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## MOVIE OF THE MONTH: *THE LONE RANGER*

Thanks to the releases of *True Grit* and *Django Unchained*, the Western genre is now more popular than it's ever been with audiences. So, does this mean that *The Lone Ranger* will not only solidify this fact but also take the genre to newer and more exciting places that it's never been before?

Well, not so, according to the film's US critics who gave the film an overwhelmingly negative reception (24% on Rotten Tomatoes - that's not a good sign!), and may or may not have contributed to its underperforming at the box office, rendering the \$200 million epic yet another live-action financial disaster for Disney (not as bad as *John Carter*, but still pretty bad results).

However, that's only one side of the Atlantic. The film is about to get its UK debut this month, and despite all of the bad word-of-mouth there are plenty of reasons to be excited about it.

Least of all because it's Johnny Depp reuniting with his Oscar-winning *Pirates of the Caribbean* and *Rango* director Gore Verbinski, since the last few times the pair collaborated, they produced some fun adventures for everyone to have fun with.



Johnny Depp observes his partner Armie Hammer in the action-packed Western *The Lone Ranger*

Whether or not the same can be said for *The Lone Ranger*, we'll only have to find out very soon.

Depp, meanwhile, heads a cast that also includes Armie Hammer (*The Social Network*), William Fichtner (*Heat*), Tom Wilkinson (*The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*), Barry Pepper (*The Green Mile*), Helena Bonham Carter (*Les Misérables*), Ruth Wilson (*Anna Karenina*) and James Badge Dale (*Shame*).

*The Lone Ranger*, for those without a proper history lesson, was a popular character whose image was all over radio, books, a television series, and various other film spin-offs. His trademarks included the catchphrase "Hi-Yo, Silver! Away!" (a reference to his white

horse of the same name), his collection of silver bullets and, of course, his theme music being the William Tell Overture. So, quite a bit is riding on this new version's shoulders, but will it still be good?

The story is actually a recounting of events by the mysterious Native American spirit warrior Tonto (Depp), who tells the tale of how he encountered a young man named John Reid (Hammer) who went from a simple lawman in the Wild West to a legend of justice as the Lone Ranger, as he and Tonto worked together to fight greed and corruption.

We shall see if *The Lone Ranger* deserves the critical mauling it's been getting when it's released on **August 9th**.

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## News Round-Up

- Christian Bale rules out returning as Batman in the *Justice League* film
- Steven Spielberg hopes to produce a new version of *The Grapes of Wrath*
- James Cameron still plans to make his long-mooted *Battle Angel* project
- *Boston Strong*, a forthcoming book based on the recent Boston Marathon bombings, has been optioned for a film
- Stellan Skarsgard is cast as the Grand Duke in Kenneth Branagh's new film version of *Cinderella*
- Dev Patel is eyed for the lead in Neil Blomkamp's next film *Chappie*, about robotic police forces
- Disney is moving forward with a new live-action version of *The Jungle Book*
- Universal and Legendary Pictures announce a multi-film partnership after the latter's withdrawal from Warner Bros
- Angelina Jolie's sophomore film as director, *Unbroken*, gets a Christmas 2014 release

If you're sick of the brooding, oh-so-serious superhero movie, be thankful that *Kick-Ass 2* is around to bring back the fun that has been sucked out of the genre most recently.

The first film in the action-comedy series, based on Mark Millar's graphic novel, was released in 2010 and became an instant cult hit with its heavy dosage of violence and breakout character Hit-Girl, which in turn ignited the skyrocketing career of Chloe Grace Moretz (*Hugo*).

This time round, however, the stakes are much higher than before including a dastardly new(ish) threat and an even higher body count than before.

to be worth watching.

Directing all the chaos this time round is Jeff Wadlow (*Never Back Down*), with original director Matthew Vaughn taking a producer credit; and joining Moretz on acting duties are Aaron

## KICK-ASS 2



Kick-Ass teams up with a group of masked vigilantes in the violent action-comedy sequel *Kick-Ass 2*

Taylor-Johnson (*Nowhere Boy*), Christopher Mintz-Plasse (*Superbad*), Donald Faison (*Scrubs*), Clark Duke (*Hot Tub Time Machine*), John Leguizamo (*Ice Age*), Lyndsy Fonseca (*How I Met Your Mother*) and Jim Carrey (*Dumb and Dumber*)

In this sequel, we see Dave Lizewski/Kick-Ass (Taylor-Johnson) discovering Justice Forever, a group of masked vigilantes led by Colonel Stars and Stripes (Carrey) who are inspired by Kick-Ass to wear costumes and fight

crime. Meanwhile, Mindy Macready/Hit-Girl (Moretz) goes into retirement and tries to blend in as a normal girl in high school. However, Chris D'Amico/Red Mist (Mintz-Plasse) is busy plotting his revenge against Kick-Ass and Hit-Girl for his father's death as the newly-named super-villain The Mother F\*\*ker (running a family magazine here, folks!) *Kick-Ass 2* makes its way into cinemas on **August 16th**.

## ELYSIUM



Matt Damon goes bald for the latest sci-fi action fest from Neil Blomkamp (*District 9*) called *Elysium*

For Neil Blomkamp, the question was simple: how on Earth (no pun intended) does one follow something so buried in subtext like *District 9*?

But while that film tackled the issues of poverty and racism with extraterrestrial beings, *Elysium* takes a different approach by exploring the significant divide in social statuses.

In his sophomore film, Blomkamp has taken this and adapted it into a sci-fi environment complete with different planets, hi-tech weaponry and some heavily-engaging action set-pieces. But even if the thorough and precise social commentary was taken out of it, it still looks to be a fun and exciting sci-fi action fest, complete with some starry names in the case including Matt Damon (*Behind The Candelabra*), Jodie Foster (*Silence of the Lambs*), Sharlto Copley (*District 9*),

Alice Braga (*I Am Legend*), Diego Luna (*Milk*), Wagner Moura (*Elite Squad*) and William Fichtner (*Heat*).

In the year 2154, the wealthy live on the planet Elysium, a hi-tech metropolis where all crime, war, poverty, hunger and diseases have been eradicated. Meanwhile, everyone else lives on a desecrated and hugely overpopulated Earth where factory worker Max (Damon)

is exposed to a deadly cancer virus and the only cure is available on Elysium, where people of his class are forbidden to go thanks to its strict anti-immigration laws. With no other choice but to venture to Elysium, a highly dangerous mission to the planet soon begins...

