"Beowulf" is the big hit release at the theaters this weekend, and in addition to teasing it in this week's Crystal Ball, Mitch is off to the theaters tonight to review the film for the front page of the site. Mitch is predicting good things, and BIG box office number from this one. "Live Free and Die Hard" is the biggest DVD release, and in the news and rumors section, Mitch also talks about the latest coming project from director Ridley Scott.

That was a major THUD last weekend.

"Fred Claus", the movie all of us experts predicted to be #1 over the weekend, couldn't beat out two hold-overs from the prior week, "American Gangster" and "Bee Movie".

Meeting my predictions exactly, "Lions for Lambs", Tom Cruise's first film as head of the re-created United Artists studio, bombed completely, keeping the streak of flops about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan intact.

Expect both movies to drop even further down this week, as "Beowulf" is about to become the 400 pound gorilla at the box office.

News and Rumors

~ More Vampires! Kristen Stewart will star in "Twilight", based on the best seller from Stephenie Meyer. The film will tell the story of a 17 year old girl who falls in love with a teenage vampire. Complications ensue when the vampire's nemesis comes to town and sets his sights on the girl. Remembering the time when my daughter was a teenager, I would say all boys that age are bloodsucking parasites.

~ More Vampires! John C. Reilly, Josh Hutcherson, and Chris Kelly will appear in "Cirque du Freak", a tale of two friends who visit an illegal freak show, where the encounter a vampire (Reilly) and a giant deadly spider, forcing them to make life-changing choices that result in vampire servitude. I'm making a not-so-life-changing choice to laugh derisively at the entire concept.

~ John Whitesell wants to do a "sequel" to the cult comedy "Meatballs". And he wants Bill Murray to reprise his role as the camp counselor, who now owns the camp. Good luck with that hair brained idea, John. I'd almost rather watch Hayden Christensen doing Shakespeare.

~ And another remake in the news. Michael Bay is planning to produce a remake of "Friday the 13th". That sound you are hearing is the Fall of Western Civilization.

~ Looking for better movie news? Not gonna happen just yet. Paul Verhoeven, the cretin responsible for "Showgirls" is set to direct a sequel to a remake, "Thomas Crown Affair 2", once again starring Pierce Brosnan. Rene Ruso is wisely avoiding this like the plague. I guess those old Bond residuals are about to run out, eh, Pierce?

~ Finally! Some decent news, and a supernatural thriller that even I might be interested in seeing. Ridley Scott has been tapped to direct "Stones", a big budget thriller that will tell of the mysterious destruction of ancient religious sites around the world...with the ancient rock formations at Stonehenge being the key to it all.

This week's new movie releases:

Beowulf

Starring: Ray Winstone, Angelina Jolie and Anthony Hopkins

Plot: Motion-capture semi animation of the Old English

piece of literature we all loved to hate in high school, concerning the mysterious hero Beowulf saving the Danes from nasty Grendal and his nastier mother.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: This is simply going to KILL at the box office this week, and all the way through the Thanksgiving Holiday as well. Very well received during the early reviews...I'll give you my opinion early next week. THIS is probably what they had in mind when they greenlighted that awful "animation over real actors" Ralph Bakshi 1978 version of "Lord of the Rings"
. At least be glad that it's Robert Zemeckis' vision for "Beowulf" and not Mel Gibson, or else he'd do it all in Olde English, with some subtitles, and a whole lot more blood.

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Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium

Starring: Natalie Portman, Dustin Hoffman, Jason Bateman

Plot: An eccentric 243-year-old owner of the most fantastic toy shop in the world wills his business to his shy, awkward store manager. However, her leadership is soon challenged by a dark presence in the shop.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: You probably haven't seen this advertised anywhere yet. The reason? It stinks. Fox-Walden is distributing this film, and after the total tanking of their last fantasy, "The Dark Is Rising", they know a bomb when they see one.

My Estimated Rating: Jeff Garcia (1 football)

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Love in the Time of Cholera

Starring: Javier Bardem, Giovanna Mezzogiorno, Benjamin Bratt

Plot: A man who is rejected by a beautiful woman at an early age devotes much of his adult life to debauchery in an attempt to heal his broken heart (I'm gagging just typing that tripe)

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Wow, this looks like total crap, starting right off with the title. Mike Newell has got to be one of the biggest &quot;hit or miss&quot; directors I've ever seen. He can put out great films like &quot;Four Weddings and a Funeral&quot;, &quot;Donnie
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Brasco", and "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire", and then he'll come back with stinkers like "Amazing Grace and Chuck", "Pushing Tin", and this disaster.

