

Blu-Ray Review: DC Universe Releases Lackluster ‘All-Star Superman’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on February 28, 2011 - 7:06pm

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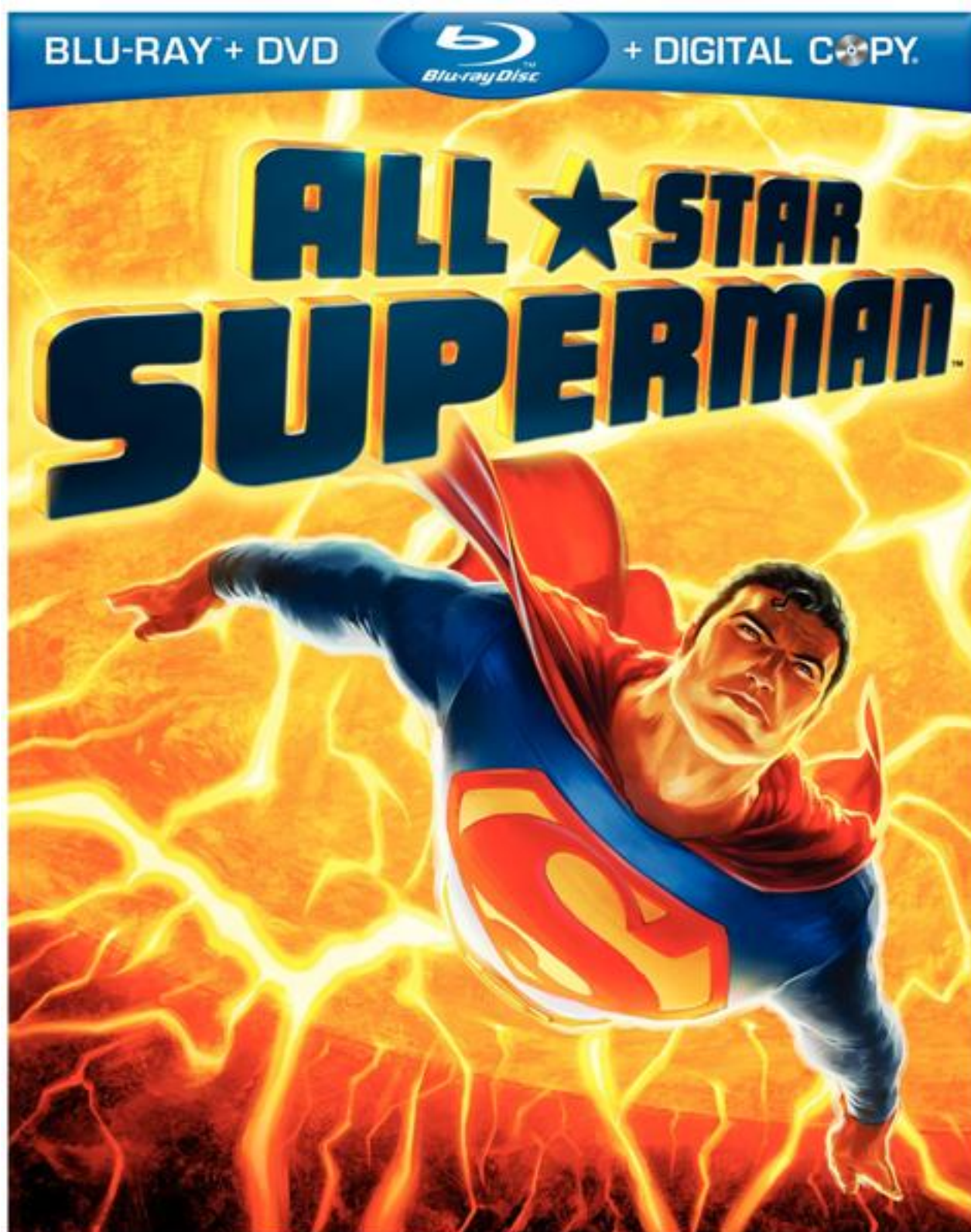
CHICAGO – “All-Star Superman” would be perfectly enjoyable on a Saturday morning but it once seemed that the straight-to-DVD series of films that wore the “DC Universe” banner aimed a little higher than lazy weekend entertainment. Oh, how even the superheroes have fallen. This once-ambitious series (that might be again with an exciting fall release of “Batman: Year One”) has released what is, in many ways, their most lackluster affair to date.



Blu-Ray Rating: **2.5/5.0**

The big problem with “All-Star Superman” is that it’s based on a multi-issue series with multiple plotlines and character arcs. The book was very well-received and written by one of the greats, Grant Morrison, who has done amazing work with “Justice League.” Morrison writes complex arcs that aren’t so easily translated from multi-issue books to 76 minutes of screen time. It just doesn’t work.

By having so many themes and ideas diluted down to 76 minutes, “All-Star Superman” comes off sterile and boring. I can barely even begin to recount the plot. The overall arc involves Superman (voiced by James Denton of “Desperate Housewives”) being poisoned by the sun to the point that he’s going to die soon. He decides to tell Lois Lane (Christina Hendricks of “Mad Men”) that Clark Kent is really the Man of Steel and even gives her super powers for 24 hours as a gift. The rest of the piece is a complex tale about responsibility and regret — the kind of thing that works great in print over multiple pages but not so much in a cartoon.



All-Star Superman was released on Blu-Ray and DVD on February 22nd. 2011

Photo credit: Warner Bros. Home Video

And, make no mistake, this is a cartoon. The best of the other DC Universe films (“Justice League: The New Frontier,” “Batman: Under the Red Hood”) felt more like graphic novels brought to life or films in animated form. There’s a difference between that and a cartoon that feels like it plays more towards kids in their PJs on a Saturday morning. This just feels like lesser entertainment on every level, from the production values to the voice work. Denton is incredibly dull as Superman, but credit should go to Hendricks and her work as Lane. She’s the best thing about the film.

The DC Universe line has become such a rollercoaster of quality. Just as I was about to write it off, “Under the Red Hood” surprised the hell out of me with its level of intensity. I have little hope for the next installment, a Green Lantern adventure — but that’s just because I’m not a fan of the lead — although the potential of “Year One” is amazing. Just consider “All-Star Superman” a dip in the rollercoaster. We’ll go back uphill again.

Synopsis:

“Fueled by hatred and jealousy, Lex Luthor masterminds an elaborate plot to kill the Man of Steel – and it works. Poisoned by solar radiation, Superman is dying. With weeks to live, he fulfills his life’s dreams – especially revealing his true identity to Lois Lane – until Luthor proclaims his ultimate plan to control the world with no alien hero to stop him. Powers fading, Superman engages in a spectacular deadly battle with Luthor that could truly trigger the end of Earth’s Greatest Protector. This startling and gripping DC Universe Animated Original Movie stars the voice talents of James Denton, Anthony LaPaglia, Christina Hendricks and Ed Asner.”

Special Features:

- o Sneak Peek at “Green Lantern: Emerald Knights”
- o Superman Now
- o Two bonus episodes from “Superman: The Animated Series” handpicked by Bruce Timm
- o “Incubating the Idea” – A conversation with Grant Morrison
- o Audio Commentary: Bruce Timm and Grant Morrison

o All-Star Superman Virtual Comic Book

"All-Star Superman" features voice work by James Denton and Christina Hendricks. It was released on Blu-ray and DVD on February 22nd, 2011. It is rated PG and runs 76 minutes.



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