To find out where it will all end up, and just how much of an impact it will make, check out *Elysium* from **August 23rd**.



## PAIN & GAIN

It's somewhat fitting that Michael Bay would make a film that recognizes the absolute stupidity of certain members of the American public.

Having dived into the pockets of horny adolescents with his *Transformers* films - and is preparing to make the plunge again with next year's fourth installment - he aims for a more sophisticated crowd (of sorts) with the new comedy-drama *Pain & Gain*.

At \$26 million, it's his least costly outing in a long while but it may actually prove the impossible in that he can actually create a complex, satirical story without all the usual visual effects and explosions (actually, you can take that back - there is at least ONE explosion to be found somewhere here but given this is Michael Bay we're talking about, are you really that surprised?)

But the smaller budget hasn't stopped him from



Mark Wahlberg and Dwayne Johnson are bodybuilders who get into an extortion scheme in Michael Bay's *Pain & Gain*

getting a starry cast that includes Mark Wahlberg (*Ted*), Dwayne Johnson (*Fast Five*), Anthony Mackie (*The Hurt Locker*), Tony Shalhoub (*Galaxy Quest*), Ed Harris (*The Truman Show*), Rob Corddry (*Hot Tub Time Machine*), Rebel Wilson (*Pitch Perfect*) and Ken Jeong (*The Hangover*).

Unbelievably based on a true story - meaning that the following events (or at least less exaggerated versions of

the events) actually happened - the story sees Daniel Lugo (Wahlberg) enlist fellow bodybuilders Adrian Doorbal (Mackie) and Paul Doyle (Johnson) to take part in a kidnapping and extortion scheme involving wealthy businessman Victor Kershaw (Shalhoub) that goes horribly wrong.

If you're keen to see if Bay has what it takes, then check out *Pain & Gain* from **August 30th**.

## THE HEAT

After a brief period away from the Hollywood system after her Oscar win for *The Blind Side* (though she hasn't entirely been on holiday - she appeared in 2011's *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*), Sandra Bullock is back to do what she is perhaps best at doing: making her paying audience laugh themselves silly.

*The Heat* is just the perfect project to do just that, least of all because its director Paul Feig and Bullock's co-star Melissa McCarthy are both coming off the success of *Bridesmaids*, with McCarthy being nominated for an Oscar herself. As you can probably imagine, the levels of anticipation for this film are rather high.

Although it doesn't have the safety net of Judd Apatow aboard as producer like *Bridesmaids* did, you can still expect the belly-laughs to come at you at all angles



Sandra Bullock's FBI agent teams up with Melissa McCarthy's Boston detective in Paul Feig's new comedy *The Heat*

with its hilarious one-liners and improvised comedy. While Bullock and McCarthy are the leads here, the equally-strong supporting cast is made up of Dan Bakkedahl (*This Is 40*), Demian Bichir (*A Better Life*), Thomas F. Wilson (*Back To The Future*), Marlon Wayans (*Scary Movie*) and Tony Hale (*Arrested Development*).

We start the film with Sarah Ashburn (Bullock), an ambitious but uptight FBI agent who no-one seems to

get along with, being sent to Boston to track down an elusive drug dealer in order to obtain herself a promotion within her ranks. There, she is inexplicably partnered up with Detective Shannon Mullins (McCarthy), a foul-mouthed loose cannon who prefers to bring justice through her own methods which, of course, conflicts greatly with Ashburn's by-the-book mentality.

*The Heat* busts into cinemas from **August 2nd**.

## News Round-Up

- Sam Mendes is confirmed to direct *Bond 24*, which is set for an October 2015 release
- Ben Affleck and Rosamund Pike join David Fincher's *Gone Girl*
- Jeff Wadlow (*Kick-Ass 2*) will write and likely direct *X-Men* spin-off *X-Force*
- Johnny Depp is set to return as the Mad Hatter in *Alice in Wonderland* sequel *Through The Looking Glass*
- According to Zachary Quinto, the next *Star Trek* movie will begin shooting next year
- *All You Need Is Kill*, starring Tom Cruise and Emily Blunt, is re-named *Edge of Tomorrow*
- Mackenzie Foy, Topher Grace, Wes Bentley, David Oyelowo, David Gyasi and John Lithgow join Christopher Nolan's *Interstellar*
- A sequel to horror film *The Conjuring* is being developed
- Max Landis is no longer writing the sequel to found-footage superhero film *Chronicle*

## News Round-Up

- Dan Brown's latest book *Inferno* is headed to the big screen in December 2015, with Ron Howard and Tom Hanks returning as director and star respectively
- Jake Gyllenhaal drops out of musical *Into The Woods* and is replaced by Billy Magnussen
- Andrew Kevin Walker (*Se7en*) will rewrite the script to sequel *The Girl Who Played With Fire*
- Britt Robertson scores the lead female role in Brad Bird's secretive film *Tomorrowland*
- A *Man of Steel* sequel is formally announced for 2015, with Batman to also feature
- The *Avengers* sequel is given an official title - *The Avengers: Age of Ultron*
- *Twelve Monkeys*, the acclaimed 1995 sci-fi by Terry Gilliam, is being adapted into a TV series
- Sacha Baron Cohen drops out of the Freddie Mercury biopic

## ALAN PARTRIDGE: ALPHA PAPA

If any beloved British comedy character deserves his own film, it's Alan Partridge.

A creation by the minds of Steve Coogan (*Tropic Thunder*) and Armando Iannucci (*In The Loop*), the arrogant and insecure Partridge has always tried to find ways to hog the spotlight after his failed (fictional) tenure as a talk show host where he shot to death a guest live on TV.

Settling for a disc jockey position at North Norfolk Digital radio station, Partridge has since gone on to become a cult comedy favourite with TV specials, books and his infamous TV comedy series *I'm Alan Partridge*.

But *Alan Partridge: Alpha Papa* - the subtitle being military code for his initials - is his first big screen outing and, refreshingly, it seems to have a very local and miniscule feel to it without all the necessary Hollywood tweaks to it all.



There's a siege in a radio station, and only Alan Partridge (Steve Coogan) can stop it in *Alan Partridge: Alpha Papa*

Coogan is, of course, taking the role of Alan Partridge himself, and is joined by his *I'm Alan Partridge* co-stars Felicity Montagu (*Bridget Jones' Diary*), Phil Cornwell (*Stella Street*) and Simon Greenall (*Holy Flying Circus*), as well as new additions like Colm Meaney (*Con Air*), Sean Pertwee (*Wild Bill*) and Nigel Lindsay (*Four Lions*).

