

## Blu-Ray Review: 'Shutter Island' Looks Amazing, But Deserved Better Release

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on June 10, 2010 - 3:31pm

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CHICAGO – I firmly believe that the detractors of Martin Scorsese's amazing "Shutter Island" will deny they ever criticized this masterful thriller when it was first released. History will be very kind to this dizzying trip through a cinematic funhouse led by arguably our best living filmmaker, but one would never guess it from Paramount's purely average Blu-ray release.



Blu-Ray Rating: **4.0/5.0**

To be fair, the main reason people pick up a Blu-ray has always been and will always be the film itself and "Shutter Island" looks absolutely stunning in HD. Robert Richardson's award-worthy cinematography pops off the screen as the colors and line detail have been perfectly mastered for 1080p. Even the film's detractors would have to admit that this is one of the most technically accomplished works of 2010, making it a perfect fit for Blu-ray. And the audio mix is similarly strong, highlighting the film's excellent audio design and great musical choices by supervisor Robbie Robertson.



Shutter Island was released on Blu-ray and DVD on June 8th, 2010

*Photo credit: Paramount Home Video*

The thing that aggravates me about the "Shutter Island" Blu-ray release is the scant special features, ones that include no commentary track, deleted scenes, and barely any behind-the-scenes information. There are straight-to-video films that even their producers would admit are crap getting better bonus material. As history notes the quality of "Shutter Island" perhaps a Special Edition will someday be released to correct the tragic oversight of not learning more about how a movie this complex and riveting gets made.

It seems like only yesterday that I was reviewing the film as it played in theaters (with less than a four-month window between the multiplex and the Blu-ray shelf) and my feelings about it have only strengthened with repeat viewing. Having read Dennis Lehane's excellent book, I knew the twists of the story going in, which made it easier to admire the production of the film than those who didn't know where it was going. If you've only seen it once, I would recommend a second look to see how well the "secret" of the piece holds up. It's remarkable.

We are introduced to "Shutter Island" lead U.S. Marshall Teddy Daniels (Leonardo DiCaprio) in a physically ill state on a boat travelling to the titular location, a desolate chunk of land that holds a mental hospital for the criminally insane. He will never look quite right as his physical state clearly hides more demons than just seasickness.

Rachel Solando, one of the patients at Shutter Island, has gone missing in the middle of the night, as if she simply “vanished through the walls”. Dr. Cawley (Sir Ben Kingsley) tells Teddy and his partner Chuck (Mark Ruffalo) the sad story of Ms. Solando, a woman who drowned her three children and then merely sat them back at the kitchen table as if nothing was wrong. With a cryptic note left, Teddy and Chuck try to not only find the missing woman but get to the bottom of the many secrets of Shutter Island. Michelle Williams, Max Von Sydow, Patricia Clarkson, Jackie Earle Haley, Ted Levine, Emily Mortimer, and Elias Koteas all make a noticeable impact in small roles.

As for the quality of the film itself, I'll quote my [theatrical review](#) [17]:

*“Shutter Island” is a nightmare on celluloid, a riveting piece of work from first frame to last. The film has reminded many viewers of another technical display from a filmmaker who was recognized at the time as one of the best living - Stanley Kubrick’s “The Shining”. Like that film, I believe it will take time for the criticism of “Shutter Island” to turn to praise. People will return to “Shutter Island” for decades to come and get new things out of it every time. It’s the rare film that rewards multiple viewings. It’s nice to get one this good so early in the year. It might be awhile before we see another one this good.”*

In the four months since the release of “Shutter Island,” we haven’t seen a mainstream, widely-released film that’s nearly as good. It seems likely at this point that 2010 will not go down as a banner year for filmmaking. At least we’ll have one masterpiece.

*‘Shutter Island’ is released by Paramount Home Video and stars Leonardo DiCaprio, Mark Ruffalo, Sir Ben Kingsley, Michelle Williams, Ted Levine, John Carroll Lynch, Patricia Clarkson, Emily Mortimer, Jackie Earle Haley, Elias Koteas, and Max Von Sydow. It was written by Laeta Kalogridis and directed by Martin Scorsese. It was released on June 8th, 2010 and is rated R.*



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