



THE PURITAN POST

| by Hank W. Mardukas |

This Week on Home Video

Searching (2018)

The Korean guy who first gained fame worshipping Stifler's Mom in the *American Pie* flicks has really come a long way in his career. John Cho delivers the performance of his career here as a father searching for his missing daughter through the computer. The entire story is told via desktop computer, cell phone screen, etc. in the vein of *Unfriended* but with a *Taken* twist. *Searching* is awesome; suspenseful, surprisingly deep, and Cho is truly the driving force. Doubt he'll get any, but he deserves some awards recognition. Debra Messing is quite good too as the woman investigating the daughter's disappearance.

This Week on TV

DEAL OR NO DEAL ("Happy Howie Days" Mon. Dec. 3rd, 10pm NBC; New Eps. Wed. Dec. 5th, CNBC)

I was watching *Ellen* and saw Howie Mandel in a tracksuit promoting the show *Deal or No Deal*. I thought, what year is this *Ellen* episode from? But the hit sensation game show, *Deal or No Deal* is in fact returning to NBC Monday, December 5th for a Christmas Special and then continuing on CNBC with new episodes from then on. I, for one, am very excited. No game show is a better microcosm for the many faces of American capitalism: the greed, the women, the banker, suitcases potentially full of money. What more can you ask for in a TV show?

Director Spotlight: Guillermo Del Toro



Birth: 10/8/1964 Mexico
Notable Works: *The Devil's Backbone*, *Hellboy*, *Pan's Labyrinth*, *Hellboy II: The Golden Army*, *Pacific Rim*, *The Shape of Water*
What's Next: *Pinocchio* (2021)
Fun Fact: After clashing with Harvey Weinstein his film *Mimic*, friend James Cameron almost fought Weinstein at the 1997 Oscars.

The FIRST EVER MOVIE REVIEW of Disney's THE LION KING (2019)

THE PURITAN POST is all about being cutting edge, as is its noble editor and chief, yours truly, Hank. And in an unprecedented, groundbreaking issue of THE PURITAN POST I will be writing the first ever movie review for *The Lion King* (2019), the "live action" remake of the 1994 animated Disney classic. You may be asking, "Hank, how can you possibly write a movie review for a movie you haven't seen yet?" Good question, my dear reader. My answer is that I don't need to see the movie for the two minute teaser trailer released during another one of those horrendous American football games this past week told me all I need to know about the upcoming "live action" remake of *The Lion King*. For in that trailer we did not see truly live action filmmaking. Instead we saw entirely CG creations. This is not like Disney's *The Jungle Book* (2016) where the argument can still be made that actor playing Mowgli is a real human, but instead *The Lion King* presents entirely CG characters and worlds.

The reason I will not respect Disney by writing a movie review when I actually see the movie is because Disney will not respect its audience by presenting something we haven't seen before. I'm not going to pay increasingly absurd ticket prices to see another animated version of *The Lion King* in an animation style I much less prefer. We live in a society inundated with CGI content, particularly in animation. Disney no longer even has a hand drawn animation department which is sad on so many levels. If you're a loyal reader of THE PURITAN POST you're aware of my gripes with CGI. It is not that CGI doesn't have its place in movies, but the film industry has jumped the lion with CGI's usage in cinema. CGI isn't meant to be the entire creation, but rather something to enhance practical effects to better sell their perceived reality.

One of the best usages of CGI ever and probably my personal favorite is Spike Jonze's cinematic adaptation of *Where the Wild Things Are* (2009). In this film, an adaptation of the iconic children's book, Spike Jonze brilliantly uses a combination of Jim Henson workshop created characters and CGI faces to bring a lifelikeness to the "Wild Things" unlike anything I have ever seen before. Similar integration of practical and CGI is precisely what makes the original *Jurassic Park* so timeless.

Recently my wife Prudence and I watched DisneyNature's *Bears* (2014), which told the story of a mother bear named Sky and her two cubs, Amber and Scout. The movie, narrated by John C. Reilly, was profound in its simplistic story telling. Saying so much, whilst saying so little. Most of the story told simply through watching animals interact in the wild. A truly visionary director would've teamed up with Disney's animation and VFX departments along with DisneyNature to create a truly unique and one of a kind movie-going experience. To see real animals with CGI faces would be unlike anything anyone has ever seen before. The problem is, in today's Hollywood, executives and creative minds alike lack the patience and the discipline to create such a wondrous vision. Instead, projects like 2019's "live action" *The Lion King* are rushed in and out of production for one purpose and one purpose only: to make lots of money.

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