The new movie spin-off, directed by *Father Ted* director Declan Lowney, sees Alan Partridge (Coogan)

facing the biggest challenge of his career. When North Norfolk Digital is taken over by a large corporation and then re-named Shape, Alan couldn't care less - until fellow DJ Pat Farrell (Meaney) loses his job and forms an armed hostage situation in response. Now, only Alan can end the siege by doing what he does best: chatting on-air.

*Alan Partridge: Alpha Papa* will have you rolling in the aisles from **August 9th**.

## WE'RE THE MILLERS

Having been bogged down by too many cutesy films from Hollywood about family and what it means to be a part of one, the filmmakers of *We're The Millers* must have felt the strain to be too much which has led to them creating a film that's almost the entire antithesis of a traditional film about family.

With Rawson Marshall Thurber (*DodgeBall*) directing from a script from a group of writers whose combined work includes *Wedding Crashers* and *Hot Tub Time Machine*, the result is a film about family that's strictly for adults only... and perhaps that's a good thing, because the "family" as depicted in this film - or at least how they come together as one - is rather twisted and strange, all the while bringing the hilarity whenever it is needed.

In terms of cast, Jennifer Aniston continues her trek



Jennifer Aniston and Jason Sudeikis form part of a fake family for an undercover illegal drug smuggling in *We're The Millers*

into raunchier comedies as she did in *Horrible Bosses* after an era of simply headlining mediocre rom-coms, and she is also joined by her *Horrible Bosses* co-star Jason Sudeikis (*Hall Pass*) as well as Emma Roberts (*4.3.2.1*), Will Poulter (*Son of Rambow*), Ed Helms (*The Hangover*) and Nick Offerman (*21 Jump Street*).

The film focuses on David (Sudeikis), a small-time pot

dealer who is drawn in to smuggle two metric tons of weed into the US from Mexico. To create the best camouflage possible, he puts together a group of people to fool the authorities, including stripper Rose (Aniston) as his "wife", and homeless teen Casey (Roberts) and geeky neighbourhood kid Kenny (Poulter) as their "kids".

*We're The Millers* opens on **August 23rd**.



## THE WAY, WAY BACK

With only a month of summer left to go until everything goes back to normal again, one film aims to capture everything that is enjoyable about the holiday period in the new comedy-drama *The Way, Way Back*. Marking the directional debuts of Nat Faxon and Jim Rash - both actors who have appeared in *Bad Teacher* and TV show *Community* respectively, and recently won an Academy Award for their script duties with Alexander Payne on *The Descendants* - the film is a lovely little take on the summer experience that will leave a great area of warmth in your heart. It has already won some unanimous praise with American critics after its debut at the Sundance Film Festival back in January, but whether us Brits will follow closely behind them remains to be seen. Helping matters is the fact that it has an outstanding



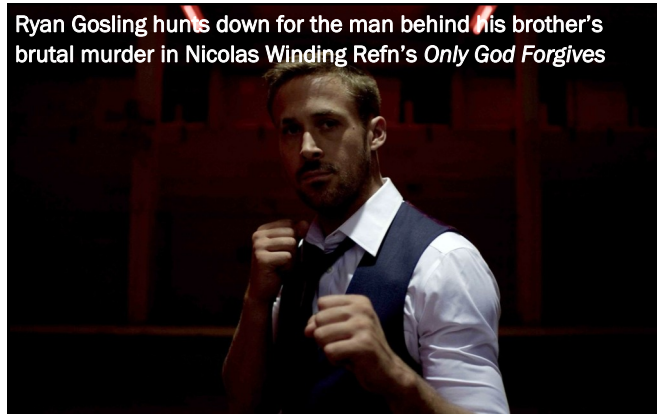
A 14-year-old boy experiences the best summer of his life from many unexpected sources in *The Way, Way Back*

cast of actors who all provide healthy roles in the ensemble, including Steve Carell (*The 40-Year-Old Virgin*), Toni Collette (*About a Boy*), Allison Janney (*Juno*), AnnaSophia Robb (*Bridge to Terabithia*), Sam Rockwell (*Moon*), Maya Rudolph (*Bridesmaids*), Rob Corrdry (*Hot Tub Time Machine*), Amanda Peet (2012) and Liam James (*The Killing*). The film is the story of 14-year-old Duncan (James)

who is spending his summer break with his mother (Collette) and her overbearing boyfriend Trent (Carell). Unable to fit in, he soon strikes up an unexpected friendship with Owen (Rockwell), the manager of a local water park which leads him to finally find a place in the world during a summer he won't ever forget. *The Way, Way Back* opens in cinemas from **August 30th**.

## ONLY GOD FORGIVES

The last time that Ryan Gosling and director Nicolas Winding Refn worked together was on *Drive*, and we all know how well that turned out. But can they possibly repeat their overwhelming success with their second film as an actor-director pair, simply called *Only God Forgives*? To answer that question properly, we'll have to wait until next month's review. But so far, response has not been as hot - reportedly booed at its debut at the Cannes Film Festival for its excessive violence, the film is apparently too much for audiences of any kind to handle. That seems doubtful, since the controversy seems to have ironically help word-of-mouth spread even further, undoubtedly to people anxious to see how violent it really is. For now, though, we can trust Gosling and Refn's



Ryan Gosling hunts down for the man behind his brother's brutal murder in Nicolas Winding Refn's *Only God Forgives*

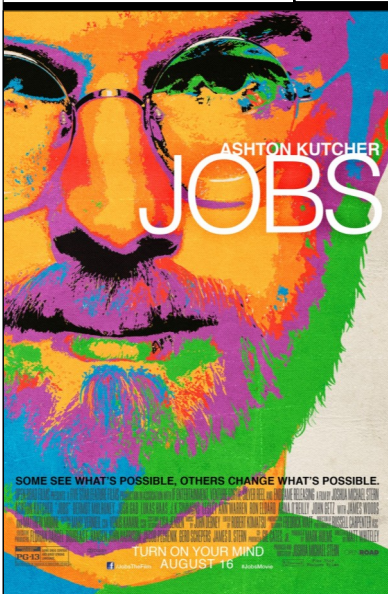
viewpoint that the film will deliver, as can also be strongly hinted by its international supporting cast that includes Kristin Scott Thomas (*The English Patient*), Vithaya Pansringarm (*The Hangover Part II*) and Tom Burke (*The Kid*), to name a select few. Set in Bangkok, a criminal named Julian (Gosling) runs a Thai boxing club which is actually a front for a large drugs operation. When his

brother Billy (Burke) brutally murders an underage prostitute, the police bring in retired cop Chang (Pansringarm), also known as the Angel of Death, to kill Billy. When Julian's mother Crystal (Scott Thomas) arrives to collect her son's body, she implores Julian to find her son's killer and "raise hell". *Only God Forgives* is not one to miss once it opens on **August 2nd**.

