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DVDs this week

By Michael Giltz

The Larry Sanders Show — First Season (\$50.95; Columbia TriStar)

Bravo plans to show reruns of this brilliant HBO sitcom. What a terrible idea. Bravo is on basic cable, so it feels obliged to edit out cursing or nudity to avoid offending viewers. Since *Larry Sanders*, starring Garry Shandling, Rip Torn and Jeffrey Tambor as Hank "Hey Now!" Kingsley, is close to 30 minutes in length and filled with cursing that is crucial to its sense of realism, the show simply won't work in edited form. All the more reason to snatch up this collection. Depicting the behind-the-scenes events at a late-night talk show, *Larry Sanders* is so brutally funny you're more likely to gasp than laugh. A classic.



SHANDLING

Cinderella II: Dreams Come True (\$29.99; Disney)

Disney makes a mint off its cheaply made straight-to-video (or should that be straight-to-DVD?) animated flicks. Some — like "The Tigger Movie" and "Return to Neverland" — turn out decently enough or simply fill a scheduling need and get a quick run in theaters. Others, like this belated and banal sequel to "Cinderella," are always planned for sell-through. The storyline strings together several different little tales, as if they couldn't muster up enough imagination for a feature-length movie. You'd think Disney would be worried about devaluing its valuable animation franchises. But parents snap them up and the money keeps rolling in. Big profits from small efforts? Dreams really do come true.

Wild Strawberries (\$39.95; Criterion)

What pops into your mind when you think of Ingmar Bergman? You probably picture dour, depressing stories and playing chess with Death. In fact, a number of his classics — such as "Smiles of a Summer Night" and "Fanny and Alexander" — are among the warmest, most charming movies ever made. After an opener featuring a surreal dream sequence that would give Dali pause, "Wild Strawberries" turns into a delightful road picture. It shows an aging professor traveling to an awards ceremony who meets young lovers on the road and reminisces about his childhood. If you think you don't like Bergman, it's simply because you've never seen this movie.

The Magnificent Ambersons (\$24.95; A&E)



STOWE

Madeleine Stowe always speaks her mind and I think her forthrightness has cost her the career she deserves. She's done it again with this adaptation of Orson Welles' original script for his flawed classic. Stowe insisted the screenplay was the best she'd ever read, but that director Alfonso Arau ruined it, in part by over-emphasizing an incest subplot. Other actors would have simply skipped the press junket or mouthed bland niceties. Not Stowe. Watch it and judge for yourself. Is she a troublemaker or simply the most honest person in Hollywood?

Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me (\$19.98; New Line)

Okay, so now we have the bizarre (make that "incomprehensibly bizarre") feature film prequel to David Lynch's landmark series, as well as a DVD set with almost all the episodes from the first season. We have everything, in fact, except for the two-hour pilot that falls smack dab in the middle of all that action, the pilot that is among the most acclaimed in TV history.

Secret Agent aka Danger Man Sets 2 and 3 (\$39.95 each; A&E)

This perfectly respectable Patrick McGooohan spy series is strictly for those with fond memories of when it first aired. McGooohan went on to create *The Prisoner* — the most enigmatic and compelling show imaginable — and fans of that like to watch this one as a prequel of sorts. For the rest of us, *Secret Agent* is of passing interest, though it's nice to see an action hero who disdains carrying a gun and has a sense of honor that sometimes gets in the way of serving King and Country. Also just out is Set 4 of *The Saint*, Roger Moore's audition for the role of James Bond. McGooohan would never have had time for such nonsense.