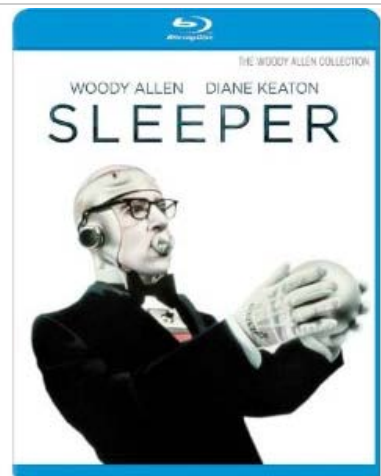
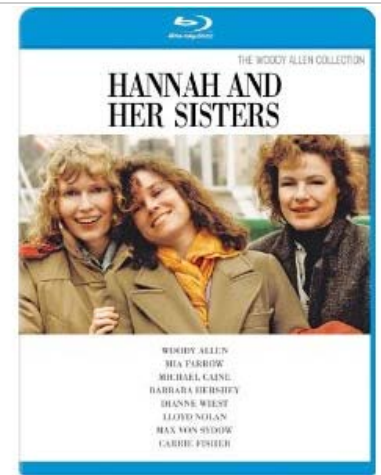
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The first DVD column of 2013 includes a number of releases by major directors who are easy to take for granted. But it's never easy to make a movie, much less one not geared toward the masses. Here's a rundown of new movies, documentaries, TV shows and classics getting a reissue, including one of my all-time favorite romantic dramas on BluRay. (Yes, John Wayne can act.)



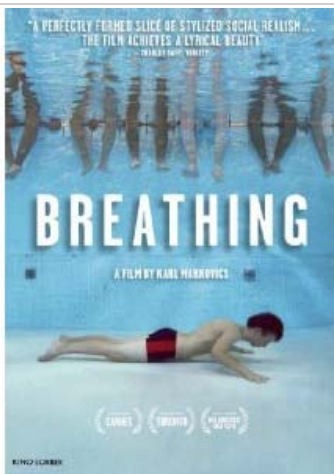
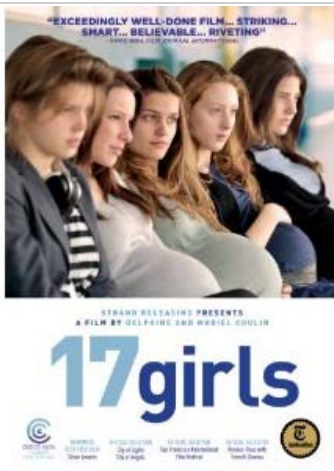
END OF WATCH (\$34.98 BluRay combo; Universal)
RED HOOK SUMMER (\$29.97 BluRay; Image)
TO ROME WITH LOVE (\$35.99 BluRay; Sony)
HANNAH AND HER SISTERS (\$24.99 BluRay; MGM)
SLEEPER (\$24.99 BluRay; MGM)
HARA-KIRI (\$29.95 BluRay; NewVideo)
17 GIRLS (\$27.99 DVD; Strand)
BREATHING (\$29.95 DVD; Kino Lorber) -- Jake Gyllenhaal has his best role in years in this violent cop drama that came and went without leaving much of an impression on anyone. It might just as easily have scored the Oscar glory of writer-director David Ayer's script for *Training Day*, but you're going to have to discover this one on your own. It's just as easy to let "another" Spike Lee film fall through the cracks. This quiet drama stars Clarke Peters of *The Wire* as a man of the cloth who spends the entire summer trying to convert his grandson to the faith when all the kid really wants to do is hang out with that pretty girl. It's difficult enough to get any movie made and Lee continues to tell stories not told anywhere else. Is there any other director in this country -- gay, Latino/Hispanic, female, First Nation, Asian-American, Jewish -- that so consistently tells the stories of their people the way Lee has for so long? No, there is not. Not every director makes it easy for you to appreciate their longevity. Take Woody Allen, who started hurting his legacy with the endless stream of so-so movies he's been turning out for 20 years. But every once in a while one pops out and gains attention. I'm not sure why *Midnight In Paris* was embraced while *To Rome With Love* was ignored. But I know a die-hard fan who insists this is, you know, one of the good ones...or rather, one of the not-so-bad ones. Jesse Eisenberg finally made it to the Allen film family, the way he was destined to. But it's obviously not a patch on his masterpiece *Hannah And Her Sisters* or even the slap-dash charm of *Sleeper*, both just out on BluRay. *Hara-Kiri* was