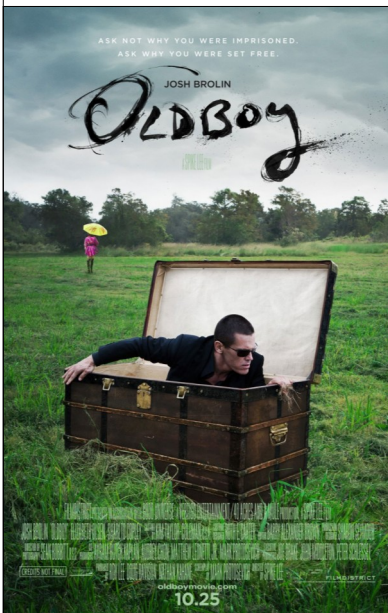
## News Round-Up

- Sony plans video game adaptation *Gran Turismo*
- Christopher Walken signs on to play a mobster in Clint Eastwood's musical *Jersey Boys*
- Kellan Lutz, Ronda Rousey and Victor Ortiz join *The Expendables 3*
- Abigail Breslin will play the zombified daughter of Arnold Schwarzenegger in *Maggie*
- Sylvester Stallone will return as Rocky Balboa in spin-off *Creed*, with Michael B. Jordan playing Apollo's grandson
- James McAvoy joins Paul McGuigan's *Frankenstein*
- Stephen Frears will direct Ben Foster in a Lance Armstrong biopic
- John Williams will return to score *Star Wars Episode VII*
- A new *Beverly Hills Cop* movie is in the pipeline
- Disney is planning an adaptation of *Artemis Fowl*
- Sigourney Weaver is in early talks to star in the follow-up to this month's *The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones*





At the top of his game in 2010, Adam Sandler released *Grown Ups*, a plotless film featuring him and his mates basically enjoying themselves on holiday. It made a mint at the box office, but at a price - reviews were not just awful, they were damning. It's little wonder, then, that Sandler's power started to slip from then onwards with the following year's Razzie-sweeping *Jack and Jill* and last year's crass and vulgar *That's My Boy*.



His safety net (of dollar bills) now appears to be a sequel to the film that kicked off his decline in the first place. *Grown Ups 2*, the first sequel in Sandler's career, reunites him with his on/off-screen chums Kevin James (*Paul Blart: Mall Cop*), Chris Rock (*The Longest Yard*) and David Spade (*The Emperor's New Groove*), but Rob Schneider is nowhere to be seen this time round. Perhaps the endless amount

## GROWN UPS 2



of physical abuse his character experienced in the first movie really got to him. Also returning from the first film - because SOMETHING needs to pay for a new car - are Salma Hayek (*Frida*), Maria Bello (*A History of Violence*), Maya Rudolph (*Bridesmaids*) and Steve Buscemi (*Reservoir Dogs*), while new additions include Nick Swardson (*30 Minutes Or Less*), Steve Austen (*The Expendables*), Andy Samberg (*Hot Rod*), Shaquille O'Neil

(*Steel*) and... Taylor Lautner?! Jeez, *Twilight* may have been bad but it was at least more dignified than a role in *Grown Ups 2*... Oh, anyway, the "plot" for this sequel sees Sandler and friends' characters act all immature and stuff on their own kids' last day of school before summer break. If that still interests you, then *Grown Ups 2* hits cinemas on **August 8th**. Free crayons will be handed out before it starts...

## THE CONJURING



If you've been following the Film Feeder from the very beginning, you'll have noticed that horror films are very rarely highlighted (for selfish reasons, really, because the editor does not enjoy the experience of watching horrors in a cinema). But the recent US box office success of *The Conjuring* has now changed this slightly, since there is now more interest in the project and it would be foolish to not bring it up in times for its UK cinema release. It is the latest genre outing for renowned horror director James Wan, who is perhaps best known for directing the first entry in the *Saw* franchise and, most recently, *Insidious* (which is also getting a sequel later this year). With that in mind, you can imagine that there is a great



amount of interest in his newest venture, which is based on the real-life, world-famous paranormal investigators Ed and Lorraine Warren, played by Patrick Wilson (*Watchmen*) and Vera Farmiga (*Up In The Air*) respectively. The husband-wife duo, best known for their investigation of the supposed hauntings in Amityville which inspired the popular *Amityville Horror* franchise, are called upon by

a family to protect them from some disturbing events at their secluded farmhouse in Harrisville, Rhode Island. There, they experience the most horrifying case of their careers. Lili Taylor (*Six Feet Under*), Ron Livingston (*Office Space*), Mackenzie Foy (*Twilight*) and Joey King (*Oz The Great and Powerful*) also star. *The Conjuring* arrives on **August 2nd**.



## RED 2

It goes without saying, but Bruce Willis is not having a good 2013. With *A Good Day to Die Hard* and *G.I. Joe: Retaliation* both turning out to be completely abysmal, there seems to be one final counter strike for the once-badass star: headlining a sequel to the surprise 2010 hit *RED*, oh so creatively titled *RED 2*.

