

## Reviews of recent and upcoming DVD releases

**By Billy O'Keefe**

**McClatchy-Tribune News Service  
(MCT)**

"Futurama: Bender's Big Score!" (NR, 2007, Fox)

Much like "Family Guy" before it, "Futurama" is coming back from the television dead. And just as "Family Guy" wasted no time in addressing its vindication, neither does "Futurama: Bender's Big Score!" which kicks off the proceedings with a few well-deserved kicks of sand in Fox's face. Fortunately, that's where the similarities end. While "Family Guy's" movie felt like three episodes remixed and stitched together, "Score" actually feels like a first-rate animated film. The story \_ a wildly convoluted yet sensibly played adventure centered around Internet scams and time travel \_ is exceptionally clever, and the twists leading up to the ending provide some genuine surprise. Most importantly, though, the whole thing feels like "Futurama." A few years on the shelf has done nothing to hurt or age the show's wonderful sense of humor, which bodes well for the show's planned revival on Cartoon Network. Those new episodes can't come soon enough.

Extras: Cast/Groening commentary, live comic book reading, "Everybody Loves Hypnotoad" episode, storyboard, math lecture, Al Gore promo (with video commentary), 3D models, first draft script, new sketches, Comic-Con promo.

---

"Waitress" (PG-13, 2007, Fox)

"Waitress" is a hard movie to sell, because it's a plainly named film about an unhappily pregnant waitress (Keri Russell) who is stuck in a seemingly dead-end job that merely gives her some respite from an equally dead-end relationship with her lousy husband (Jeremy Sisto). On the surface, it's all been done, and by films with better names. But if you enjoy depressing slice-of-life films like a vegan savors a juicy cheeseburger, worry not: "Waitress" takes a bleak and tired premise, infuses some terrifically written characters, and ends up producing something that's surprisingly hopeful and very likeable. As detestable as Sisto's character is and as much as Russell's character's decisions will baffle, both are nonetheless fun to watch. That goes as well for the other players (Nathan Fillion, Cheryl Hines, Andy Griffith, Adrienne Shelly), who by film's end are just as exposed as the title character.

Extras: Producer/Russell commentary, four behind-the-scenes features, Fox Movie Channel "In Character" segments, Adrienne Shelly Foundation segment.

---

"Hot Rod" (PG-13, 2007, Paramount)

The DVD packaging for "Hot Rod" excitedly proclaims that "Rod" stars the same guy who starred in that "1/8Bleep3/8 in a Box" skit from "Saturday Night Live." It's meant to sell the film to Andy Samberg fans, but those who read between the lines may find a deeper meaning \_ that "Rod" is a feature-length film starring a guy most famous for appearing in five-minute skits. Sure enough, Samberg's talents feel stretched thin in "Rod," which stars him as an overgrown wannabe stuntman who's attempting a killer stunt to raise money for

his dying step-dad (Ian McShane) and impress the local love interest (Isla Fisher). Surprisingly, though \_ and in spite of every omen to the contrary \_ those talents never break. "Rod" couldn't be more textbook as far as plot goes, and it's contrived to the point that it pokes fun at itself so as to beat you to the punch. That, though, is what ultimately wins the day. It's hard to take too much issue with a film that already knows the deal. And while there are plenty of much funnier films out there that can entertain you without having to wink first, one still could do a whole lot worse than this. Jorma Taccone, Will Arnett, Bill Hader and Danny R. McBride also star.

Extras: Director/cast commentary, deleted/extended scenes, outtakes, behind-the-scenes feature.

