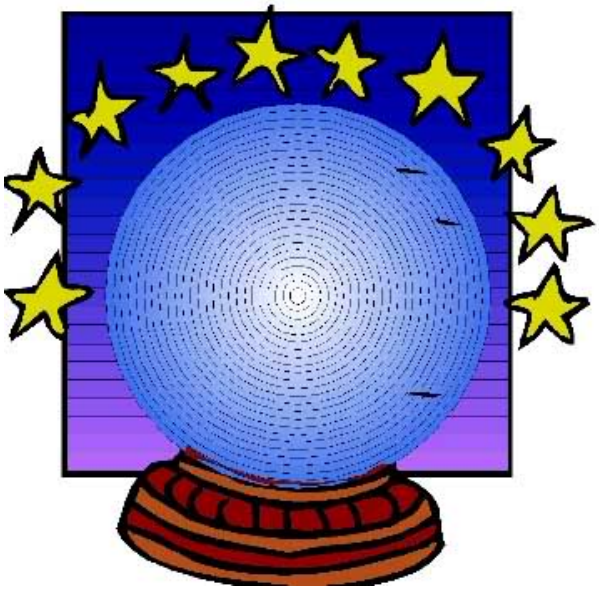
Friday night means it's Crystal Ball time here at The Cleveland Fan, and what a week it is for DVD releases, as "Slumdog Millionaire", "Marley & Me", and "Seven Pounds" all become available to watch at home this week. At the theaters, we have three releases of note, with "Monsters Vs. Aliens", "The Haunting In Connecticut", and "12 Rounds" all debuting today at the cinema. Mitch tells us about all of these films, as well as all the biggest projects of note coming down the pike.



Another weekend to spend watching the Tube...keeping up on what looks to be just another version of the Big East Tournament.

Good thing, as two of the very few TV shows I watch on a regular basis concluded last week.

It was a pretty interesting sendoff to the Battlestar Galactica series. Lots of unanswered questions, but overall, a satisfactory ending that was quite surprising as well.

On the other hand, it was a great ending of the season of "Big Love". I had heard all week that an important male character was supposed to be bumped off at the end...but I was totally wrong on who it ended up being.

This may be the show that I look forward to returning almost as much as "Dexter" (but not quite).

News and Rumors

~ This one goes right to the top of the "WTH Are They THINKING?" category. A Three Stooges movie that's not really a biography, but an update using basically the same characters in a similar style comedy. The stars?
Benicio del Toro as Moe Howard, Sean Penn as Larry Fine, and Jim Carrey is said to be willing to put on 40 pounds to play Curly Howard.

You can read all of our comments from the board on it
Here
.

Suffice to say; we all think it's a really dumb idea.

And add to it that it's being made by the Farley Brothers?

Gag.

Vomit.

~ One of the comments on the board about the 3 Stooges movie mentioned that may have been a bit better if they'd have seen the words "Coen Brothers" rather than "Farley Brothers". Can't be the Coen's as they look to be working on making an adaptation of "True Grit".

It's said that this version would be more true to the book than the 1969 John Wayne film.

This story would be more from the point of view of the 14 year old girl working with an aging U.S. Marshal and another lawman to track down her father's killer in hostile Indian territory.

~ Tom Hanks is said to be in line for the lead role of a movie based on the vintage Mattel action figure Major Matt Mason. I have absolutely no recollection of this toy whatsoever. Supposedly, it was a big hit in the mid 60s, with the good Major leading an astronaut team that worked on

the moon. Something tells me that if the G.I. Joe movie coming out this summer tanks as bad as I'm predicting (think "Speed Racer" bad), this will end up on the shelf.

~ Nicole Kidman is set to star in Woody Allen's newly announced project. As always, it's totally shrouded in mystery, and you can't tell if it's going to be a comedy like "Scoop" (only not as sucky), a dramedy like "Vicky Cristina Barcelona", or a drama like "Match Point.

One thing though, he has a great cast lined up.

In addition to Kidman, Frieda Pinto, Antonio Banderas, Josh Brolin, Anthony Hopkins, and Naomi Watts are on board.