As with that first film, this second outing is based on the graphic novel series of the same name which saw a small group of retired CIA operatives being rudely forced back into action to counteract a personal threat. The first film managed to make nearly \$200 million worldwide, surpassing even the studio's expectations, get many critics on its side and even warranted a Golden Globe nomination for Best Picture (Comedy/Musical) - then again, also nominated was *Alice in Wonderland* and *The Tourist* so that might not be the best



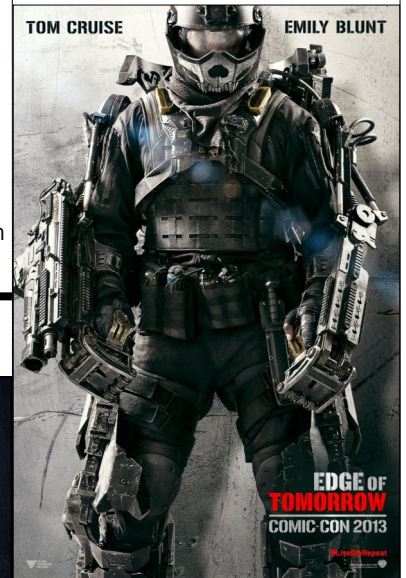
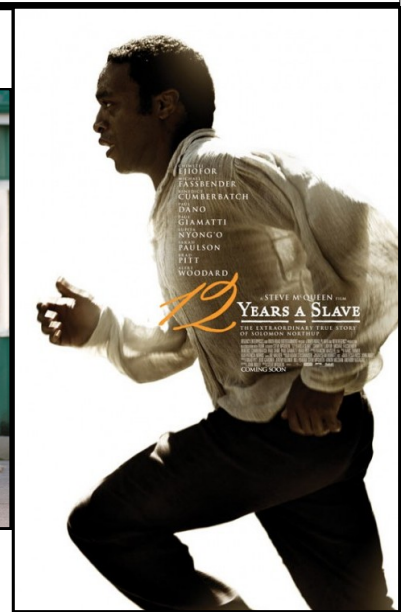
Bruce Willis teams up once again with his team of retired CIA agents to find a nuclear device in *RED 2*

trophy to display.

This time directed by Dean Parisot (*Galaxy Quest*), the sequel sees Willis returning alongside fellow returnees John Malkovich (*Dangerous Liaisons*), Mary Louise-Parker (*Weeds*) and Helen Mirren (*The Queen*), who in turn are joined by new additions Catherine Zeta-Jones (*Traffic*), Anthony Hopkins (*Silence of the Lambs*), Lee Byung-hun (*G.I. Joe: Retaliation*), Brian Cox (*The Escapist*), David Thewlis

(*Harry Potter*) and Neil McDonough (*Minority Report*).

This sequel sees Frank Moses (Willis) bringing together his crew to track down a missing nuclear device on a mission that takes them around the world and into the crossfire of various terrorists, assassins and government officials. *RED 2*, which hopes to be a loud action-comedy, opens in cinemas from **August 2nd**.



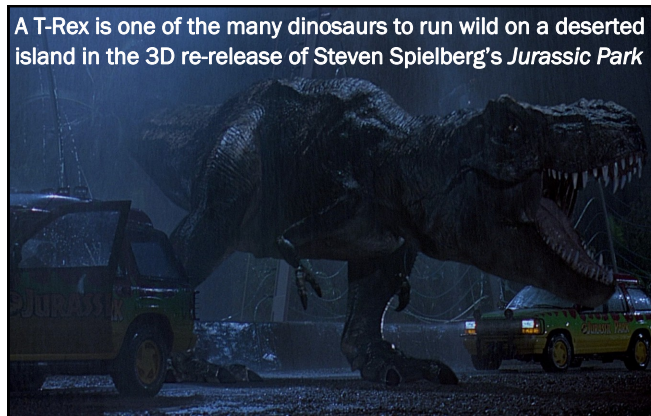
## JURASSIC PARK 3D

*Jurassic Park*... what on Earth can you say about it? One of the most popular movies of all time, combining a memorable story and characters with visual effects that still look better than your average CG-fest today, it still stands as the ultimate dinosaur blockbuster.

And now, to celebrate its 20th anniversary, the once-Biggest Film of All-Time (pre-*Titanic*) is back in cinemas for a limited 3D re-release.

If you have never had the experience of seeing this film on the big screen, then this is most definitely your chance to catch up and experience director Steven Spielberg's highest-grossing film as though it were 1993 again (although back then, 3D was only limited to those flimsy red-and-blue glasses). You'll undoubtedly come for the dinosaurs, but you'll stay for the classic characters as played by Sam Neill (*The*

A T-Rex is one of the many dinosaurs to run wild on a deserted island in the 3D re-release of Steven Spielberg's *Jurassic Park*



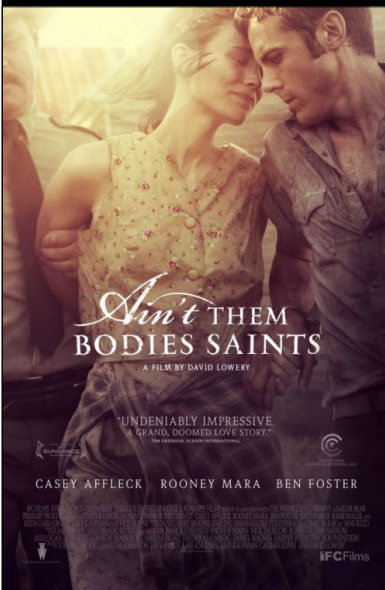
*Piano*), Laura Dern (*Blue Velvet*), Jeff Goldblum (*Independence Day*), Richard Attenborough (*The Great Escape*), Wayne Knight (*Space Jam*) and Samuel L. Jackson (*Pulp Fiction*). All of them create their own memorable personas for their respective characters and, as a result, they're as unforgettable as the rest of the film.

Speaking of which, what's the plot for anyone who still

doesn't know by this point? Well, it all kicks off when wealthy entrepreneur John Hammond (Attenborough) creates a theme park on an island with cloned dinosaurs as the main attraction. But when four individuals arrive to test the park's facilities, it's not long before the dinosaurs start to run amok. For your chance to see *Jurassic Park* on the big screen, simply go to the cinema from **August 23rd**.







Whether you love or hate Pixar's controversial Cars franchise, its financial stability is unquestionable. And to those who believe the films to be a cynical attempt by Pixar to make a profit off its inevitable merchandise, there's some more bad news: the world of Cars is now expanding to the sky with the new spin-off, *Planes*.

But something to keep in mind is that this new film is not part of Pixar's official canon of films. In fact, it was originally made in-house by Disney for a direct-to-video release but the powers that be saw great potential and swiftly upgraded it to a theatrical release.

The same fate was also intended for Pixar's *Toy Story 2*, and that was of course a major success. But the major difference is, everybody loved *Toy Story* while the same cannot be said for the *Cars* films, so there is much more doubt about this one. The film features a large

## PLANES



The world of Cars is expanding to the skies as we follow the adventures of an ambitious plane in, erm, *Planes*

voice cast that includes Dane Cook (*Good Luck Chuck*), Stacy Keach (*American History X*), Brad Garrett (*Everybody Loves Raymond*), Teri Hatcher (*Coraline*), Cedric the Entertainer (*Madagascar*), Julia Louis-Dreyfus (*Seinfeld*), John Cleese (*Life of Brian*), and Val Kilmer (*Batman Forever*).

