

# This week's DVDs by Michael Giltz



## **The Last Samurai** ★★

Warner Bros. \$29.98

Tom Cruise scored the biggest international hit of his career with this stodgy drama about a disillusioned Civil War veteran who regains his dignity by teaming up with a renegade samurai in Japan. But even war buffs will have a hard time with the hokum of this film's weepy finale. Loads of extras, of course. If you're hankering for more swordplay, check out the much cooler cartoon "Samurai Jack" — Season 1 (\$29.98, Warner Bros.).

## **Gilmore Girls - Complete First Season**

★★★ 1/2

Warner Bros. \$59.98

This delightful mother-daughter drama jumped the shark this year when Rory (Alexis Bledel) went to college. But fans can take comfort in the marvelous first season, where the banter was always witty and the stories always real.

## **The Marx Brothers Collection**

★★★

Warner Bros. \$59.92

Everyone knows the "animal" movies by the Marx Brothers ("Duck Soup," "Animal Crackers," etc.) are the best. But at least two other flicks in this seven-movie set — "A Night At The Opera" and "A Day At The Races" — are right up there, too.

## **The Triplets of Belleville**

★★★ 1/2

Sony Pictures Classics \$24.96

"Finding Nemo" was sweet, but the best animated film of 2003 was this off-beat charmer about a cyclist named Champion. A wonderfully

quirky film filled with aging dancehall singers who feast on frogs, a running gag about trains and that infectious title song. Modest extras round out this personal triumph for director Sylvain Chomet.

## **5 Films about Christo and Jeanne-Claude**

★★★ 1/2

Plexifilm \$59.95

Next February, grand-scale artists Christo and Jeanne-Claude will install their latest work in Central Park: 7,500 16-foot-tall vinyl gates holding up saffron fabric panels. The Maysles brothers, famous for their cinema verite documentaries on everything from Jackie Kennedy's relatives to Mick Jagger, document their earlier mad schemes on three discs filled with commentaries from all involved.

## **Peter Pan**

★ 1/2

Universal \$26.98

J.M. Barrie's classic has been captured brilliantly on stage and TV, but still falls short on film. Steven Spielberg's 1991 "Hook" was woeful, and this latest stab by director P.J. Hogan has a fine cast, but is too broad and comic to do the tale justice.