After a ferocious run of movie reviews for us early this summer, we hit a dead spot this last month. A dead spot that ends this week as SIX new movies come out, providing a little something for everyone. "Tropic Thunder", "Star Wars: The Clone Wars", "Mirrors", "Vicky Cristina Barcelona", "Henry Poole Is Here", and "Fly Me To The Moon". Mitch previews them all in our Friday night staple here at The Cleveland Fan ... The Crystal Ball.

Time to get back into the theater this week, with SIX new movies coming out, providing a little something for everyone.

News and Rumors

~ This is extremely disappointing. The money grubbing powers that be at Warner Brothers have decided this week to delay the release of "Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince" from November of this year until July 2009, in order to prop up what looks to be a relatively lame summer schedule. This will make it two years between the last movie and this one. At this rate, by the time they do the two part "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows', Daniel Radcliffe my have children of his own.

~ Sorry to say this for all of you out there going nuts about a new poster making the rounds showing that the next Batman movie will be about the Riddler. The poster was made by a fan, not the studios. Now that doesn't mean that the next one won't be about the Riddler (and Johnny Depp has been rumored for the part), but there is absolutely nothing beyond rumors at this point.

~ A couple of new casting notes for Quentin Tarantino's WWII film "Inglorious Bastards" Mike Myers and Simon Pegg ("Hot Fuzz") will join Brad Pitt, Eli Roth and Natassja Kinski. I'm not sure about Myers playing a British general...but I'll try to hold off judgment for now.

~ Two Tom Cruise notes. The great couch jumper reportedly turned down the lead in the spy thriller "Edwin A. Salt", about a CIA operative being wrongfully accused of being a Russian spy. Angelina Jolie will now take the role, which will obviously be renamed. Cruise will instead star in a comedy called "Food Fight", playing a snobby NY chef who ends up working at a school cafeteria. Great decision there, Tom.

This week's new movie releases:

Tropic Thunder

Starring: Ben Stiller, Jack Black, Robert Downey Jr.

Plot: While filming a big budget war movie, a group of self absorbed actors unwittingly get caught up in a real-life conflict

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Major buzz on this one, not the least of which has come from the outrage of the use of the word "retard" in the film...which is really just a send-up of shallow actors who love to take on handicap roles just to get awards. Supposed to be one of the sharpest satires about the Hollywood culture in some time, including a hilarious send-up from Tom Cruise, of all people.

I'll let you know in a few days, as I plan on getting to it this weekend.

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Star Wars: The Clone Wars

Starring: the voices of Matt Lanter, Nika Futterman, Tom Kane

Plot: Filling the gap between "Attack of the Clones" and "Revenge of the Sith", this animated tale chronicles the on-going intergalactic battle involving the Jedis of the Republic and the battle droids of the Trade Federation

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: This one is not faring well when it comes to buzz. Maybe the most diehard fanboys will love this, but for everyone else that likes Star Wars, they are being advised to wait until Lucas's "Clone Wars" TV show comes out.

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Mirrors

Starring: Kiefer Sutherland, Paula Patton, Amy Smart

Plot: An ex-cop and his family are the target of an evil force using mirrors as a gateway into their home.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Kiefer really should use his popularity and clout to pick some better projects. This one is getting (rightfully) killed by the critics, and expect the fans to stay away in droves, as the plot and script are said to be so bad that even those that really like horror films will not be able to watch this one.

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Vicky Cristina Barcelona

Starring: Rebecca Hall, Scarlett Johansson, Javier Bardem, Penelope Cruz

Plot: Two girlfriends on a summer holiday in Spain become enamored with the same painter, fully unaware that his ex-wife is about to re-enter the picture

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Woody Allen does a fun, breezy comedy? I'll believe it when I see it, but the early buzz on this does seem to be very good. Then again, the infamous threesome seen between Cruz, Johansson, and Bardem might attract the voyeurs (I've heard it isn't all that titillating). There are lots of people who wouldn't see a Woody Allen movie at gunpoint, so there is no sense in talking to that crowd. For me, I'm hoping Woody is as good as he was making "Match Point", as opposed to his last two disasters; "Scoop" and "Cassandra's Dream".

