It's Friday night, and we all know what that means here on The Blurbs. It's "Crystal Ball" time. Mitch's weeky column previews all the new film releases at the theaters and on DVD, and also tracks the latest Hollywood news, rumors, and major films that are in the works. This weekends biggest theater releases are "Deja Vu" starring Denzel, "Bobby", and Jack Black's latest film.

Damn penguins…screwing up my predictions (so what's my excuse the other 51 weeks per year?)

I could point out that "Casino Royale" had a better per screen average than "Happy Feet", but that would sound like someone whining about how the Browns lead for 59 ½ minutes last Sunday against the Squealers.

I should have known better. After all, three of the seven films that have grossed $150 million or more this year have been animated ("Cars", "Ice Age 2", and "Over the Hedge").

Probably not much change this holiday weekend. Lots of films being released, but only two of them have any real potential. "Déjà vu" will get into the top five, but probably only into third place, assuming it can beat out "Borat". "The Fountain" will have an OK first weekend, and then fall like a stone.

News & Rumors:

~ Let's start right out with some news that's pissing me off. Due to a money spat between New Line Cinema and director Peter Jackson regarding Pete's cut of "The Fellowship of the Ring", New Line has announced that PJ will have nothing to do with the upcoming film adaptation of "The Hobbit". WTF???? Not having Jackson involved with a Tolkien project would be like not having George Lucas involved in Star Wars.

~ In the same blurb, it was mentioned that Jackson would also not be part of a possible "prequel" to "Lord of the Rings". Now this one has me disturbed as Tolkien never wrote a "prequel", and they aren't talking about making an adaptation of "The Silmarillion". No…this one supposedly covers the lives of Aragorn, Gandalf, Bilbo, et al from the end of "The Hobbit" until the start of LOTR, I may definitely hurl.

~ Comic book movie news: Josh Holloway, who plays Sawyer in "Lost" is said to be in line to play Gambit on the next X-Men movie. He may have a more prominent role than you'd think, as it's is unlikely that X-4 would have Hugh Jackman, Ian McKellen, or Halle Berry involved. Jackman will be making the "Wolverine" movie, McKellen is set to star in a Magneto movie…and Berry will be making an appearance on some reality show with other washed up stars.

~ Dumb TV remake that may not actually be that dumb. Steve Carell as super-spy Maxwell Smart in the remake of Don Adams/Mel Brooks/Buck Henry classic "Get Smart". Scarlett Johannson is said to be the choice for Agent 99. OK, would you believe Kiera Knightley? Fine…it's Anne Hathaway.

~ Lindsay Lohan…Dennis Haysbert from AllState just called. He said they'd like to put their good hands around your neck and wring it until you can't drive anymore.

~ SuperSkank Paris Hilton threw up on stage while singing in Vegas the other night. I guess she just wanted to have the same reaction as the audience forced to listen to her caterwauling.

This week's new releases:

It's the holiday season…and that means a boatload of new releases. And the watchword for today is "Stupid".

Title: **Deja Vu**

Starring: Denzel Washington, Paula Patton, James Caviezel

Plot: An FBI agent is introduced to a secret government agency that could make it so that the crime he's working on solving would never happen

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: It has to be a better time travel flick than Keanu and Sandra in "The Lake House". A Jerry Bruckheimer film, so expect lots of things blowing up big time. Fortunately, Jerry's not working with Michael Bay, so it's probably not going to suck at "The Island" levels. Even if the storyline may get a little stupid at times, Denzel has a habit of being able to rise

above an average action movie script and make it an entertaining movie to watch ("Man on Fire", "Out of Time", "The Bone Collector").

Title: **The Fountain**

Starring: Hugh Jackman, Rachael Weitz

Plot: A conquistador discovers the Tree of Life in the 1500s, and spends the next 1000 years trying to save his love.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Stupid Movie #1. Director/writer Darren Aronofsky fancies himself as the next Stanley Kubrick. He's not. Bloated, meandering movie that may be a decent thing visually to watch, especially if you're dropping a lot of acid. Other than that, it'll bore the hell out of you for 75% of it.

Title: **Bobby**

Starring: Half of freaking Hollywood.

Plot: Fictional accounts of people in the Ambassador Hotel the night Bobby Kennedy was assassinated intermingled with archive footage and actual interviews.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Stupid Movie #2. Did I say that “The Fountain” was bloated and meandering? Same words apply to Emilio Estevez’s labor of love. His intentions are good, but there are just too many people, too many plot lines, and too much pontificating. However, the cast alone would make it an interesting rental. Anthony Hopkins, Laurence Fishburne, Demi Moore, Helen Hunt, Martin Sheen, William H. Macy, Christian Slater, Ashton Kutcher, Heather Graham, Sharon Stone, Elijah Wood, Freddy Rodriguez, Lindsay Lohan, and Harry Belafonte.

Title: **Deck the Halls**

Starring: Matthew Broderick and Danny DeVito

Plot: Obnoxious short fat man wants to make his Christmas light display so bright that it can be seen from outer space. Whiny wuss wants to stop him.

The BeerBuzz: Extremely Stupid Movie #3. This one should be a bigger bomb than the 2004 Ben Affleck stinker “Saving Christmas”. Sarah Jessica Parker needs to hurry up and get to work on that “Sex In the City” movie so that her husband Matthew can stop trying to earn a living making tripe like this.

Title: **Tenacious D in the Pick of Destiny**

Starring: Jack Black and Kevin Gass

Plot: Plot? Are you kidding me?