~ Another big name adaptation of a kiddie book the the big screen. This time, it will be the first of Rick Riordan's "Percy Jackson & The Olympians" series about a 12 year old boy who discovers that he's the son of the Greek God Poseidon. The first movie will be based on the first book "The

Lightning Thief", and will star Pierce Brosnan, Uma Thurman, Sean Bean, Kevin McKidd, and Malina Kanakaredes.

Stupid Remakes and Sequels

~ It's bad enough that we're going to have to put up with Will Ferrell's sure-to-be-lame TV adaptation of the cheesy dinosaur show "Land of the Lost". What could be worse? C. Thomas Howell directing and starring in a remake of the cheesy dinosaur movie "The Land That Time Forgot".

Let's just call both of them "Movies I Plan to Forget".

~ And let me take this opportunity to once again bitch about how STUPID it would be to put Penn, Carrey, and del Toro as the new Three Stooges. I'm just not sure everyone got to know my true feelings earlier on.

~ Finally, this one just makes me chuckle, and belongs in a subcategory with "Stupid" in the title. Poor Lindsay Lohan's latest movie is so bad that it's going straight to Cable TV. "Labor Pains" is about a woman who fakes a pregnancy to keep her job.

Fill in your own train wreck jokes here.

This week's new movie releases:

Monsters Vs. Aliens

Starring: the voices of Reese Witherspoon, Kiefer Sutherland, Seth Rogen, Hugh Laurie, Rainn Wilson and Stephen Colbert

Plot: When Earth is attacked by and alien commander known as Gallaxhar, a General busts out all of the monsters he's been hiding in a secret government compound, led by a 50 foot tall woman (who is actually only 49' 11")

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Dreamworks animated flicks never seem to have quite the same WOW factor as Pixar, but they still tend to be very good at raking in money and entertaining the little kids. This one is going to be no different. It's not for the adults who found "WALL-E" to be so exceptional, as it's geared at the same audience that went to last year's Dreamworks hit, "Kung Fu Panda".

I expect this will be the first 2009 film to top $200 million domestically.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

The Haunting in Connecticut

Starring: Virginia Madsen, martin Donovan, Elias Koteas

Plot: A couple relocate their family to Northern Connecticut for health reasons concerning their son. As they settle into an old Victorian home, they come face to face with its unsettling history and supernatural forces.

View Trailer
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

The BeerBuzz: Another horror movie "based upon a true story". Yeah...there was a house, and people lived there. They did lots of drugs and imagined a bunch of scary stuff.

Other than that, expect this to be nothing more than another rip-off of "The Amityville Horror".

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

12 Rounds

Starring: John Cena, Ashley Scott

Plot: A detective discovers that his girlfriend has been kidnapped by an ex-con tied to his past. To save her, he'll have to successfully complete 12 challenges.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Another brilliantly intelligent movie brought to you by that master of the understatement; Vince McMahon and his WWE cronies. Remember &quot; The Marine &quot;? Of course you don't.
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

Well, that was the last movie McMahon produced that starred Cena, and it bombed its way to a whopping $18 million at the box office.

Don't expect much more from this.

But DO expect to see it on the DVD shelf in about three weeks.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

New DVD Releases for Tuesday, March 31

Get your Netflix Queue updated, because this is going to be a great week for DVD releases

Slumdog Millionaire **- The hands down 800 pound gorilla of this year's Oscars, and one of the best movies of the decade. It's unbelievable that this movie almost went straight to DVD before being rescued by Fox Searchlight films. It is an incredible experience, watching three sets of young Indian actors portraying two orphaned brothers and the girl they are cosmically tied to as they grow up in the slums of Mumbai, until their lives come headlong together as the younger boy Jamal ends up competing for the top prize in**
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

the Indian version of the game show "Who Wants to be a Millionaire".

This is a Must See film.

Marley & Me **-** Another surprise hit of 2008. Owen Wilson and Jennifer Aniston star as a young couple starting out their married lives as writers in South Florida.

Their lives evolve, and the connecting aspect of it is "the world's worst dog", a wrecking ball on four legs known as Marley.

But the movie is not focused on the Labrador Retriever, nor do they try to make the dog "human".

Instead, the dog is shown as he should be, as a loving and loved pet to a family that is more realistic than any I have seen in recent films.

Rent this...but make sure you have lots of tissues around.