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Henry Poole Is Here

Starring: Luke Wilson, George Lopez, Radha Mitchell

Plot: A man abandons his fiancée and family business to spend what he believes are his remaining days alone, until the discovery of a "miracle" by a nosy neighbor ruptures his solitude and restores his faith in life.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Another movie that might have been better served going straight to a "movie-of-the-week" on the Lifetime Network. A very uneven comedy-drama as Luke Wilson sleepwalks through another film. I'm surprised it's being released on 500 screens nationwide. Look for it to be on 50 screens by next week, and on DVD by the end of September.

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Fly Me to the Moon - 3D

Starring: the voices of Trevor Gagnon, Philip Bolden, David Gore

Plot: Three flies hitch a ride on the Apollo 11 mission.

The BeerBuzz: Did you see "Flushed Away"? (And if you did, you are in a very small minority)...well, this is the

same thing, only in space. You get the 3D thing in this one...which may not be a good thing either. Keep the tequila ready for you at home if your kids force you to take them to this. Try to talk them into seeing "Kung Fu Panda" or "WALL-E" again instead.

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DVD Releases for Tuesday, August 19th

I guess August is a great month to attack your Netflix Queue...because there hasn't been squat coming out this month that anyone should rush out and rent. This week is no exception.

Hannah Montana/Miley Cyrus: Best of Both Worlds Concert Tour - If you think I'm going to pimp this just because the star shares the same name as the author of this article...you're wrong.

But that doesn't matter. If you have a daughter between the ages of 5 and 12, you're going to have to buy this. Accept it, and move on.

Prom Night (Unrated) - Teenagers get hacked up at a prom. And the "unrated" means that you get even more gore than you got at the theater!

Street Kings - Keanu Reeves as a copy set up to be the fall guy. With Forest Whitaker and Hugh Laurie. The co-stars don't matter, as this movie stinks. When you put Cedric the Entertainer and Jay Mohr in an action drama, you know you are courting disaster.

Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day - An out-of-work London governess (Frances McDormand) finds her world turned upside down when she goes to

work for a ditzy American actress and singer (Amy Adams). Supposedly better than it sounds...my wife already has plans to see it.

Calendar Watch

Next week; *Death Race, The House Bunny, The Longshots, The Rocker*

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

Righteous Kill - September 12th - Robert De Niro and Al Pacino together again as NY detectives working on a case that may be

related to both a serial killer and a man they might have wrongly imprisoned years before.

Burn After Reading - September 12th - The latest Coen Brothers' movie, with Brad Pitt joining Frances McDormand, George Clooney, Tilda Swinton and John Malkovich in a dark comedy about missing memoirs of a CIA agent.

Eagle Eye - September 26th - Shia LaBeouf and Michelle Monoghan as a slacker and a single mother who become unwitting members of a terrorist cell plotting a political assassination.

Miracle at St. Anna - September 26th - Spike Lee's tale of a a battalion of black American soldiers who became trapped in a Tuscan village during WWII.

The Express - October 3rd - A must for Browns fans, the biographical tale of Syracuse running back Ernie Davis, the first African-American to win the Heisman Trophy.

Body of Lies - October 10th - Russell Crowe and Leonardo DiCaprio in Ridley Scott's spy tale of intrigue in the Middle East.

Max Payne - October 17th - Mark Wahlberg stars in the adaptation of the video game about a DEA agent out to avenge the deaths of his family.

Pride and Glory - October 24th

- Edward Norton and Colin Farrell in a story about a family of prominent NYC cops who are shaken to their core when a scandal is uncovered.

RocknRolla - October 31st - Guy Ritchie hopefully back in form for another tale of

London gangsters. Gerard Butler, Thandie Newton, Tom Wilkenson, and Jeremy Friggin' Piven star.

Changeling - October 31st - Clint Eastwood's latest Oscar potential, with Angelina Jolie as a Prohibition era mother who begins to think that

the kidnapped son who was returned to her might not really be hers.

Quantum of Solace - November 7th

- The next James Bond film, picking up shortly after the events ending

"Casino Royale"

Australia - November 14th - Baz Luhrmann's epic tale set in WWII Australia. With Nicole Kidman and Hugh Jackman. Think "Gone with the

Wind" with kangaroos.

