Crap, crap, and more crap. That's what's been coming out every Friday at the theaters as of late. And instead of dispacthing the talented and trusty Mitch Cyrus to the theaters to review junk, we've had Mitch out seeing all the contenders for Best Picture at the Oscars coming later this month. And like we do every year, we'll run all five reviews in the five days leading up to the awards. It;s Friday night! It's The Crystal Ball ....

I get messages.

"Didn't you used to be the guy who wrote movie reviews?"

Yes, I know that I have done all of two movie reviews since Christmas. But have you taken a look at the garbage that's being released lately? (if you need more proof, jump on down to This Week's Releases for Exhibit A).

"So why haven't you done a reviews for 'No Country for Old Men', 'Juno', 'Atonement', and 'There Will Be Blood'? These were all good enough for Best Picture nominations, but not good enough for you?"

Chill your jets, there. Starting February 18th, you'll get more of my movie stuff than you can probably handle, as we'll run reviews of all five nominated films in five days, followed by my annual Drunk Guy's Oscar Predictions.

Which may just come off as planned, as rumors are out today that this writers' strike may be resolved in the next day or two.

"Why don't you review horror flicks?"

Because they suck, and I'm a big snob in that regard. By the way, anyone inspired to be TheClevelandFan's answer to Roger Ebert with a machete can contact Swerb...my oversized ego has no problem having other people post reviews of these types of movies.

News and Rumors

~ One thing we do seem to love around here is Mob Movies, and here comes another one. Casey Affleck will star in "The Kind One", a drama based upon the novel by Tom Epperson. The story is centered around an amnesiac who ends up working for a mobster called "The Kind One", and falling in love with his girlfriend...normally not a good career choice. I really don't like that tired plot device of amnesia, but I'll hold off judgment until later.

~ Kate Hudson, the woman about to embarrass herself in "Fool's Gold" this weekend, will play painter and 1950s feminist Margaret Keane in the film "Big Eyes". Keane was famous for making those distinctive paintings featuring big-eyed children (no, I didn't known that

until I read the press release. I'm not THAT big of a snob). Given that "Pollack" and "Frieda" were other movies about painters that just made a bundle of cash...why not? (sarcasm intended).

~ As far as Ben Stiller movies go, "Night at the Museum" wasn't too bad. There might be some hope for the sequel, as Amy Adams will be co-staring as a historical figure who develops a crush on Stiller's character. The movie will also shift from New York to the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C.

~ Nothing is set in stone, yet...but "Arrested Development" creator Mitch Hurwitz is working on a movie for the acclaimed comedy. Keep your fingers crossed.

~ Brett Ratner, the uber-hip director of the "Rush Hour" movies and "X-Men: The Last Stand" is the frontrunner to direct a remake of "The Wolf Man", starring Benicio Del Toro and Anthony Hopkins. I have a few concerns with this, because I thought the last few episodes of "Rush Hour" stunk big time, and X-3 was a total disaster.

This week's new movie releases:

Given the crap that's coming out this week, look for Miley Cyrus to once again suck all the money out of the wallets of parents of tween girls everywhere as her Hannah Montana concert movie, the #1 film last week, expands to even more theaters.

Fool's Gold

Starring: Matthew McConaughey and Kate Hudson

Plot: A clue to the whereabouts of a lost treasure rekindles an estranged couple's sense of adventure.

The BeerBuzz: When they release a romantic comedy the week BEFORE Valentines Day, you know it sucks. And as of this morning, it's clocking in at an astounding 7% positive on Rottentomatoes.com, a number even lower than "Over Her Dead Body" (but at least higher than "Meet the Spartans"). I'm not sure what Kate Hudson needs more; a good script or a couple dozen cheeseburgers. I do know that Matthew

McConaughey has turned into the laziest actor in Hollywood.

My Estimated Rating: Mike Phipps (½ football)

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Welcome Home Roscoe Jenkins

Starring: Martin Lawrence, Cedric the Entertainer, James Earl Jones

Plot: A popular talk show host leaves L.A. for a reunion with his family in the Deep South.

The BeerBuzz: Cute concept...a black Dr. Phil turning out to have that wild and wacky family we always see in these types of films. Lots of Lowest Common

Denominator fat jokes and crotch kicks, but it might be half-way amusing to watch on DVD.

My Estimated Rating: Tim Couch (1 ½ footballs).

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Vince Vaughn's Wild West Comedy Show: 30 Days & 30 Nights - From Hollywood to the Heartland

Starring: Vince Vaughn, Justin Long, and a bunch of stand-up comedians.

Plot: Comedy concert film as Vince and the boys hit 30 towns in 30 nights.

The BeerBuzz: Nowhere near what was seen in such similar concert films "Blue Collar Comedy

Tour" or "The Kings of Comedy"...but it might be alright if you're into this genre. I'll probably catch it when it hits DVD.

My Estimated Rating: Kelly Holcomb (2 footballs).

