

This week's DVDs

By MICHAEL GILTZ



National Treasure

★★½
Disney, \$29.99

AN enjoyable bit of malarkey about Freemasons, the Knights Templar, buried treasure in downtown Manhattan and a secret map on the back of the Declaration of Independence. We can be relieved that this Nicolas Cage film — he's the history buff hero — is a bit better here than in some of his recent vehicles. Deleted scenes and an alternate ending are even more "buried" extras you have to ferret out.

The Big Red One: The Reconstruction

★★½
Warner Bros., \$26.99

DIRECTOR Sam Fuller is the king of movies that were butchered by film studios and this World War II drama is example No. 1. Forty minutes of new scenes show how well he captured the downtime and vicissitudes of war. Extras include a look at Fuller's career and the real exploits of the unit portrayed.

The Phantom of the Opera

★
Warner Bros., \$29.95

DIRECTOR Joel Schumacher has made a very faithful adaptation of Andrew Lloyd Webber's mega-musical, so of course this is a stiff, dreadful bore. "Evita" made a better movie and the much-maligned "Cats" had better lyrics. But at least Webber now can boast of the most expensive keepsake in Broadway history.

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