

This week's DVDs

By MICHAEL GILTZ

**The L Word**

★★★

Showtime, \$69.99

Desperate, but not housewives — that's the premise of this soapy look at L.A. lesbians. Jennifer Beals, Pam Grier, Mia Kirshner and others keep it fun. The extras are so-so, except for a puppet show reenacting the meeting of two main characters that is goofily funny. Also just out: "Too Close For Comfort: Season One" (Rhino, \$39.95), "Smallville: Third Season" (Warner Bros., \$59.98) and "Buffy: Season Seven" (Fox, \$59.98).

Pee-wee's Playhouse: Volume 1 and 2

★★★★

Image, \$49.99 each

Surreal, silly, clever, and flat-out funny. Winner of 22 Emmys, "Pee-wee's Playhouse" is one of the best children's shows of all time and it's a crime the 45 episodes from its five year run (1986-1990) haven't been seen on TV in the last 14 years. No extras, but every frame of the show is bursting with invention. The secret word? "Finally!"

The Chronicles of Riddick

★

Universal, \$29.98

When is a movie star not a movie star? When he's Vin Diesel. His latest actioner wasted Judi Dench and a lot of special effects to gross a modest \$57 million (a big disappointment for the second in an intended trilogy). That follows the dud "A Man Apart" and "XXX." Lots of typical extras and 15 minutes of new footage.

The Iron Giant Special Edition

★★★★

Warner Bros., \$19.96

If you flipped for "The Incredibles" (and who

hasn't?), check out director Brad Bird's critically acclaimed film debut "The Iron Giant," which has that new movie's subtle smarts wrapped around a more low-key, Cold War era story. Lots of new extras, including an especially interesting commentary track by Bird and a host of others.

Miles Electric

★★★★

Eagle Eye, \$19.98

When Miles Davis embraced fusion and a rock beat in 1969 for his best-selling "Bitches Brew," it created more controversy than any music since Bob Dylan went electric. This new documentary explores the stir Davis created, along with the legendary 38 minute one-song set his band played at the Isle of Wight



Festival for 600,000 people. Also just out: "Norah Jones Live 2004" (Blue Note, \$19.98), from an

artist who never upset anyone, and "Crosby, Stills & Nash: DVD Collection" (Rhino, \$44.99).