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New DVD Releases for Tuesday, February 12th

We have another week of good offerings. Just in time for the end of the football season void.

Gone Baby Gone - Excellent film from the writer of "Mystic River" with Casey Affleck as a young private investigator looking

for a lost 5 year old girl in South Boston. Fantastic performances by Affleck, Ed Harris as the cop he's forced to work with, and Amy Ryan in her Oscar nominated role as the young girls foul mouthed loser of a mother. Go out and rent this one.

We Own the Night - This looked to be something worthwhile when it came out...pairing up Joaquin Phoenix with Mark Wahlberg in a film set in the 80s that had cops, mobsters, and a hot New York nightlife backdrop...but it just didn't catch on with audiences. Probably a bit to "by-the-numbers" for most peoples' tastes; but I still plan on catching it on DVD.

Into the Wild - For some reason, this film was nominated for "Best Cast" for the Screen Actors Guild Awards, their equivalent of Best Picture. I have no idea why...but then again, "Hairspray" was also nominated. For this one, director Sean Penn and Emile Hirsch do a wonderful job with acting, directing, and filming the story of a child of influences decisions to chuck it all and hike alone to Alaska...but it's just not my cup of tea.

No Reservations - Aaron Eckhart and Catherine Zeta-Jones star in a romantic comedy about an anal retentive master chef (Zeta-Jones) whose world is thrown for a loop when a talented chef (Eckhart) comes to work for her during the same time frame that she becomes the guardian of her young niece.

Tyler Perry's Why Did I Get Married - A slightly different style of Tyler Perry movie, more soap opera comedy as four couples deal with relationship issues during their annual Colorado marriage check-up retreat.

Becoming Jane - Anne Hathaway as Jane Austen in a movie focusing on her life before becoming famous.

Martian Child- Disappointing John Cusack film about a recently widowed science fiction writer who considers adopting a troubled and hyper-imaginative 6 year old boy who says he's really from Mars.

Things We Lost in the Fire - Another film

that aimed for the awards and fell far short. Halle Berry stars as a recently widowed woman who reaches out to her deceased husband's friend, a troubled man played by Benicio Del Toro.

Calendar Watch (all being released on Thursday)

Next week: *Jumper, Definitely-Maybe, The Spiderwick Chronicles, Step Up 2 the Streets*

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

Vantage Point - February 22nd - Dennis Quaid, Forest Whitaker, and Matthew Fox in a political thriller/mystery showing five different points of view to an attempted assassination of the President.

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.

Horton Hears a Who - March 14th - Not content to have made Dr. Suess spin in his grave with "How the Grinch Stole Christmas", Jim Carrey now

takes on the voice of Horton the Elephant in this animated tale.

Pride and Glory - March 14th - Ed Norton and Colin Farrell in a tale of a multi-generational family of NYPD officers and an investigation of corruption that could tear the family apart.

21. - March 28th - 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.

Leatherheads - April 4th - George Clooney and Renee Zellweger in an old fashioned screwball comedy set in 1925 about an aging football

legend and the college hotshot he's drafted for his pro team both fighting for the heart of an intrepid up-and-coming journalist.

Iron Man - May 2nd - The latest mega-budgeted superhero flick. Looks very promising, and the casting of Robert Downey, Jr. as

the alcoholic billionaire who designs a supersuit.

Speed Racer - May 9th - Emile Hirch, Matthew Fox, and Christina Ricci as Speed, Racer X, and Trixie in the Wachowski Brothers' ("The Matrix" trilogy) adaptation of the campy

1960s Japanese anime.

The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian - May 16th

- The same four kids from the first movie return to Narnia...1300 years after their last visit

in that enchanted land's time frame, to help restore the throne to the rightful heir.

Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull - May 23rd - Spielberg and Ford team up one more time,

with Cate Blanchett as the romantic interest, and Shia LaBeouf ("Transformers") as Indy's son.

Sex and the City - May 30th - The movie version of

the HBO series hits the big screen. Can we guys get our share of this pie and have a movie version of "Deadwood"?

The Incredible Hulk -

June 13th

- Looks to be much, much better than the Ang Lee stink-fest, with Edward Norton taking on the role of Bruce Banner.

Get Smart - June 20th

- Steve Carell, Anne Hathaway, and Alan Arkin take on the roles of Maxwell Smart, Agent 99 and The Chief. As much as I hate movie adaptations of

television shows, this one has potential.

Wall-E - June 27th - Pixar's next masterpiece, about a garbage cleaning robot who dreams of

the stars.

Wanted - June 27th - Look for this to make a star out of James McAvoy ("The Last

King of Scotland") as he plays a young man brought into a secret society of assassins by a hot, hot looking Angelina Jolie. Morgan Freeman

plays their boss.

The Dark Knight - July 19th

- Batman is back, and this time he's

tracking the Joker, played by Heath Ledger. Most likely the box office champion of 2008.