a poor choice for a remake since the original accomplishes everything it wanted. But Takashi Miike tackled it anyway, with the added pointlessness of 3-D (which is not featured here). The flamboyant Miike feels tamped down here though the score by Ryuichi Sakamoto is worth a listen. *17 Girls* can't match the intrigue of its poster, which shows a string of teenage girls, all pregnant. It's based on a true story of cluster pregnancies, caused when one girl apparently gets pregnant and all her friends do the same in solidarity. It'll be fun, they think! The cast is good, but it never truly comes to life. Can kids really be so dumb as to think getting pregnant will be a way to get out of responsibility? Well, it happened. Finally, actor Karl Markovics makes a promising debut as a writer-director with *Breathing*, a low-key drama about another troubled teen, this one a 19 year old just out of juvie who tries to track down his mother. It's an actorly film and a good showcase for newcomer Thomas Schibert.

PINA (\$49.95 BluRay combo; Criterion)
5 BROKEN CAMERAS (\$29.95 DVD; Kino Lorber)
INVENTING DAVID GEFFEN (\$29.99 BluRay; PBS)
THE IMPOSTER (\$19.97 DVD; Indomina/Vivendi)
BEAUTY IS EMBARRASSING: THE WAYNE WHITE STORY (\$29.95 DVD; Docurama)
THREE STARS (\$24.95 DVD; First Run Features) -- Wim Wenders delivers a terrific documentary about Pina Bausch, originally conceived as a collaboration and finished as a tribute after her untimely death. I saw it in 3-D at the movies (with dirty glasses courtesy of IFC Center and sitting in the back row). The 3-D was one of those rare cases where it actually seemed to serve a purpose but I don't miss it at all while watching this visual stunner at home. (This set contains a 3-D version for those with all the necessary equipment to view it.) Criterion offers some solid extras including a Wenders commentary track and a making-of film. *5 Broken Cameras* is one of the most successful documentaries of the year. It shows life in Bill'in, a West Bank village that becomes a center of regular protests, all captured on camera by a local who becomes the town's unofficial



videographer. The story itself has an inherent interest but the film -- though praised to the moon -- has little to recommend it. Emad Burnat is not a gifted cameraman and rarely captures unexpected or revealing angles; his narration is similarly rote if heartfelt. It's a relief his children go unharmed which was my main fear as the film continued as I wondered why it had attracted so much praise. *Inventing David Geffen*, on the other hand, deserves the acclaim it received; this look at this pioneer in music and film is one of the best entries in the PBS American Masters series in a long time. To anyone who has seen the fictional film *Olivier, Olivier*, the documentary *The Imposter* is a real-life look at a kid who disappears and then reappears almost four years later but is... different. I knew nothing about artist Wayne White but I knew his work on *Pee-wee's Playhouse*, Peter Gabriel's video "Big Time" and in so many other areas. *Beauty Is Embarrassing* captures his quixotic career and benefits greatly from White's caustic, funny personality. Similarly, I can't boil an egg but *Three Stars* gains some serious access into the kitchens of ten top chefs and shows their daily struggle to maintain the highest of standards.