My Estimated Rating: Mike Phipps (½ football)

New DVD Releases on Tuesday, November 20th

Live Free or Die Hard - Great timing for this release. John McClane's at it again, this time toting around that kid who plays a Mac on all of those "PC vs Mac" commercials. Much better than the other two sequels of this series, as Bruce Willis allows himself to put his ego aside and go back to what made the first one so fun...McClane's smart-assed, rapid fire style, over-the-top stunts, and wink-at-the-camera humor.

Yippee-ki-ya muthasporkers.

Hairspray - Remake of the John Waters camp-cult favorite about a plump teenaged girl who wants to be on a local dance show in 1962 Baltimore. Baltimore...and John Travolta in drag. Talk about the Scylla and Charybdis of Suck.

Santa Claus 3: The Escape Claus - Tim Allen, back for the third time in this tired series, battles Martin Short, playing evil Jack Frost. I'd sooner get frost bite than watch this.

Rescue Dawn - Christian Bale in a real life story of U.S. Fighter pilot Dieter Dengler, a

German-American shot down and captured in Laos during the Vietnam War, and his efforts to escape. Very well received film that will soon find its way to the top of my Netflix Queue.

Calendar Watch

Next week (All releases on Wednesday, Nov. 21st): *Hitman.. Enchanted, August Rush, This Mist, This Christmas, No Country for Old Men (expanding)*

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

The Golden Compass - December 7th - Major, major push from the studios for this big budget fantasy...designed to be the first of a franchise. Nicole Kidman and Daniel Craig star (their second collaboration this year, let's hope it's better than "The Invasion"), along with Sam Elliot and Eva Green.

Atonement - December 7th - Artsy British film with Keira Knightley and James McAvoy, about a 13 year old girl who changes several lives when she accuses her older sister's lover of a crime he did not commit.

I Am Legend - December 14th - Will Smith in what is basically a remake of the Chuck Heston apocalyptic film "The Omega Man".

National Treasure: Book of Secrets - December 21st - Follow-up to the hugely popular guilty pleasure "National Treasure" with Nick Cage back at his wacky best.

P.S., I Love You - December 21st - Hillary Swank, Gerard Butler, and Harry Connick Jr. in an award contender about a widow who discovers love letters written by her recently deceased husband (Butler) that are meant to help her begin the next chapter of her life.

Charlie Wilson's War -

December 25th

- Tom Hanks, Julia Roberts, and Philip Seymour Hoffman in an Oscar contender about the charismatic and eccentric Texas Congressman who orchestrated the funding of the Afghans against the Soviet Union in the early 80s.

The Bucket List - December 25th -

Jack Nicholson as a corporate billionaire and Morgan Freeman as a mechanic. And odd couple, but they are both terminally ill men who escape from a cancer ward to take one last road trip.

Sweeny Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street - Limited release in December - Tim Burton's adaptation of the macabre Steven Sondheim musical about a deranged barber bent on revenge (Johnny Depp) and the meat pie baker that assists him (Helena Bonham Carter), who uses the bodies to

make delicious snacks.

Untitled J.J. Abrams Project - January 18th - You've seen the buzz generating hand held camera trailer during "Transformers", and wondered what it's all about. We don't know yet, but we're thinking it

should be fun.

The Other Boleyn Girl - February 29th - Natalie Portman as Anne Boleyn, Scarlett Johansson as her sister Mary, and Eric Bana as King Henry VIII. I expect

this to blow the tepid Showtime series "The Tudors" out of the English Channel...but since it's gotten pushed back to the waste-land of February releases, I don't have a good feeling about it.

10,000 B.C. - March 7th - Roland Emmerich, he of "The Day After Tomorrow", gets to unleash his big-budget vision of mammoth hunters in this film that is NOT a remake of "One Million Years B.C." Bummer. I was hoping

of a really good visual update to Rachel Welch in that fur bikini.

21. - March 21st - Swerb's favorite upcoming movie, the true tale of six MIT students that are

trained by one of their professors (Kevin Spacey) in the art of card counting. They later take down Vegas casinos for millions.