---

"Ice Road Truckers: The Complete Season One" (NR, 2007, History Channel)

For two months every year, a 350-mile ice highway forms over several frozen Canadian lakes and leads a handful of very brave truckers to and from a cluster of diamond-mining outposts. The pay for traversing this road is immense for those gutsy enough to take it, but the dangers of driving a rig across 350 miles of pure ice in the bitter, lonely cold need no explanation. Too bad "Ice Road Truckers" feels the need to beat us over the head with one anyway. In fairness to the show, the focus in "Truckers" is mostly on the truckers themselves, who in turn make for a fascinating fraternity of high-paid daredevils. When the camera is on them, "Truckers" entertains. But it's never long before the show feels yet another need to remind us \_ through graphics and dramatization footage, no less \_ that the ice road has and could again take lives. Such drama makes sense in the first episode, but it gradually morphs into something resembling parody after we've heard the warnings for the umpteenth time. Fortunately, thanks to the DVD remote, the power to skip these shameless grabs for viewers now lies in your hand.

Contents: 10 episodes, plus the pilot and five behind-the-scenes features.

---

"I Know Who Killed Me" (R, 2007, Sony Pictures)

Well-behaved teenager Aubrey (Lindsay Lohan) is abducted and tortured, but manages to escape. When she awakes, though, she goes by the name of Dakota, works as a stripper and mouths off to her supposed parents. Now it falls on Aubrekota to figure out if she's crazy or scratching the surface of a ... you know what, who cares. No matter how it's phrased, the premise of "I Know Who Killed Me" reaches far beyond the point of absurdity before the film is even a quarter through. Things only worsen as time passes, and if "IKWKM" has even one good idea, it has no concept of how to communicate it. Instead, we're inundated with a rotation of "me too" gore scenes, stretches of unbearably pretentious cinematography, wannabe symbolism that's more funny than poignant, and random instances of Lohan acting like a bad girl. By the merciful end, there's only one mystery worth pondering: How did so many people agree to make something so overwhelmingly bad?

Extras: Alternate opening and ending, extended dance sequence, bloopers (in case the actual film doesn't count as blooper enough).

---

New Gift Sets Available on DVD

\_ "The Coen Brothers Movie Collection" (NR, 1984-96, MGM/Fox): Film compilations

released around the holidays often tend to package a couple of cherished favorites with a handful of lesser films that likely wouldn't sell on their own. This set, happily, doesn't play by those rules. Included in this five-film package: "Fargo," "Raising Arizona," "Miller's Crossing," "Blood Simple" and "Barton Fink." No extras.

\_ "Benny Hill: The Thames Years: 1969-1989: The Complete Megaset" (NR, 1969, A&E): The box art and title say it all: 58 episodes, 585 sketches and 18 discs inside. Extras include a Hill documentary, trivia, the A&E "Biography" episode on Hill, three behind-the-scenes features and the liner notes and pack-in booklets from the previously-released individual sets.

\_ "Christmas Time in South Park" (NR, 1997-2004, Comedy Central): Includes seven Christmas-themed episodes from the "South Park" canon, packaged in a storybook-like DVD case. Rabid "South Park" fans likely have most of these already, thanks to the season sets, but it nonetheless is cool to see them packaged together like this.

\_ "The X-Files: The Complete Collector's Edition" (NR, 1993-2002, Fox): All 201 episodes, along with the "X-Files" movie, sit inside this rather monstrous DVD box set. Also included: Commentary on the film and various episodes, a four-part documentary, deleted scenes, interviews, special effects sequences, behind-the-scenes features, art cards, a theatrical poster, a season one comic book and a 60-page episode guide.

\_ "Everybody Loves Raymond: The Complete Series" (NR, 1996-2005, HBO): Not to be outdone, HBO has packed all 210 episodes of "Everybody Loves Raymond" into a most bizarre plastic DVD package that resembles a rowhouse version of the Barone family house. Also included inside: a replica of the series finale script (autographed by the writers), footage from "The Late Show with David Letterman" that inspired the series' creation, a retrospective, bloopers, deleted scenes, interviews, two panel discussions and commentary on 39 of the episodes.

---

(Billy O'Keefe writes video game and DVD reviews for McClatchy-Tribune News Service.)

---

© 2007, McClatchy-Tribune Information Services.