

Blu-ray Review: 'The Hunger Games' Given Stellar Two-Disc Edition

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on August 26, 2012 - 4:18pm

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CHICAGO – Can a Blu-ray be both great and a likely placeholder for a future Special Edition? “The Hunger Games” makes that case. The lack of a commentary track or deleted scenes (and Lionsgate’s double-dipping track record) lead one to believe that a Special Edition will likely hit stores in conjunction with “Catching Fire” but this is still a great release with hours of special features and a stellar HD video and audio transfer. And the movie has held up well since its wave of publicity has subsided in favor of Summer blockbusters. It’s a great flick, one of the best Hollywood films of 2012 to date.



Rating: **4.5/5.0**

My friend Erik (follow [@EriktheMovieman](#)) put it perfectly when he said “Gary Ross actually made a movie.” What he meant was he didn’t make a product, a piece of merchandising designed to appeal only to the consumers already programmed to buy it. Sorry Twi-hards but that’s all “The Twilight Saga” has been, a focus-grouped effort to make as much money as possible off of fans of the books. There has been some artistic quality that has sprung from that accidentally but “The Hunger Games” is clearly a more creatively vibrant venture on every level. The source material is strong but it’s what Ross and his team, especially the amazingly talented Jennifer Lawrence did with it that elevated this adventure from product to film.



The Hunger Games

Photo credit: Lionsgate

See how they pulled that off with a series of great special features that are assembled under the banner of “The World is Watching: Making The Hunger Games.” It runs over 2 hours and offers interviews with all of the major players including Ross, Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, Woody Harrelson, and many more. It’s a great series of interviews and insights into how a film like “The Hunger Games” gets made. It’s

accompanied by a number of smaller features for those who like their behind-the-scenes details in bite-sized form but “The World is Watching” is the full meal. The second disc of special features also comes with marketing materials and an interview between Ross & Elvis Mitchell. All around, this is a great release.



The Hunger Games was released on Blu-ray and DVD on August 18, 2012

Photo credit: Lionsgate

The second disc of bonus material leaves the film itself on the first Blu-ray and the movie looks and sounds spectacular in HD. In fact, a second home viewing reminded me of the filmmaking quality of “The Hunger Games” now that I have the ability to appreciate it outside of not knowing the story (I hadn’t read the book for my [theatrical review](#) [14]). I stand by that review. This is a great film, one that will stand the test of time. Or at least until another Special Edition Blu-ray is released.

Synopsis:

Every year in the ruins of what was once North America, the Capitol of the nation of Panem forces each of its twelve districts to send a teenage boy and girl to compete in the Hunger Games. Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen volunteers in her younger sister’s place and must rely upon her sharp instincts when she’s pitted against highly trained Tributes who have prepared their entire lives. If she’s ever to return home to District 12, Katniss must make impossible choices in the arena that weigh survival against humanity and life against love.



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Special Features:

- o Game Maker: Suzanne Collins And The Hunger Games Phenomenon
- o The World Is Watching: Making The Hunger Games
- o Letters From The Rose Garden
- o Controlling The Games
- o A Conversation With Gary Ross and Elvis Mitchell
- o Preparing For The Games: A Director’s Process
- o Propaganda Film
- o Marketing Archive

“The Hunger Games” stars Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, Liam Hemsworth, Woody Harrelson, Elizabeth Banks, Lenny Kravitz, Stanley Tucci, and Donald Sutherland. It was written by Suzanne Collins and Gary Ross and Billy Ray and directed by Ross. It was released on Blu-ray and DVD on August 18, 2012.



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