

# DVDs this week

By Michael Giltz

## A.I.: Artificial Intelligence (DreamWorks)

This very good DVD release has most of the bells and whistles you'd expect—though not enough to convince me to overlook its flaws. Many of the design touches are simply cheap and unconvincing: Rouge City, home of Gigolo Joe (the preternaturally beautiful Jude Law), never seems real; the rickety three-wheeled cars look terribly dated; the *Flesh Fair* seems like an adolescent re-imagining of the WWF; and the bad guys who round up robots look like outcasts from *Tron*. So what's good? Law is clever, the talking bear is great, Spielberg can still stop you dead in your tracks with an amazing visual flourish and Haley Joel Osment is stunningly good at showing David's transformation from a robot to a real, live boy. Very few child actors can succeed after adolescence. But since Osment already seems like a man trapped in a kid's body, his future is assured.



LAW

## In The Mood for Love (\$39.95; Criterion)

The key word here is "mood." Director Wong Kar-Wai's haunting romance set in 1962 Hong Kong is overflowing with it: the soundtrack with Nat King Cole singing in Spanish, the stunning outfits worn by Maggie Cheung that evoke old Hollywood glamour, and the restrained tone that makes every gesture and every glance erotically charged. The gorgeous, willowy Cheung and equally handsome costar Tony Leung play neighbors who realize their spouses are having an affair and seem drawn towards having one as well. It is easily one of the best films of last year and Criterion gives it the deluxe treatment it deserves. Not to be missed.

## Say Anything: Special Edition (Fox)

John Cusack was sick of playing high school students, he hated the scene where the hero holds up a boom box in a defiant act of love and director Cameron Crowe should be forever grateful he convinced the actor to come on board. Cusack winningly plays Lloyd, a kickboxing doofus who woos the high school valedictorian (Ione Skye) the summer before college. The subplot about her dad (John Mahoney) being in trouble with the Feds still comes way out of left field, but it bothers me less now simply because I'm so used to it. The scene where Cusack and Skye make love and she realizes he is trembling with nervousness is still delightfully sweet. And while that awkward subplot keeps the film from being one of the greats, it does have a truly great ending.

## All The Right Moves/Taps (Fox)

Two movies that show how fully formed Tom Cruise was right from the start. *All the Right Moves* is surely the last movie where Cruise would be saddled with a name as un-heroic as Stefan Djordjevic. His role as a high school football player screwed over by a vindictive coach (Craig T. Nelson) proved he always had good taste in material. The movie's fine, but it's probably best remembered by some for a sex scene with Lea Thompson that was notably explicit. *Taps* is a fun B-movie with a grade-A cast telling the story of cadets who love the military and its sense of honor so much they break every law on the books. Nobody knew at the time how funny it would be for Sean Penn to play the quiet voice of conscience and Cruise the out-of-control nut.



CRUISE

## Bob Hope: The Tribute Collection - Road to Morocco; Road to Utopia; The Paleface; The Ghost Breakers and more (Universal)

Bob Hope was one of the most consistent stars in Hollywood—whatever the film, whatever the role, you knew Hope was a helpless cad who ran after dames almost as fast as he ran away from a fight. His Road movies with Bing Crosby are clearly his legacy and Universal has put out the first four, along with a passel of other good Hope vehicles like *The Paleface* and *The Ghost Breakers*, which must have inspired the tone for *Ghostbusters*. I favor *Road to Morocco*, perhaps because I can remember most of the words to the title song. ("Like Webster's dictionary, we're Morocco bound!") But my friend Joe, a peerless Road movie expert, gives the nod to *Utopia*. Whatever your preference, these are seminal movies that continue to inspire poor imitations like *Ish-tar*, *Spies Like Us* and *Volunteers*.