THE TIN DRUM (\$39.95 BluRay; Criterion)

THE QUIET MAN (\$29.95 BluRay; Olive)

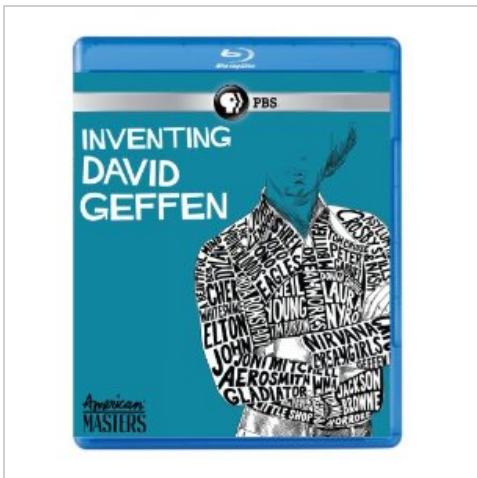
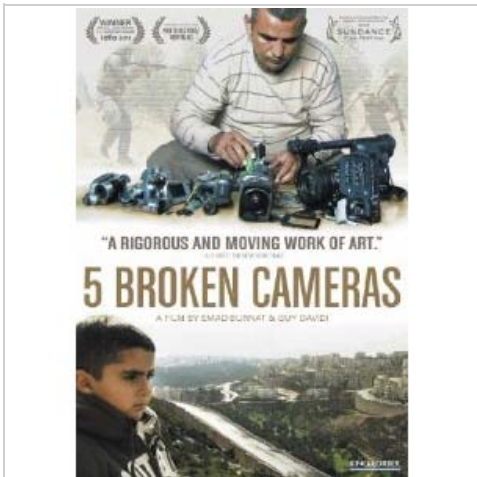
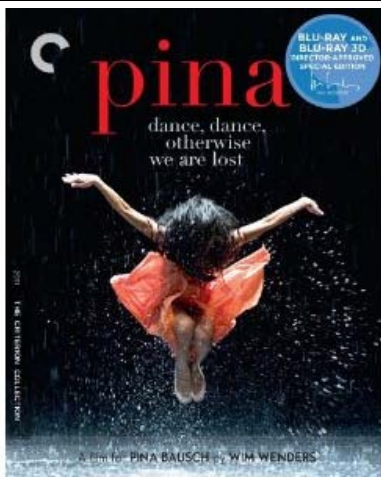
CRIME STORY/THE PROTECTOR (\$19.93 BluRay; Shout)

TRUST (\$29.95 BluRay; Olive)

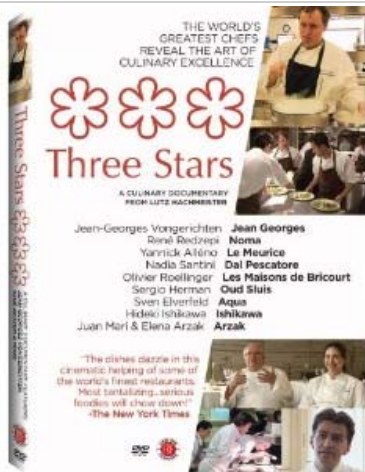
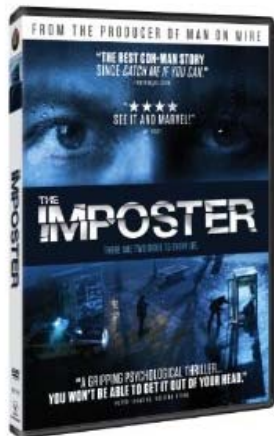
THE SEVEN-PER-CENT SOLUTION (\$26.99 BluRay; Shout)

INDISCREET (\$29.95 BluRay; Olive)

FRONTIER HORIZON (\$24.95 BluRay; Olive) -- Maybe it was the commercial where the little boy emitted a high-pitched scream but I was always wary of *The Tin Drum*. Released to overwhelming acclaim in 1979, it is the key work by director Volker Schlöndorff, who always felt the original cut was rushed and incomplete. Now, 34 years later he's added almost half an hour based on the extensive notes he kept at the time and hopes this version will be considered the definitive version of the film. It comes out on Criterion looking splendid with all sorts of extras, including new interviews, TV interviews at the time, author Gunter Grass