The Road - November 28th - Viggo Mortensen as a man walking with his son for months across a ravaged,

post-apocalyptic landscape in search of civilization. Charlize Theron co-stars.

The Day the Earth Stood Still - December 12th

- Keanu Reeves in a remake of the classic 1951 sci-fi film.

Twilight - December 12th - the adaptation of the popular book series

concerning a relationship between a non-blood drinking vampire and a teenaged girl.

Defiance - December 12

th

- Daniel Craig and Live Schreiber as Jewish brothers in WWII Russian, leading a band of refuges in striking back at the Germans. A major

early Oscar contender

Revolutionary Road - December 19th

- Leonardo

DiCaprio and Kate Winslet as a young couple raising a family in a Connecticut suburb during the mid 1950s. Sam Mendes ("American

Beauty") directs the "Titanic" stars in their on-screen reunion.

The Spirit -

December 25th

- Frank Miller's next comic book adaptation, done in the same style as "Sin City".

Watchmen - March 6, 2009 - The screen version of what is arguably graphic novelist Alan Moore's greatest work.

Blockbusters on the Distant Horizon (movies that would seem to be big hits...as soon as they get made or released).

X-Men Origins: Wolverine - May 1, 2009 - Hugh Jackman goes it alone as the adamentium enhanced anti-hero. With Live Schreiber as

Sabertooth, and Ryan Reynolds as Deadpool.

Star Trek - May 8, 2009 - J.J. Abrams and a

young cast reboot the franchise, going back to Kirk and Spock's days at Starfleet Academy.

Angels and Demons - May 15, 2009 - Tom Hanks and Ron Howard follow-up to "The DaVinci Code"

Terminator 4 - May 22, 2009 - Christian Bale as John Conner as the franchise moves into the apocalyptic future.

Transformers 2 - June 26, 2009 - The next chapter of Robots In Disguise!

Public Enemy - Jul

y 1, 2009 - Johnny Depp as John Dillinger. Co-staring Christian Bale, and directed by Michael Mann

Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince - July 2009 - The sixth of J.K. Rowling's seven books, setting the stage for the two part conclusion in 2010 and 2011.

The Taking of Pelham 123- August 7, 2009 - Denzel Washington, John Travolta, and James Gandolfini in a remake of the classic 1974 film

about a hijacked subway car.

Shutter Island - October, 2009 - Martin Scorsese working once

again with Leonardo DiCaprio in this mystery set in 1954.

Nottingham - Nove

mber, 2009 - Ridley Scot and Russell Crowe together again in a retelling of the Robin Hood legend, this time through the eyes of the Sheriff of

Nottingham (Crowe). With Sienna Miller as Maid Marion.

Avatar - December 18, 2009 - James

Cameron's sci-fi/CGI extravaganza. The C.I.A. should take lessons about secrecy from Cameron, as he's keeping info about this film very much

to himself at this time.

Iron Man 2 - May, 2010 - Right on the heels of the success of the first

one, Marvel is quick to get Robert Downey Jr. back into his titanium suit.

The Chronicles of

Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader - May, 2010 - The series goes off in a bit of a different direction, as those of you who love the books already

know.

Thor - June 2010 - Another Marvel superhero...but the Nordic God is about as bland

personality-wise as Superman, so we'll see how it goes.

Harry Potter and the Deathly

Hallows: Part I - 2010 - The start of the End for the boy wizard and his battle against He-Who-Shall-not-Be-Named

Lincoln - 2010 - Steven Spielberg directs the biographical film of the 16th President (Liam Neeson)

The Hobbit - 2010 - Guillermo del Toro directs and Peter Jackson will produce the prequel to "Lord of the Rings". Ian

McKellen will return as Gandalf

Fantastic Voyage - 2010 - Roland Emmerich

("The Day After Tomorrow", "10,000 B.C.") remakes the classic 1967 movie about a

miniaturized sub and crew operating on a scientist from inside his brain.

The Avengers - 2011 - Iron Man, Hulk, Thor, and Captain America open up a can of whoopass on bad guys everywhere.

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part II - 2011 - The end of the line for what will be beyond doubt the most profitable series

in the history of film making.

The Hobbit 2 - 2011 - del Toro and Jackson

again, this time covering the time between the end of Tolkien's book, "The Hobbit" and the start of LOTR.