

reel deal

BATMAN BEGINS

Girls love the suit and guys dig the dark detective action. This month Batman returns to glorious form in the highly-anticipated *Batman Begins*.

Directed by Christopher Nolan (*Memento*, *Insomnia*) this bat-tastic outing promises to be a major departure from the gothic, Prince-laden world of Tim Burton and

neon-colored bat-nipples of Joe "I somehow managed to make Batman suck" Schumacher. Starting from the beginning (hence the title) audiences across the world will get to see an obsessed Bruce Wayne train to become the dark and twisted man-in-batsuit that we all know and love. Based in a real-world setting, this gritty take on the Batman legend is sure to be the one comic fans have been waiting for all their lives.



BATMAN: The Animated Series Vol. 3

The funny thing about Batman, outside of print media, is that he's only translated perfectly in animated form. While funny, Adam West's old series was just absolutely corny — not a great representation of what is an often dark and serious comic, whereas the live-action films up until this point have been downright embarrassing. When Bruce Timm unleashed his adult-oriented *Batman: The Animated Series* back in the '90s he turned the American animation world upside down. No longer geared towards children, this series tackled complex story lines with a tremendously cinematic feel. This third volume of the beloved series introduces the villainous Ra's Al Ghul — one of Batman's foes also featured in *Batman Begins*.

Like the two volumes before it, this four-disc DVD set is laced with short featurettes and select commentaries on various episodes.



HIEROGLYPHICS LIVE

The Hieroglyphics crew have been praised time and time again in the pages of this magazine. While they are all extremely talented hip-hop artists, they are also some of the most tireless cats in the game. Aside from handling their own successful indie label, these guys are constantly on the grind selling albums and performing live. In this two-disc set (one DVD and one audio CD), we get to follow the legendary col-



lective of Del The Funky Homosapien, Souls of Mischief, Pep Love and Casual as they embark on their nationwide *Full Circle* tour with Little Brother and Z-Man. Experience both their live performances and tour bus antics. Remember, all work and no play...



BASEMENT TV: Underground Hip-Hop's Finest

Though the quality of underground hip-hop tends to outshine much of what you currently hear on the radio, it still doesn't receive the shine it deserves. This is for a number of reasons, namely: independent labels can't afford to promote or pay to have their artists highlighted on mainstream television and radio outlets. Fortunately, there are hip-hop heads who've used their resources to help out their favorite groups. This collection, named after a store in California, features tons of amateur footage of some of hip-hop's finest artists, including Aesop Rock, Fat Lip (formerly of The Pharcyde), the Living Legends, J-Live, Atmosphere and plenty, plenty more. Get an inside look at what these cats do for a living from rockin' venue after venue, to battle competitions, and even in-store performances. Warning: the footage here can be pretty low-quality at times, as it was seemingly all shot on camcorders, however true hip-hop heads and diehard fans of the featured artists will definitely want to pick this up.



BIG BLACK COMEDY SHOW: Volume 2

The *Big Black Comedy Show* returns for another installment of hilarious comedy. This time around award-winning comedian Mo'Nique (*The Parkers*, *Showtime at the Apollo*) returns along with Rodney Perry as the co-hosts of three live taped comedy shows. The line-up includes Rolfie May, Vincent Morris, Rodman, Chris Spencer and Sexy Marlo. If you can't get enough stand-up comedy, then this is the perfect DVD for you.

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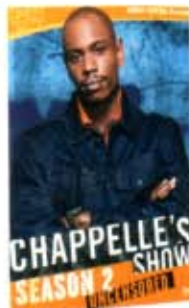
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CHAPPELLE SHOW: Season 2

We all know that Dave Chappelle is a phenomenal comedic talent from his stand-up comedy routine and the first season of his hit show, but this is the season that introduced the now overused catchphrase, "I'm Rick James, bl#ch!" It also introduced Lil Jon interviewing Lil Jon, a hardcore Wayne Brady, a basketball-playing Prince, the "Nigger Family" and plenty other hilarious skits. Truth be told, if anybody thought that Chappelle's show couldn't get any funnier after the first season, they were dead wrong and this collection is the uncensored proof.



MACHINIST.

Though he bulked up to fill in the cape and cowl of DC Comic's one-and-only Dark Knight for *Batman Begins*, underrated actor Christian Bale had to actually bulk down for his role in this psychological thriller. Apparently Bale lost over 60 pounds to give himself a sick, ghostly appearance that oozes creepiness. If that wasn't reason enough to check out this film of Hitchcockian proportions, then maybe you should check it out because this chilling and bleak story about a factory worker haunted by nightmares and driven to insomnia is actually one fine flick.

Features on this DVD include 8 Deleted Scenes; *The Machinist*; *Breaking the Rules*; Commentary by director Brad Anderson; and the Theatrical Trailer.



BE COOL

Much like the recent re-release of *Get Shorty*, this sequel is got a no-holds-barred release from MGM Studios. The film, if you don't know by now, focuses on the ongoing happenings of Chili Palmer (John Travolta). Tired of the film business, Chili is looking to jump start a lucrative career as a music guru. He hooks up with a recently widowed music executive (Uma Thurman) with hopes to launch the career of an up-and-coming singer (Christina Milian). Of course, this wouldn't be a comedy if hilarity didn't ensue. There are laughs-a-plenty with an eclectic cast that includes *Andre 3000*, *Cedric the Entertainer*, *The Rock*, *Vince Vaughn* and *Harvey Keitel*. For your very own chance to *Be Cool* check out this month's give-away on page 15.

Features on this set include Deleted Scenes; Gag Reel; *Be Cool, Very Cool*: a 22-minute behind-the-scenes documentary; Music Video; "Close Up: Dance Partners"; "Close Up: The Rock"; "Close Up: Andre Benjamin"; "Close Up: Cedric the Entertainer"; "Close Up: Christina Milian"; and the Original Theatrical Trailer.



HITCH

Surprisingly enough, Will Smith has not done a romantic comedy until now and believe it or not, it's like he was born for such a role. As suave romance counselor Alexander Hitchens, we get to watch as he puts his advice to use with a pudgy, helpless accountant played by the *King of Queens*' star, Kevin James. Of course, Hitch isn't exactly Mr. Perfect himself, as we see that his own love life is in complete shambles. DVD features include: 4 Deleted Scenes; Bloopers; "Dance Steps Made Easy" featurette; "Hitch Style" featurette; "The Dating Experts" featurette; "Love in New York" featurette; "Will Smith's Red Carpet Ride" featurette; and the "1 Thing" music video by Amerie.



PACIFIER

All tough guys have to go soft some time. Just look at Arnold Schwarzenegger's filmography, or better yet, that of former NWA member Ice Cube. The same holds true for Mr. XXX himself, Vin Diesel. Though he's played a big softie in the past (in the exceptional animated film, *Iron Giant*), this may be the first time we get to see him be a big teddy bear on screen. As a Navy S.E.A.L. involved in a mission-gone-awry, he is placed on guard duty (AKA babysitting) with the kids of a recently assassinated scientist. Of course, what follows is fun for the whole family as Vin Diesel must deal with children.

Features include: Deleted Scenes; Outrageous bloopers; Special Ops TV commercials; "On Set With Brad Garrett: Unpacified"; "On Set With Mr. Diesel: Action Hero and Nice Guy"; Audio commentary with the writer/director Adam Shankman.