In *Planes*, a film set in the automobile-populated world of *Cars*, we focus on a group of characters who just

happen to be... well, what do YOU think?

A small-town plane named Dusty (Cook) dreams of becoming a high-flying air racer, but his fear of heights and incompatibility make that near impossible. But when he starts to receive help from his new friends, his dream starts to become more of a reality.

Disney/not Pixar's *Planes* soars into cinemas on **August 16th**. Parents, bring your iPods...

## THE SMURFS 2

Smurfette is taken by Smurf-like creations explicitly called the Naughties in family sequel *The Smurfs 2*



If you thought *Grown Ups 2* was an unnecessary and unwanted sequel, then just wait till you hear about *The Smurfs 2*.

The first film, released in 2011 to overwhelmingly negative reviews that claimed the filmmakers had taken a cherished bunch of comic book and cartoon characters and then soiled their worldwide reputation with lowest-common-denominator jokes and "wit", was of course a big box office success which meant audiences clearly wanted more, according to Sony. So now we have *The Smurfs 2*, which promises more of the same type of low-brow humour and enough gross-out gags to entertain the kids but horrify any older fans of the Belgian creations. Starring for returning director Raja Gosnell (*Scooby Doo*) are Hank Azaria (*The*

*Simpsons*), Neil Patrick Harris (*How I Met Your Mother*), Jayma Mays (*Glee*) and Brendan Gleeson (*In Bruges*) in the live-action roles, while providing the voiceovers are pop star Katy Perry, Fred Armisen (*Easy A*), Alan Cumming (*Spy Kids*), Anton Yelchin (*Star Trek*), George Lopez (*Rio*), John Oliver (*Community*), Christina Ricci (*Casper*), J.B. Smoove (*We Bought A Zoo*), and the late Jonathan Winters (*It's A*

*Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*) in his final role before his death earlier this year.

In the sequel, Smurfette (Perry) is taken by the evil wizard Gargamel's (Azaria) newest creations called the Naughties, and the rest of the Smurfs must venture back to our world to save her.

*The Smurfs 2*, bound to satisfy kids but horrify their parents, is out on **August 2nd**.

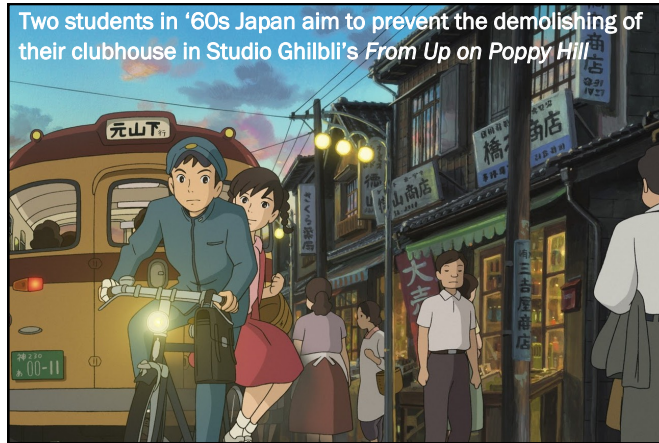


# FROM UP ON POPPY HILL

For any lovers of Japanese anime or just animation in general, there is perhaps no better place for all its qualities than Studio Ghibli, the studio behind classics like *Spirited Away*, *Princess Mononoke*, *Howl's Moving Castle*, and many others. Its latest addition to this stellar line-up, *From Up On Poppy Hill*, is directed by Goro Miyazaki who is, of course, the son of Studio Ghibli founder and director of those previously-mentioned films, Hayao Miyazaki.

Having only directed one anime film prior to this one - that being *Tales From Earthsea*, which received a mixed reception from critics - Miyazaki Jr obviously has a lot riding on his shoulders, namely his aging father's good name in the business as well as its Pixar-esque reputation for spewing out wondrous film after wondrous film. Thankfully, there seems to be no signs

Two students in '60s Japan aim to prevent the demolishing of their clubhouse in Studio Ghibli's *From Up on Poppy Hill*



of this being a dud after a positive reception in its native Japan. For its English dub, the voice cast includes Sarah Bolger (*In America*), Anton Yelchin (*Star Trek*), Gillian Anderson (*The X-Files*), Jamie Lee Curtis (*A Fish Called Wanda*), Christina Hendricks (*Drive*), Bruce Dern (*Django Unchained*), Beau Bridges (*The Descendants*), Aubrey Plaza (*Scott Pilgrim vs. The World*) and Ron Howard

(*Happy Days*). Set in 1963 Japan, young school girl Umi (Bolger) joins forces with Shun (Yelchin), a member of her school's newspaper club, to stop a local businessman from demolishing their clubhouse for redevelopment. *From Up On Poppy Hill* looks to be a charming little piece from the people at Studio Ghibli, and should deliver when it gets its release on **August 2nd**.

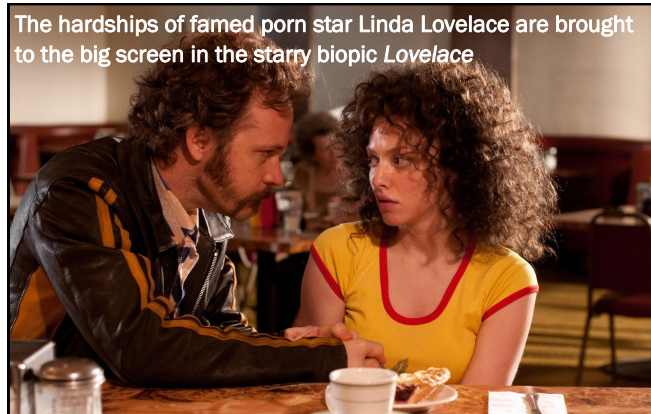


# LOVELACE

With David Cameron's recent plans to curb online porn in every UK household, the timing for a new biopic about one of the world's most famous, and famously reluctant, porn stars could not have better timing. *Lovelace* examines the hardships of the career of one Linda Lovelace, the woman who shot to fame after taking on the lead role in the high-grossing X-rated film *Deep Throat*. Seemingly happy with her career at first, she then suddenly did a complete U-turn with her views and became an activist against the exploitation of women in the industry.

