

DVDs this week

By Michael Giltz

The X-Files: The Complete Fifth Season (\$149.98; Fox)

This beautifully packaged fifth season of "The X-Files" is where fans that don't want their hearts broken should stop. The show, starring David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson, would decline soon afterwards, with even creator Chris Carter unable to find any convincing new wrinkles in the wildly paranoid, wildly complicated conspiracy at the heart of the series. The truth may be out there, but I can't be bothered.



DUCHOVNY

The Others (\$29.99; Dimension)



KIDMAN

A horror story about a mother and her two children that's rather tame for anyone who's ever watched "The Twilight Zone." But it's a beautifully made film on every level, with Nicole Kidman delivering a terrifically focused performance and looking every inch the proper heir to Grace Kelly.

The Original Transformers (\$59.95; Rhino)

Out of nowhere, "Transformers" has become the hot revival of the year. The '80s series about a battle for universal domination has spawned a new comic book series that sold out immediately all over the country. (In the old days, that would mean the publishers would print a bunch more. Today it means frustrated fans, with greedy collectors who sit on their mint copies and dream of more money via E-Bay in a few years.) Adding to the nostalgia is this terrific compilation from the first season. Rhino gives this once dorky show its typical tender loving care via lots of extras.

Marilyn Monroe: The Diamond Collection II (\$79.98; Fox)

Yep, Marilyn Monroe could act. She appeared in more decent films than you remember, though ironically it's the awful *Seven Year Itch* (featured in Diamond Collection I) that produced her most iconic moment. Here you have mostly smaller roles, but you can't go wrong with Joseph Cotton (in *Niagara*) or the Marx Brothers (indulging in a little *Monkey Business*). Nothing revelatory, but fans will appreciate the velvet glove treatment: Monroe always needed it.



MONROE

Old Yeller (\$29.99; Disney)

Like the best Disney movies, this is tougher than you remember. Our young hero has quite a little temper on him (and it isn't noticeably tamed by the end) while life on the frontier is appropriately brutal. It's still shocking to see Old Yeller turn vicious after getting rabies and still sad to hear that final gun blast. The film's given deluxe treatment (complete with a second DVD loaded with extras), and there are similar sets for the silly fun of *Swiss Family Robinson* (featuring many of the same actors).

The Blue Planet Sets 3 and 4 (\$39.92; BBC Video)

Finally, fans of one of the most critically acclaimed documentary films in years get to see the final four parts of the BBC series about our oceans. The images are still breathtakingly beautiful, the moments captured on film still remarkable, and the sense of discovery still strong indeed. It shows up the Crocodile Hunter and most other nature shows for the empty bit of flash they are.

From Hell (\$29.98; Fox)

This retelling of the Jack the Ripper crime spree never comes to life and certainly never captures the quirky grandeur of the groundbreaking graphic novel it's based on. But Johnny Depp gives his usual, eccentric and exciting performance and he's matched scene for scene by Robbie Coltrane. Since the directors (the Brothers Hughes) practically went to film school by listening to commentary tracks on laser disc, you can depend on them for good insight.