

DVD Round Up, Oct. 30, 2009: 'Sauna,' 'The Tournament,' 'The Butcher'

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on October 30, 2009 - 7:00am

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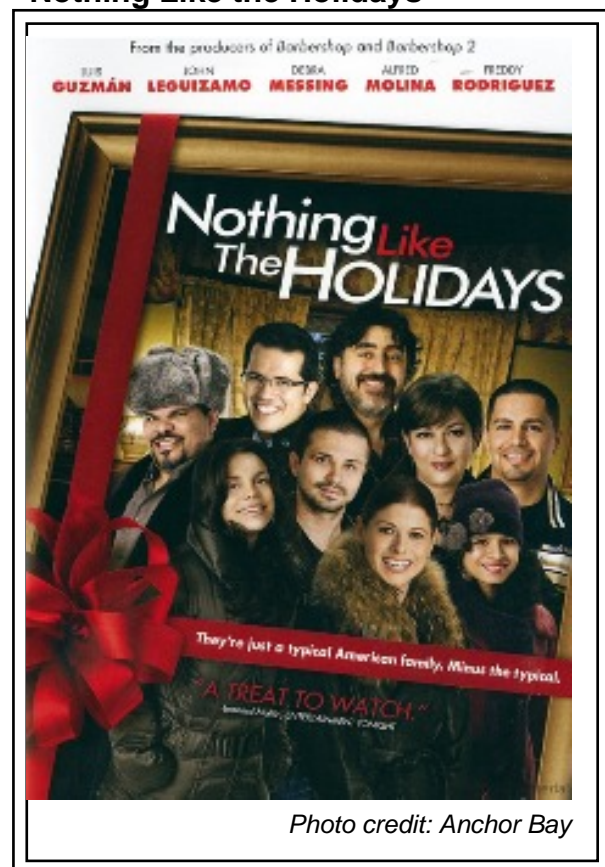
CHICAGO – Many editions of the DVD Round-Up have featured a different genre and focus for each title within it. This week seems a little more thematically linked as we have a trio of foreign horror films and a few more independent films than usual. Of course, there has to be a holiday comedy to spice things up.

Consider this column informational with synopsis, tech specs, and special features info for titles that might go otherwise unnoticed, but if you're looking for more critical opinion, we covered "[Sauna](#) [19]" when it played at the EU Film Fest, "[Medicine For Melancholy](#) [20]" when it was available on IFC Direct, and "[Nothing Like the Holidays](#) [21]" when it played in theaters.

"P" and "The Tournament" were released on October 20th, 2009

"The Butcher," "Medicine For Melancholy," "Nothing Like the Holidays," and "Sauna" were released on October 27th, 2009

"Nothing Like the Holidays"



Synopsis: "John Leguizamo (Ice Age, Moulin Rouge!), Freddy Rodriguez (Six Feet Under, Bobby), Debra Messing (Will & Grace, The Starter Wife), and Alfred Molina (The Pink Panther 2) lead a hilarious ensemble cast in this humorous and heartwarming holiday story that is "laugh-out-loud-funny and downright touching." (MoviePictureFilm.com)

It's Christmastime in Chicago, and the far-flung members of the Rodriguez family are converging at their parents' house to celebrate the season. During the course of this eventful week, traditions will be celebrated, secrets revealed, old resentments forgotten, familial bonds re-affirmed and the healing power of laughter will work its magic. Nothing Like The Holidays is a "heartfelt" (Roger Ebert, Chicago Sun-Times) gift for the whole family."

"Nothing Like the Holidays" stars John Leguizamo, Freddy Rodriguez, Debra Messing, Alfred Molina, Luis Guzman, Melonie Diaz, Vanessa Ferlito, Jay Hernandez, and Elizabeth Pena. It was written by Alison Swan and Rick Najeira and directed by Alfredo de Villa. The film runs 98

minutes and is rated PG-13. It is presented in its original 2.35:1 aspect ratio and accompanied by a Dolby Surround 5.1 audio track.

Special features include “Nothing Like a Family: Cast Reunion,” Audio Commentary by Actor/Producer Freddy Rodriguez, Director Alfredo de Villa, and Producer Robert Teitel, Bloopers, and Theatrical Trailer.

“The Tournament”



Photo credit: The Weinstein Company

Synopsis: “Every seven years, thirty of the world’s most deadly assassins face off against one another for an outrageous cash prize. There’s only one rule: kill or die. As dozens of wealthy gamblers watch via closed-circuit TV, a city is overrun by brutal assassins - all aiming to be the last one standing. Starring Ving Rhames (Mission Impossible films), Kelly Hu (X2: X-Men United) and Robert Carlyle (Stargate: Universe), The Tournament is an explosive, action-loaded thriller where the winner takes all”

“The Tournament” stars Ving Rhames, Robert Carlyle, and Kelly Hu. It was written by Gary Young, Jonathan Frank, & Nick Rowntree and directed by Scott Mann. The film runs 95 minutes and is rated R. It is presented in a matted widescreen transfer and accompanied by an English Dolby Digital 5.1 audio track.