The BeerBuzz: Stupid Movie #4. This is for hard core Jack Black/Tenacious D fans only. The cameos should be rather amusing, however. Tim Robbins, Ben Stiller, Colin Hanks, Amy Adams, John C. Reilly as Sasquatch, and Meat Loaf as Jack's father (I always thought Meat Loaf was Edwin McCain's long lost father).

Title: **For Your Consideration**

Starring: The usual suspects involved in a Christopher Guest movie.

Plot: Guest's typical "mockumentary" ensemble, this time following three "actors" (Catherine O'Hara, Parker Posey, Harry Shearer) who are stars in a movie generating major Oscar buzz.

The BeerBuzz: I tend to like a lot of Guest's recent work. "Best in Show" and "A Mighty Wind" were both quite amusing. However, the buzz on this one is not good, so let's just call it Stupid Movie #5, and leave it at that.

New DVD Releases on Tuesday, November 28th

Superman Returns – The Boy Scout in Blue is back. Bryan Singer gets a lot right in this homage to the original Christopher Reeve movie, including excellent work from Brandon Routh as the Man of Steel, Kate Bosworth as Lois Lane and Kevin Spacey as a menacing, whacked out Lex Luthor. Not a classic, as it's too long by about 45 minutes, and gets a little slow in places…but still a great rental.

Clerks II – Kevin Smith's long awaited follow-up to his breakout film. Definitely for the Kevin Smith fans out there, which is something I admire. Smith vowed that he'd only do a sequel if it could be exactly the way he wanted it, expectations and studio executives be damned.

The Ant Bully – Not all animated films were box office cash cows. This was one of those exceptions, and the reason is because it sucks.

Calendar Watch:

Next week: *The Nativity Story, 10 Items or Less, Van Wilder 2: The Rise of Taj, Turistas.* OK…so you think I ripped this week's new releases. Come back next week, cuz you ain't seen nuthin' yet.

Upcoming Biggies (click on the hyperlink to view the available trailers).

Apocalypto : December 8th – Mel Gibson's latest controversial movie filmed entirely in a dead language, this one focusing on the decline and fall of the Mayan Civilization.

Blood Diamond – December 15th – Leonardo DiCaprio, Jennifer Connelly, and Djimon Hounsou have various reasons to search for a priceless diamond in Sierra Leone.

Eragon – December 15th – Swords and Dragon fantasy with Jeremy Irons. The inner geek in me is looking forward to it. But then again…lame attempts to rip off Tolkien will totally draw my wrath.

Rocky Balboa – December 22nd – I'll admit it…the trailer makes it look much better than Rocky IV or Rocky V.

The Good Shepherd – December 22nd – Robert Di Niro directs Matt Damon, Angelina Jolie and himself in a tale of the early years of the CIA.

We Are Marshall – December 22nd – Another uplifting movie with football as the backdrop…this one about the attempts to rebuild the Marshall football program after the tragic 1970 airline crash that killed 75 players, coaches, and staff.

Dreamgirls – December 25th – Big budget adaptation of the Broadway musical with Beyonce, Jamie Foxx and Eddie Murphy.

The Good German – December 25th –Oscar contender from Stephen Soderberg starring George Clooney, Cate Blanchett, and Tobey Maguire in post WWII Berlin.

Children of Men – December 25th - New release date for the futuristic Clive Owen and Julianna Moore film about a world where women can no longer get pregnant, dooming mankind.

2007 Attempts at Blockbusters (most dates are nothing more than educated guesses at this point).

Zodiac – Jake Gyllenhaal and Robert Downey, Jr star in the tale of the Bay Area serial killer (January)

Letters From Iwo Jima – Clint Eastwood's follow-up to "Flags of Our Fathers", showing the Battle of Iwo Jima from the perspective of the Japanese. (Wide release in January or February, limited in December).

Hannibal Rising – Tale of how the young Hannibal Lecture became the cretin we all know and love (February)

Ghost Rider – Nicholas Cage turns into a motorcycle riding superhero with a flaming

skeleton head. (February)

The Number 23 – Mystery Thriller with Jim Carrey and Virginia Madsen. (February)

Shooter – Political thriller with Mark Wahlberg as a sniper trying to stop an assassination. (March)

Reign Over Me – First major fictional piece dealing with the effects of 9/11 on the families, starring Adam Sandler (against type) and Don Cheadle (March)

300 – Frank Miller adaptation of the Frank Miller graphic novel about 300 Spartans defending Greece from the entire frickin' Persian Empire. Filmed in the same style as "Sin City". (March)

Grind House – Two one-hour short horror stories, one from Robert Rodriguez, the other from Quentin Tarantino. (April)

Spider-Man 3 – The webslinger versus Venom, Sandman, and Harry Osborne picking up his father's GoblinGear. (May)

Shrek the Third – Justin Timberlake as young King Arthur. Gulp (May)

Pirates of the Caribbean: At the World's End – Captain Jack goes for the hat trick (May)

Ocean's Thirteen – Will someone please stick a fork in this franchise? (June)

Fantastic Four: The Rise of the Silver Surfer – No way does this film get completed by this date (June)

Live Free or Die Hard – John McClane strikes again (probably with his walker) (June)

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix – My wife and daughter will be there the first day (July)

The Bourne Ultimatum – Superspy Jason Bourne (Matt Damon) is back and looking for his roots (August)

Beowulf – Robert Zemeckis gets all medieval on us with a motion capture (like "Polar Express") adaptation of the epic poem (November)