Such a poignant story needs a stable director and cast to pull it through, and directors Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman (*Howl*) are lucky enough to have an entire ensemble of A-list talent that includes Amanda Seyfried

The hardships of famed porn star Linda Lovelace are brought to the big screen in the starry biopic *Lovelace*



(*Les Miserables*), Peter Sarsgaard (*An Education*), Sharon Stone (*Basic Instinct*), Robert Patrick (*Terminator 2*), Juno Temple (*Atonement*), Adam Brody (*Jennifer's Body*), Wes Bentley (*American Beauty*), Eric Roberts (*The Dark Knight*), James Franco (*127 Hours*), Chris Noth (*Sex and the City*), Hank Azaria (*The Simpsons*) and Chloe Sevigny (*Boys Don't Cry*). As well as most of those

biographical elements you read earlier, the film also focuses on the troubled relationship between Lovelace (Seyfried) and her abusive husband and self-proclaimed manager Chuck Traynor (Sarsgaard) who takes the naive young woman and exploits her for the screen. *Lovelace*, a starry take on a tragic story of love and sex, gets its UK release on **August 23rd**.





## U.S. Box Office

### July 5th-7th

1. Despicable Me 2 - \$83,517,315
2. The Lone Ranger - \$29,210,849
3. The Heat - \$24,763,907
4. Monsters University - \$19,716,347
5. World War Z - \$18,408,963
6. White House Down - \$13,478,486
7. Man of Steel - \$11,414,297
8. Kevin Hart: Let Me Explain - \$10,030,463
9. This Is The End - \$5,870,167
10. Now You See Me - \$2,853,191

### July 12th-14th

1. Despicable Me 2 - \$43,892,895
2. Grown Ups 2 - \$41,508,572
3. Pacific Rim - \$37,285,325
4. The Heat - \$14,002,080
5. The Lone Ranger - \$11,506,100
6. Monsters University - \$10,631,576
7. World War Z - \$9,314,862
8. White House Down - \$6,162,633
9. Kevin Hart: Let Me Explain - \$4,754,152
10. Man of Steel - \$4,719,084

### July 19th-21st

1. The Conjuring - \$41,855,326
2. Despicable Me 2 - \$24,906,360
3. Turbo - \$21,312,625
4. Grown Ups 2 - \$19,872,150
5. Red 2 - \$18,048,422
6. Pacific Rim - \$16,002,231
7. R.I.P.D - \$12,691,415
8. The Heat - \$9,303,788
9. World War Z - \$5,191,541
10. Monsters University - \$5,121,878

### July 26th-28th

1. The Wolverine - \$53,113,752
2. The Conjuring - \$22,208,389
3. Despicable Me 2 - \$16,424,135
4. Turbo - \$13,740,247
5. Grown Ups 2 - \$11,600,811
6. Red 2 - \$9,337,197
7. Pacific Rim - \$7,703,461
8. The Heat - \$6,914,664
9. R.I.P.D - \$6,070,525
10. Fruitvale Station - \$4,590,219

## PERCY JACKSON: SEA OF MONSTERS

Many *Harry Potter* knockoffs have been spurned out after the boy wizard debuted back in 2001, with studios searching far and wide for many fantasy books that centered around young-ish protagonists to adapt in order to cash in on its popularity.

One of them, based on the first in author Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* book series, was released in 2010, and although *The Lightning Thief* wasn't truly detested by critics and only did an OK box office performance, 20th Century Fox still saw it fit to continue on with this franchise by adapting the second book, *Sea of Monsters*.

This time, our young heroes are a little older and wiser, least of all because most of them are the demigods of the various Greek gods from all the legends.

In the director's seat this time, taking over from Chris



A group of young demigods must search for the fabled Golden Fleece in fantasy sequel *Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters*

Columbus (*Harry Potter*), is the appropriately-named Thor Freudenthal (*Diary of a Wimpy Kid*), while the cast includes Logan Lerman (*The Perks of Being a Wallflower*), Brandon T. Jackson (*Tropic Thunder*), Alexandra Daddario (*Texas Chainsaw 3D*), Leven Rambin (*The Hunger Games*), Jake Abel (*The Host*), Stanley Tucci (*The Lovely Bones*), Nathan Fillion (*Serenity*), Sean Bean (*Game of Thrones*) and Anthony Head (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*).

In this follow-up, Percy Jackson (Lerman), the demigod son of Poseidon, must embark on a journey with his friends to retrieve the fabled Golden Fleece in order to save their secluded training ground, Camp Half-Blood. To do this, they must journey across the Sea of Monsters where various dangerous challenges await them.

*Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters* arrived on **August 9th**.

## THE MORTAL INSTRUMENTS: CITY OF BONES

As you may have just read in the *Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters* article above, there have been many fantasy books being adapted into film franchises to match *Harry Potter's* popularity and get in with its young adult fanbase.

And heeeeeeeeeere's another one!

*The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones* is adapted from the first book of a six-part series by Cassandra Clare, first published in 2007 with its sixth and final entry yet to be published.

Diving into the fantastical mythos of angels while retaining its focus on its teenage protagonist, there's little wonder that the book series has been so well received by many fans. But will its success on paper translate well into the moving image?

Having a decent-sized cast - directed by Harald Zwart



Lily Collins plays a teenager who learns some fascinating facts about her bloodline in *The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones*

(*The Karate Kid*) - certainly helps, for names like Lily Collins (*The Blind Side*), Jamie Campbell Bower (*Sweeney Todd*), Robert Sheehan (*Misfits*), Jemima West (*The Borgias*), Kevin Zegers (*Transamerica*), Godfrey Gao (*All About Women*), Jonathan Rhys Meyers (*The Tudors*), Jared Harris (*The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*), Aidan Turner (*The Hobbit*), Lena Headey (*Game of Thrones*) and Kevin Durand (*X-Men*

*Origins: Wolverine*) all pop up on this film's cast list.

We focus on a seemingly ordinary teenage girl, Clary (Collins), whose mother (Headey) is attacked and kidnapped by a demon after she witnesses a murder. On her quest to rescue her, Clary learns truths about her past and bloodline which resolve to change her life forever.

*The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones* comes out on **August 23rd**.



## 2 GUNS

Mark Wahlberg has shown his unexpected talents for comedy both intentional (*Ted*, this month's *Pain & Gain*) and unintentional (*The Happening*), but can a major heavyweight like Denzel Washington get in on the fun as well?

You probably wouldn't expect the Oscar-winning actor to proudly show off his own comedic chops, so his co-lead turn in the new action-comedy *2 Guns* may come as quite a shock.

