

Blu-Ray Review: MGM Rides Into Town With Classic Westerns

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on August 18, 2011 - 5:09pm

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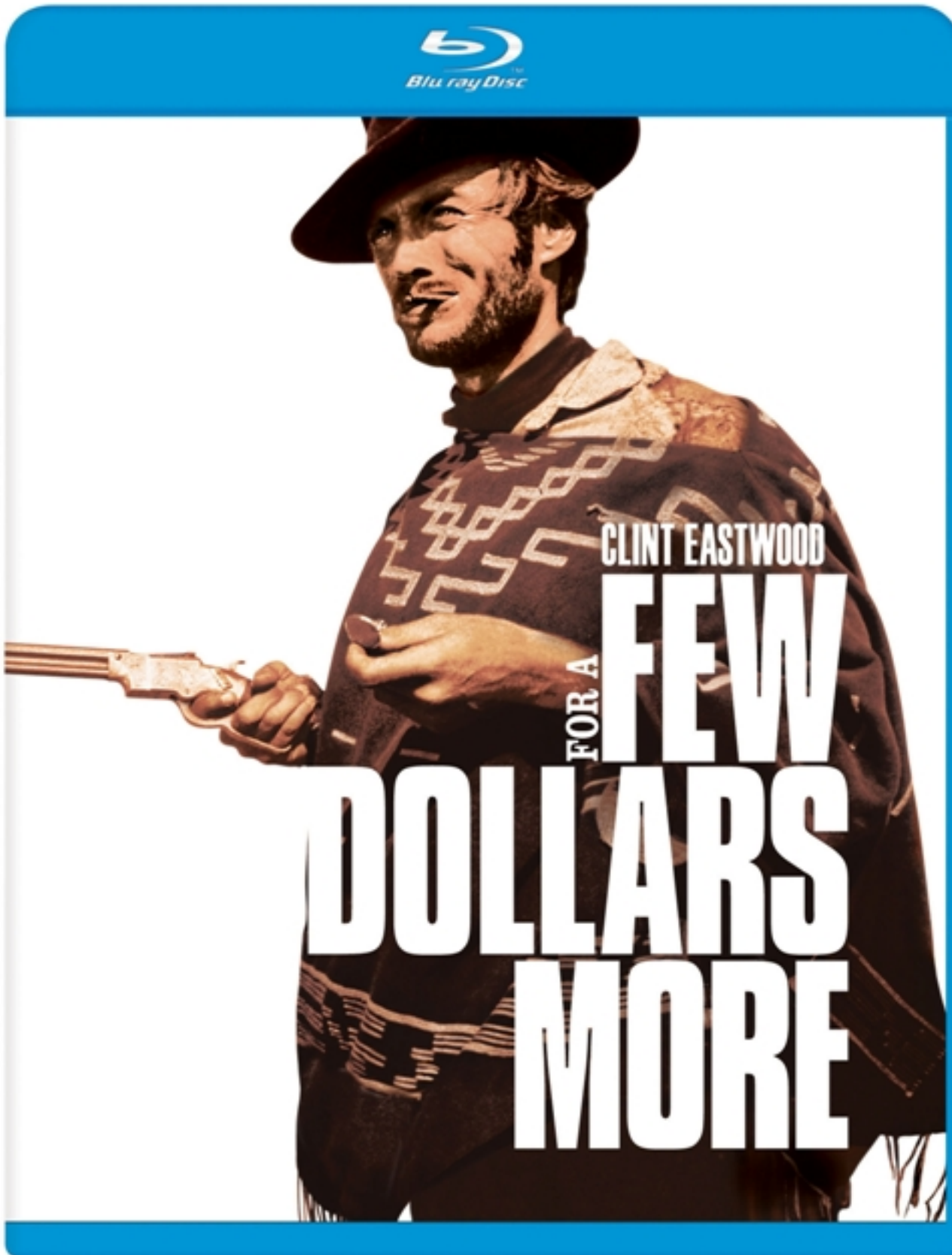
CHICAGO – Westerns are regularly “called up” to HD Blu-ray at two times during the year — Father’s Day and Christmas. It’s logical in a marketing sense that Clint Eastwood would dominate new release shelves during the seasons where dear old dad is likely to get a gift, but it leaves the rest of the year as barren as a ghost town. MGM has a little summer gift for fans of alpha males going through withdrawal — four classics of the genre hitting Blu-ray this month — “A Fistful of Dollars,” “For a Few Dollars More,” “The Magnificent Seven,” and “Return of the Magnificent Seven.”



