

Blu-Ray Review: Michael Mann's 'Heat' a Modern Masterpiece

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on November 11, 2009 - 4:23pm

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CHICAGO – Michael Mann might first seem the ideal fit for Blu-Ray. He's a notorious perfectionist, apparent in every frame of his remarkable output of films that includes such great modern classics as "Manhunter," "The Insider," "Collateral," and "Public Enemies". But one of Mann's best films, "Heat," recently released on Blu-Ray, is an interesting example of a director who has a vision that shouldn't necessarily be overly polished by the HD format. The film looks like Mann wants it - gritty, dark, and like, well, actual film. It's a release that some buyers may think doesn't look "HD enough," but to this Mann aficionado thinks that it looks just right.



Blu-Ray Rating: **4.5/5.0**

As for the film itself, it's one of the rare '90s films that gets better every time I see it. It's a battle of wills between two of the most legendary actors of all time - Al Pacino & Robert De Niro - and it is arguably the last time they would ever be this good. It saddens me deeply to think about a young generation who may only know De Niro as the old guy from "Meet the Fockers" and the reputation Pacino must have after junk like "88 Minutes" is something I don't even want to think about. This is the final gust of wind from when these two were still not just actors, they were forces of nature.



Heat was released on Blu-Ray on November 10th, 2009.

Photo credit: Warner Brothers Home Video

Two of the best actors of all time star as a cop and his number one criminal in Mann's modern crime epic. Densely plotted, incredibly detailed, and perfectly acted by an ensemble that also includes Val Kilmer, Tom Sizemore, Jon Voight, Ashley Judd, and Amy Brenneman, "Heat" is one of the best movies of its kind ever made, a contemporary action classic.

Before he finalized "Public Enemies," Mann went into a studio and personally oversaw a detailed remastering of "Heat" for this Blu-Ray release. The result is a 1080p transfer (in 2.40:1) that looks simply amazing. There's been a bit of controversy as to the lack of detail in it but Mann has made a film that he wants to look gritty and dark and, ultimately, the format shouldn't be built around presenting the most polished picture but the one that most captures the intention of the filmmaker. I believe the "Heat" Blu-Ray does just that.

As for special features, it's an extensive lot including a commentary by Mann, 11 additional scenes, and 5 documentaries - "True Crime," "Crime Stories," "Into the Fire," "Pacino and De Niro: The Conversation," and "Return to the Scene of the Crime".

There was much controversy surrounding the quality of Mann's last two films - "Public Enemies" and "Miami Vice" - and, as I mentioned before, the legacy of Al Pacino and Robert De Niro simply must be tarnished by some of the choices these two great actors made in the '00s. Anyone turned off by any of the recent work by these three gentlemen shouldn't keep that from going back and seeing what they accomplished when they got together. And anyone who still likes Mann's films, shouldn't miss a great Blu-Ray for one of his best.

'Heat' is released by Warner Brothers Home Video and stars Al Pacino, Robert De Niro, Tom Sizemore, Diane Venora, Amy Brenneman, Ashley Judd, Mykelti Williamson, Wes Studi, Ted Levine, Jon Voight, and Val Kilmer. It was written and directed by Michael Mann. The film was released on Blu-Ray on November 10th, 2009. It is rated R.



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