reading from his novel and so on. I'm delighted that Schlöndorff had the chance to rescue the footage he shot (which was almost lost) and create this edition. But it should never be available solely on its own, so I'll be holding on to the theatrical edition of *The Tin Drum* Criterion released years ago and hope it too comes out on BluRay. The expense might be great but ideally both versions would be released together in one package so fans don't have to choose but can compare and appreciate them both. However improved this version may be, the ground-breaking original release is a part of film history and should always be just as widely available. I love John Ford's *The Quiet Man*, one of the most gorgeous films ever made, right down to Maureen O'Hara's flaming red hair. This romantic drama about a boxer who looks for a quiet life in a small Irish village but finds love is a sheer delight filled with great character actors and Wayne in one of his most appealing turns. This BluRay edition looks better than all the previous home video versions I've seen but the film very much needs to be properly restored and returned to its original glory. But if you've never seen it, this is a champ. So is Jackie Chan's *Crime Story*, one of his best action films which is paired here on a two-fer with the forgettable *The Protector*. If you've never seen a Jackie Chan movie, *Crime Story* is a great place to start. Hal Hartley has slipped off the radar in recent years. His cinematic world is a very distinctive, particular world with its own offbeat style and a martini dry wit. The early triumph *Trust* shows Hartley coming into his own in a very satisfying manner and includes a 19 minute making-of. I'm a sucker for Sherlock Holmes (arguably the most-filmed character in movie history) and read the "shocking" novel about Holmes and his addiction to cocaine when the book came out. *The Seven-Per-cent Solution* has a sterling cast, including Nicol Williamson and Robert Duvall and should be more fun than it is, but still I watch it. *Indiscreet* won't rock your world but Cary Grant and Ingrid Bergman have fun chemistry in this trifle from director Stanley Donen that should have given above the title billing to the Dior gowns that Bergman shows off throughout. It took a lot of



movies before John Wayne became a leading man and *Frontier Horizon* shows him right on the cusp of stardom that would be his forever thanks to *Stagecoach*. It's a minor B movie western in a little known string of flicks that offered a cowboy spin on *The Three Musketeers*. We wouldn't be watching it if Wayne weren't in it, but you can also catch Jennifer Jones in her film debut. Everyone starts somewhere. We're lucky to see such an obscure film at all, but at less than an hour, this really should be paired with two other films of the same sort and still cost just \$25.

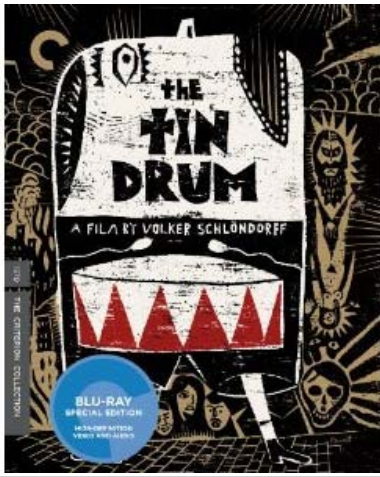
GAME CHANGE (\$24.99 BluRay; HBO)

THE ABOLITIONISTS (\$24.99 DVD; PBS)

SMASH SEASON ONE (\$44.98 DVD; Universal)

DALLAS COMPLETE FIRST SEASON (\$39.98 DVD; Warner Bros.)

SCARECROW AND MRS. KING SEASON FOUR (\$39.98 DVD; Warner Bros.) -- A TV movie about John McCain choosing Sarah Palin as his running mate and then losing the election? It sounds like a too-soon, bad idea but *Game Change* turned into an Emmy winning triumph for Julianne Moore. The odd mix of traditional documentary and reenactments in *The Abolitionists* simply unsettles me. I'd love to see a feature film about these radicals for human rights. I'd love to see a documentary film. But combining the two serves neither well. Broadway wasn't well served by the idiotic TV series *Smash*, but they were so thrilled to have their industry shown in primetime that it was embraced by the community anyway. Watch it and you'll understand why about half the cast and behind the scenes talent were dumped for a season two reboot. Larry Hagman just died but his most iconic role as JR Ewing lives on now that the original *Dallas* has been rebooted. They'll miss JR a lot because the new show couldn't resist showcasing him as much as his health would make possible. The final season of the light spy show *Scarecrow and Mrs. King* shows the chemistry of Bruce Boxleitner and the smart angel Kate Jackson could survive them actually getting together.



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