Special features include...nothing.

“Medicine For Melancholy”

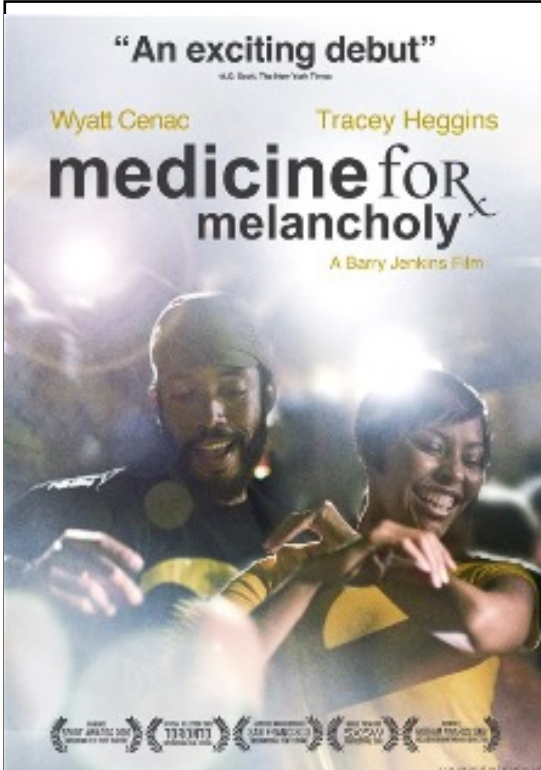


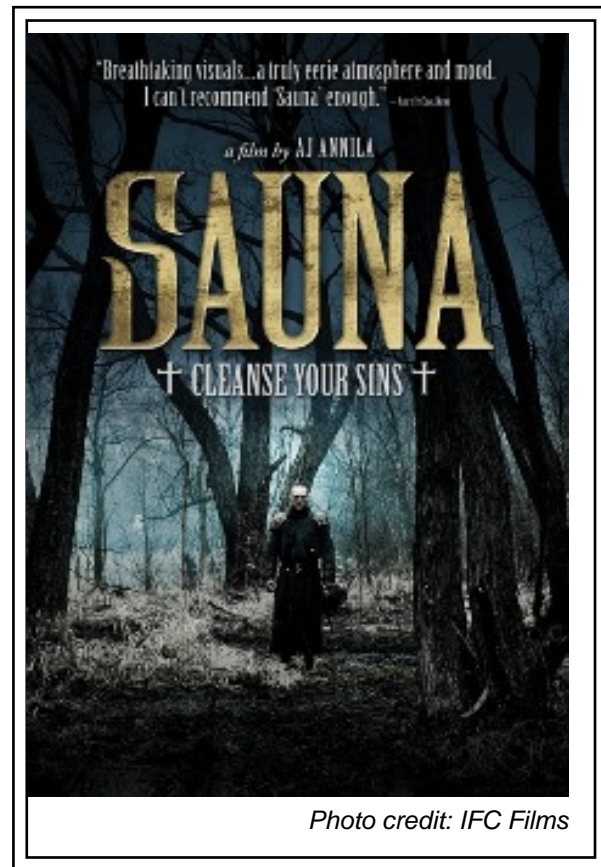
Photo credit: IFC Films

Synopsis: “Wyatt Cenac (of The Daily Show) and Tracey Heggins star in this love story about two African-American twenty-somethings, their one-night stand, and a revealing day-after in rapidly gentrifying San Francisco - a city with the smallest proportional black population of any other major American city. In his internationally acclaimed and award-winning debut feature, writer/director Barry Jenkins creates a tender yet resonant tale of sex, race, bicycles and modern urban life that became one of the most significant hits of the festival season and remains perhaps the most talked-about independent film of the year.”

"Medicine For Melancholy" stars Wyatt Cenac and Tracey Heggins. It was written and directed by Barry Jenkins. The film runs 88 minutes and is not rated. It is presented in an enhanced widescreen transfer and accompanied by an English Dolby Digital 5.1 audio track.

Special features include the trailer and "Director's Notes: An In-Depth Interview with Barry Jenkins at the London Film Festival".

"Sauna"