Seven Pounds- Speaking of tissues, you'll need a lot for this one as well, as Will Smith plays a man with a mysterious past who is bound and determine to help out people he has never previously met. It tries to hit the same chords

as the previous Smith tear-jerker "Pursuit of Happyness", but doesn't quite make it.

Still...you could do worse for a rental.

Calendar Watch

Next week; *Adventureland, Fast and Furious, Sunshine Cleaning*

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

State of Play - April 17 - Russell Crowe and Ben Affleck in a political thriller about reporter and his assistant looking to uncover the truth about a picture-perfect U.S. Congressman. Another Tony Gilroy script.

The Soloist - April 24 - Jamie Foxx and Robert Downey Jr. as a street living mentally disturbed man who is also a virtuoso cellist. Downey Jr. plays the down and out reporter who discovers and befriends him.

X-Men Origins: Wolverine - May 1 - 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 - 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 - Tom Hanks and Ron Howard follow-up to "The DaVinci Code"

Terminator: Salvation - May 22 - Christian Bale as John Conner as the franchise moves into the apocalyptic

future.

Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian - May 22 - This time, Ben Stiller's hapless security guard has to break into the Smithsonian Museum to rescue some of his peeps who've been shipped there by mistake.

The biggest mistake is scheduling this movie on the same weekend as Terminator.

Up - May 29 - Pixar's latest movie certain to be an Oscar winner for "Best Animated Feature". This time, it's an old man who ties hundreds of balloons to his house so he can go on an adventure while staying home.

Land of the Lost - June 5 - Will Ferrell will now do his completely predictable mugging as a scientist sucked into a space-time vortex into an alternate universe complete with dinosaurs. Based on the lame TV series.

The Taking of Pelham 123 - June 12 - Denzel Washington, John Travolta, and James Gandolfini in a remake of the classic 1974 film about a hijacked subway car.

Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen : - June 26 - The next chapter of Robots In Disguise!

Public Enemy - July 1 - Johnny Depp as John Dillinger. Co-starring Christian Bale, and directed by Michael Mann

Bruno - July 10 - Sacha Baron Cohen attempts to recreate the magic he found in "Borat"; this time featuring his flamboyant Austrian fashion reporter character.

Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince - July 17 - The sixth of J.K. Rowling's seven books, setting the stage for the two part conclusion in 2010 and 2011.

G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra - August 7 - Every year, there is one big-budget movie that bombs.

My prediction is that it will be this one.

Inglourious Basterds - August 21 - Quentin Tarantino directs Brad Pitt in this violent (of course) tale of a group of WWII commandos who conducted high-profile executions/terrorist acts against the Nazis in occupied France prior to D-Day.

Astro Boy - September 23 - They are really making a full length animated feature about this Japanese Anime chestnut?

Shutter Island - October 2 - Martin Scorsese working once again with Leonardo DiCaprio in this mystery set in 1954.

The Wolf Man - November 6 - Benicio Del Toro and Anthony Hopkins in the retelling of the classic horror tale.

2012 - November 13 - Roland Emmerich's ("The Day After Tomorrow") tale of global cataclysm and the struggle of the survivors.

Nine - November 27 - Tim Burton's latest animated strangeness, with Elijah Wood and Jennifer Connelly voicing characters fighting aliens in a post apocalyptic world.

The Lovely Bones - December 11 - Peter Jackson's latest, about the ghost of a young, murdered girl watching over her family and friends' reactions to the event. Mark Wahlberg and Rachel Weisz star.

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

released).

Avatar - (unknown) - 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.

The Road - (unannounced 2009) - 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.

*Nottingham - (*unannounced 2010) - 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 Cate Blanchett as Maid Marion.

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. Mickey Rourke and Scarlett Johansson to co-star.

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.

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.

Spider-Man 4 - May 2011 - Tobey Maquire is back as the angst ridden arachnid powered hero.

Thor - June 2011 - Another Marvel superhero...but the Nordic God is about as bland personality-wise as Superman, so we'll see how it goes. Kevin Kidd (Rome) is said to be playing the title role.

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.

The Avengers - 2012 - Iron Man, Hulk, Thor, and Captain America open up a can of whoopass on bad guys everywhere.