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

As influential and enjoyable as John Sturges’ “The Magnificent Seven” is for a lot of viewers, my preferences in the quartet would side with the Sergio Leone & Clint Eastwood collaborations every time. I love the Man With No Name and the style that Leone brought to his filmography. “The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly” or “Once Upon a Time in the West” may be superior Leone films but “For a Few Dollars More” and “A Fistful of Dollars” set the stage for those latter masterpieces. Sergio Leone made far too few films for this fan and any chance to own any of them should be taken. As for the Yul Brynner films, “The Magnificent Seven” is a beloved film for a reason. The sequel is not for a reason as well.

As for special features, the Leone films and the original “Seven” are well-packed but “Return” is bare-bones. They’re the same releases as part of the trilogy box set that was released last year, just now available stand-alone and at a much lower price (\$12 at some outlets). The transfers are solid on all four, as we’ve come to expect from MGM/Fox — these are good transfers but not spectacular. Still, your dad will probably be pretty happy.



For a Few Dollars More was released on Blu-ray on August 2nd, 2011

Photo credit: MGM

“A Fistful of Dollars”

Synopsis:

“Oscar-Winner Clint Eastwood blends a quiet steadiness with a palpable ferocity as the iconic gunslinger “The Man With No Name” in Sergio Leone’s gritty “spaghetti western.” When a steely blue-eyed mercenary arrives in a dusty border town where two rival bands of smugglers terrorize the impoverished citizens, he pits the gangs against each other in one of the most exhilarating frontier adventure films in cinema history.”

Special Features:

- o The Christopher Frayling Archives: Fistful Of Dollars
- o Feature Commentary by Noted Film Historian Sir Christopher Frayling
- o A New Kind Of Hero
- o A Few Weeks In Spain: Clint Eastwood on the Experience of Making the Film
- o Tre Voci: Fistful Of Dollars
- o Not Ready For Primetime: Renowned Filmmaker Monte Hellman Discusses the Television Broadcast of A Fistful Of Dollars
- o The Network Prologue with Harry Dean Stanton
- o Location Comparisons: Then To Now
- o 10 Radio Spots
- o Double Bill Trailer
- o A Fistful Of Dollars Trailer

“For a Few Dollars More”

Synopsis:

“When two rival bounty hunters (Oscar-Winner Clint Eastwood and Lee Van Cleef) learn they’re both after the same murderous bandit, they join forces in hopes of bringing him to justice. But all is not as it seems in the hard-hitting second installment of Sergio Leone’s trilogy starring

Eastwood as the famed “Man With No Name.””

Special Features:

- o The Christopher Frayling Archives: For A Few Dollars More
- o Feature Commentary by Noted Film Historian Sir Christopher Frayling
- o A New Standard - Frayling On A Few Dollars More
- o Back For More - Clint Eastwood Remembers For A Few Dollars More
- o Tre Voci: For A Few Dollars More
- o For A Few Dollars More - A Look at Alternate Scenes and Releases
- o Location Comparisons
- o 12 Radio Spots
- o Original Theatrical Trailers

“The Magnificent Seven”

Synopsis:

“Academy Award Winner Yul Brynner stars in the landmark Western that launched the film careers of Steve McQueen, Charles Bronson and James Coburn. Tired by being ravaged by an army of marauding bandits, the residents of a small Mexican village seek help from seven American gunfighters. The only problem — It’s seven against 50! Also featuring Eli Wallach and Robert Vaughn, and set against Elmer Bernstein’s Oscar-Nominated score, director John Sturges’ thrilling adventure belongs in any Blu-ray collection.”

Special Features:

- o Guns For Hire - The Making Of The Magnificent Seven
- o Elmer Bernstein And The Magnificent Seven
- o The Linen Book: Lost Images from The Magnificent Seven
- o Original Theatrical Trailers
- o Still Gallery
- o Audio Commentary Featuring James Coburn, Eli Wallach and Walter Mirisch

“Return of The Magnificent Seven”

Synopsis:

“In this thrilling sequel, the legendary Magnificent Seven thunder through Mexico in search of their compatriot who has been taken hostage by a band of desperados. Starring Academy Award® winner Yul Brynner and a stellar supporting cast that includes Robert Fuller, Warren Oates and Claude Akins, Return Of The Magnificent Seven features Elmer Bernstein’s Oscar®-nominated score and raises the bar for rugged western adventure to a new, heart-stopping level!”

“A Fistful of Dollars,” “For a Few Dollars More,” “The Magnificent Seven,” and “Return of the Magnificent Seven” were all released by MGM on Blu-ray on August 2nd, 2011.



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By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [17]
Content Director
HollywoodChicago.com
brian@hollywoodchicago.com [16]

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