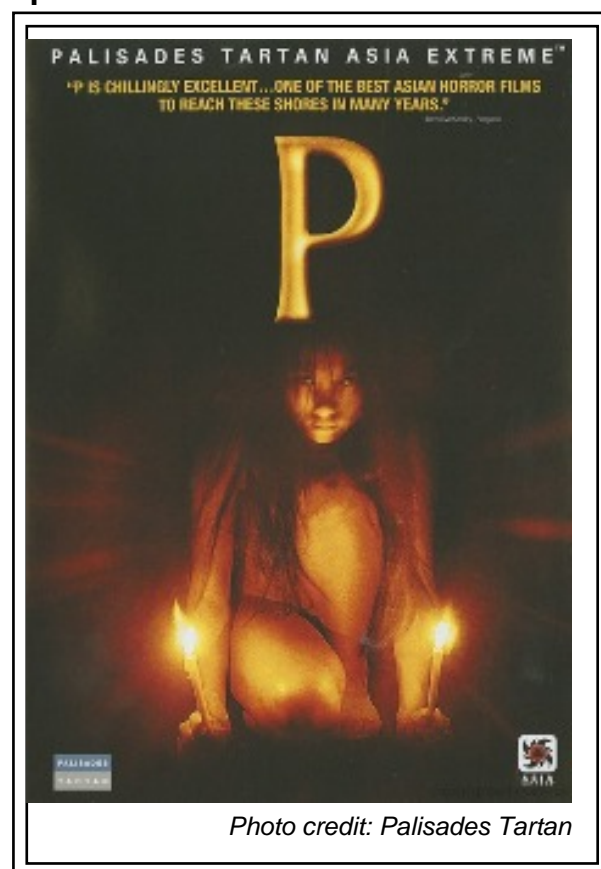


Synopsis: "A chilling horror film, Sauna explores the space between Christianity and paganism. The year 1595 - a long and brutal war is finally over. Brothers Knut and Erik - who are part of a commission marking the border between Finland and Russia - commit a terrible sin as they leave a young girl to die a horrible death. As the commission crosses the uncharted swamp, the girl returns to haunt them. Weary men find solace from the nameless village and find a sauna - the sauna where all sins are washed away. Seeking forgiveness the brothers step in..."

"Sauna" stars Ville Vertanen, Tommi Eronen, and Viktor Klimenko. It was written by Iiro Kuttner and directed by AJ Annila. The film runs 84 minutes and is not rated. It is presented in a 2.35:1 widescreen transfer and accompanied by a Finnish/Russian Dolby Digital 5.1 audio track.

Special features include the film's trailer.

"P"

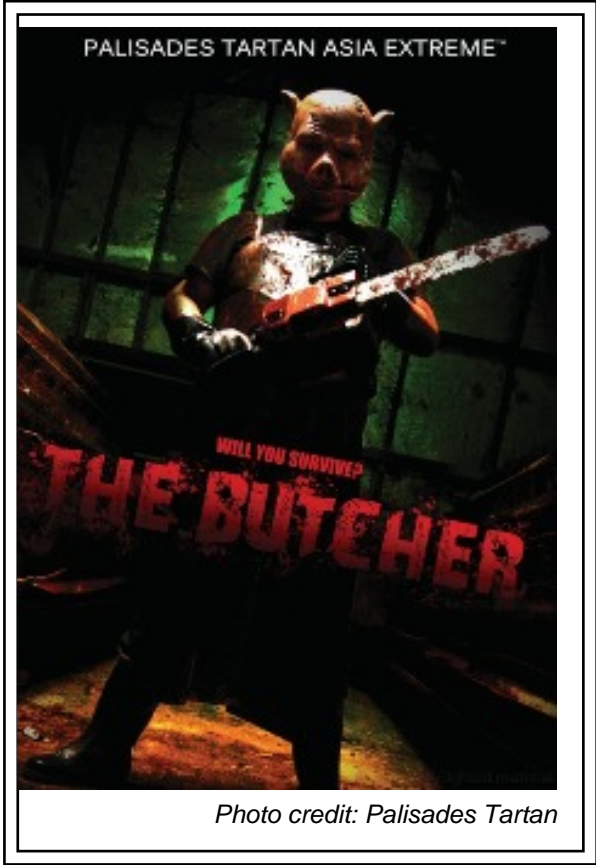


Synopsis: "While growing up in rural Thailand, a young orphan girl, Dau, is taught magic by her grandmother. But when her grandmother falls sick, Dau is lured to Bangkok to find work so that she can buy medicine. She finds herself working in a go-go bar, and her journey from naïveté to maturity is swift. She uses the magical skills her grandmother taught her to her advantage, but in doing so makes enemies within the bar. As her magic gets darker, and the consequences increasingly horrific, she gradually loses control, and something evil takes over. "

"P" was written and directed by Paul Spurrier. The movie runs 110 minutes and is not rated. It is presented in anamorphic widescreen and accompanied by a Thai Dolby Digital Audio 5.1 track.

Special features include Directors Audio Commentary, "Behind the Scenes," "Soi Cowboy Go-Go Bars" Featurette, Rawang Music Video, Production Photos, and Original Theatrical Trailer.

"The Butcher"



Synopsis: "Told entirely through two POV video cameras, The Butcher throws you into the middle of chaos and death: a handful of people have been abducted and lie bloodied and bound on the floor of a rotting slaughterhouse. Nearby, a team of snuff film producers are discussing their gruesome handiwork: torturing their captives to death, one by one."

"The Butcher" was written and directed by Kim Jinwon. The movie runs 75 minutes and is not rated. It is presented in anamorphic widescreen with a 2.35:1 aspect ratio and accompanied by a Korean Dolby Digital Stereo 2.0 track.

Special features include Alternative Ending, Behind the Scenes Photos, Storyboard Sketches, and the Original Theatrical Trailer.



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