It's finally time! Movies are BACK, baby! Starting this weekend, we now have high profile movies that are either Blockbuster material, or serious adult entertainment (and I mean by being intelligent, not pornographic, so get your minds out of the gutter). Mitch has taken quite the semi-sabbatical from doing movie reviews lately, spending his time on this column, some "best of" lists, and of course, his weekly "24" recaps. But that will now change, as he will be reviewing at least one movie a week for the next 14 weeks.

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Here's the schedule (for the movie releases...look for the reviews a few days later):

April 17 - State of Play

April 24 - The Soloist

May 1 - X-Men Origins: Wolverine

May 8 - Star Trek

May 15 - Angels & Demons

May 22 - Terminator Salvation

May 29 - Up

June 5 - Land of the Lost

June 12 - The Taking of Pelham 1 2 3

June 19 - Year One

June 26 - Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen

July 3 - Public Enemies

July 10 - Bruno

July 17 - Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince

Plus anything that comes out of left field to be judged worthy.

News and Rumors

~ Michael Sheen will be joining the cast of the next mega-blockbuster "Twilight" movie, "New Moon". Sheen, who is great whether he's doing serious films like "Frost/Nixon", or camp like "Underworld" will play the leader of the Volturi, an Italian coven of vampires. (Gotta like a Facebook comment I saw yesterday: "I was pale before Twilight made it cool").

~ It looks like Ridley Scott has officially changed his point-of-view for the movie that WAS going to be called "Nottingham". Russell Crowe was going to play the Sheriff...but now he's changed it to where Crowe will be Robin Hood.

In addition to already named cast members Cate Blanchett, Mark Strong, Scott Grimes and Vanessa Redgrave; William Hurt has been added as the Earl of Penbroke.

Filming finally begins this month.

~ Steve Carell and Tina Fey will combine for the comedy "Date Night", where they play an ordinary couple whose routine night out goes crazy when they are mistaken for someone else. James Franco and Mark Wahlberg will also be in it, with Marky-Mark playing a former black ops operative "helping" the couple and Franco as a dim con man.

~ Fans of Showtime's "The Tudors" have reason to be happy. They've announced that there will be one more season of the racy depiction of the lives and loves of King Henry VIII.

The most recent season started two weeks ago, and is already looking quite good

as Jonathan Rhys Meyers continues his astounding work as the famous monarch (despite the fact that he looks nothing like him).

Stupid Remakes and Sequels

~ I'm sure my wife won't be happy I'm putting this here, because she loved the original, but Emma Thompson is putting back in the fake teeth that even the British go "ick" at seeing, playing Nanny McPhee in a second movie of the children's series. Maggie Gyllenhaal, Rhys Ian, and Maggie Smith have also been cast.

~ Elizabeth Shue is set to star in a remake of the camp classic "Piranha". This time? It's going to be in 3D (as in dumb, desperate, and d'oh!)

This week's new movie releases:

State of Play

Starring: Russell Crowe, Rachel McAdams, Ben Affleck, Helen Mirren

Plot: An investigative reporter and his colleague try to uncover the secrets behind the murder of the research assistant/mistress of a rising

star politician.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Very positive buzz on this film; the highest I've seen in a very long time for a political thriller, a genre that seemed almost dead. Right on time, too, as I'm not sure which one of these actors are more in need of a hit; Crowe, McAdams, or Affleck.

In any case, I'm hoping this can be a bit better than the decent "Duplicity"...and have better box office numbers.

Look for the review early next week.

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Crank: High Voltage

Starring: Jason Statham, Amy Smart, Clifton Collins Jr.

Plot: Despite looking like he died from falling 100 stories from a helicopter in the last movie, Chev Chelios is indeed alive, but now he's
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out after the man who stole his heart, leaving an artificial one in its place that needs constant electrical charges to keep working.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: I thought the first "Crank" was one of the worst movies I ever saw...although I'll admit that it was still entertaining to watch despite the stupidity. This one? Looks to be a 100% replay of the first one....which is to say; a movie put together by an ADD director who spent three straight months prior to filming on a diet of nothing but Red Bull and SweetTarts.

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17 Again

Starring: Zac Efron, Matthew Perry, Leslie Mann

Plot: A man who is in the midst of a pity party about his life of regrets suddenly reverts back to being a 17 year old, looking to create a path that leads to a better adult experience.
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View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Completely predictable popcorn comic fare aimed squarely at the audience that love Zac Efron for his High School Musical performances. This is this week's version of "I feel sorry for you if your 12 year old drags you to this film.

Please have alcohol ready for yourself immediately after the movie.

Or if you have a designated driver, please feel free to smuggle in a flask".

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New DVD Releases for Tuesday, April 21

Frost/Nixon **- Only three movies from 2008 earned Bernie Kosars (4 footballs) from me in 2008. This was one of them.**

A fantastic adaptation of the hit Broadway play concerning the unlikely television interviews between David Frost, then a struggling lightweight television variety host, and Richard Nixon, desperately striving for a comeback three years after his disgraced exit from the White House.
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Extraordinary acting from Michael Sheen as Frost, and especially Frank Langella as Nixon, a performance that I still say was the best of the year.

Must See.

***The Wrestler* -** Mostly noted for the amazing comeback performance from Mickey Rourke. But it is an excellent film on its own rights; the look at a faded professional wrestler facing retirement, but unable to adjust to a new life outside of the ring.

Marisa Tomei and Evan Rachel Wood also give magnificent performances.

***Notorious* -** Biographical film of the life of Christopher Wallace, a.k.a. Notorious B.I.G., the gangster rapper who went from rags to riches to murdered. The potential for a good movie was there, but instead, you get a very bland, boring, predictable rehashing of the life without looking more than an inch deep into the reasons for what he did, and what happened to him.

Calendar Watch

Next week; *The Soloist*, *Obsessed, Earth, Fighting*

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

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.

Year One - June 19 - Jack Black and Michael Cera as a couple of lazy hunter-gatherers on an epic journey through the ancient world. Harold Ramis directs

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?

Surrogates - September 25 - Bruce Willis as a cop in a futuristic world where humans live in isolation and interact through surrogate robots.

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).

The Informant - (limited release in Sept) - Steven

Soderbergh's latest attempt at Oscar with Matt Damon as a company-man turned whistleblower against an agri-business giant. Might have touches of Coen Brother-like dark humor.

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.

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. Mick ey 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.