Based on the comic series of the same name by comic book writer Steven Grant - regarded highly in the comic industry with his work on characters like Marvel's Punisher - it's also an opportunity for Hollywood to show the world that these two actors can work together in the best way possible on-screen with unquestionable chemistry and laughter all the way throughout.

Icelandic director Baltasar Kormákur reunites with



A 14-year-old boy experiences the best summer of his life from many unexpected sources in *The Way, Way Back*

Wahlberg after working on last year's thriller remake *Contraband* with the actor, and has also recruited Paula Patton (*Precious: Based on the Novel "Push" By Sapphire*), James Marsden (*Enchanted*), Bill Paxton (*Aliens*) and Fred Ward (*30 Minutes or Less*) to fill in the roles of the supporting cast. In the film, we see that DEA agent Bobby Trench (Washington) is working undercover alongside

supposed criminal Marcus Stigman (Wahlberg), who he's investigating for stealing money from the mob. After a botched attempt to infiltrate a drug cartel leads them both on the run, Trench learns that Stigman is also an undercover agent, working for the NCIS. Both men then set out to find out why neither knew of the other's secret identity. *2 Guns* explodes into cinemas from **August 16th**.

## U.K Box Office

### July 5th-7th

1. Despicable Me 2 - £3,996,837
2. Now You See Me - £2,898,997
3. The Internship - £1,248,431
4. World War Z - £837,347
5. Man of Steel - £802,763
6. This Is The End - £502,946
7. The Bling Ring - £141,425
8. Lootera - £69,153
9. Singam II - £65,806
10. Behind The Candelabra - £49,546

### July 12th-14th

1. Monsters University - £3,463,917
2. Despicable Me 2 - £2,225,543
3. Pacific Rim - £2,193,500
4. Now You See Me - £1,142,376
5. The Internship - £397,660
6. World War Z - £382,975
7. Man of Steel - £278,607
8. This Is The End - £181,367
9. Bhaag Milkha Bhaag - £89,348
10. The Bling Ring - £76,540

### July 19th-21st

1. Monsters University - £2,791,078
2. The World's End - £2,123,576
3. Despicable Me 2 - £1,850,549
4. Pacific Rim - £1,332,877
5. Now You See Me - £922,669
6. World War Z - £242,057
7. The Internship - £226,680
8. Man of Steel - £134,325
9. The Frozen Ground - £89,515
10. This Is The End - £74,270

### July 26th-28th

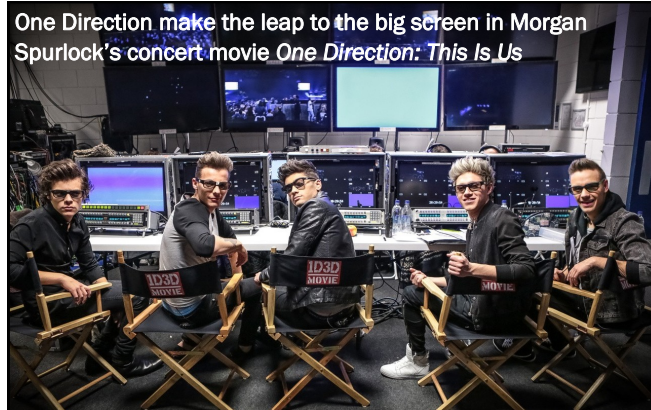
1. The Wolverine - £4,694,092
2. Monsters University - £3,114,562
3. Despicable Me 2 - £2,085,392
4. The World's End - £1,435,469
5. Now You See Me - £880,783
6. Pacific Rim - £732,249
7. The Internship - £174,945
8. World War Z - £168,060
9. Frances Ha - £150,689
10. Man of Steel - £78,014

## ONE DIRECTION: THIS IS US

Okay folks, prepare to file THIS under "WTF Movie Deals": Morgan Spurlock, the award-winning documentary filmmaker famous for films like McDonald's exposé *Super Size Me*, is the man behind a new concert movie featuring the insanely popular boy band One Direction.

Yyyyyyyyyyyyyyyeah...

The only people who are going to see this are, naturally, hardcore fans of the British pop group who mostly consist of young celeb-obsessed tween-age girls (and looking at various figures, there's an alarming amount of them at the moment) - in other words, not exactly Mr. Spurlock's key demographic. Unless you count the teenagers who watched *Super Size Me*, and got hungry for a Big Mac immediately afterwards. However, Spurlock has attained a large chunk of



One Direction make the leap to the big screen in Morgan Spurlock's concert movie *One Direction: This Is Us*

footage - mostly taken during the band's Up All Night world tour last year - to satisfy the audience, and given his track record thus far he should hopefully apply some of his talents as a filmmaker to make this one a concert film that stands out among the rest.

As well as showcasing said concert footage, the film also focuses on the meteoric rise to fame for the English-Irish boy band, consisting of

members Harry Styles, Niall Horan, Zayn Malik, Louis Tomlinson and Liam Payne, from their debuts on *The X Factor* to conquering the British and American charts with hit singles like *What Makes You Beautiful* and *Live While We're Young*. For most of you reading this, this will probably not interest you in the slightest. However, for everyone else, *One Direction: This Is Us* lands on **August 29th**.



## STILL SHOWING: JULY



### Trance

- Also available on Blu-Ray
- Released: 05/08/13



### The Place Beyond the Pines

- Also available on Blu-Ray
- Released: 12/08/13



### Evil Dead

- Also available on Blu-Ray
- Released: 12/08/13



### Oblivion

- Also available on Blu-Ray
- Released: 19/08/13

Despite the truly scorching weather, July has never been busier at the cinema and the following films are testament to that.

The film month started on the 5th, when we saw Emma Watson become part of a gang of thieving teenagers in *The Bling Ring*; Gerard Butler catching waves in *Chasing Mavericks*; a group of English Civil War deserters stumble upon some mushrooms in the psychedelic *A Field In England*; Owen Wilson and Vince Vaughn vying for a placement at Google in *The Internship*; and a band of magicians outwitting the cops in *Now You See Me*.

Next up, on the 12th, Mike and Sully returned to the big screen as their teenage selves in the riotous *Monsters University*;



Guillermo Del Toro unleashed his monster mash epic *Pacific Rim*; a young woman experienced memory problems in *Trap For Cinderella*; and we got an exclusive insight into the most controversial website on the world wide web and the intriguing people behind it in *We Steal Secrets: The Story of WikiLeaks*.

Then, on the 19th, Guy Pearce felt an attraction to foreign exchange student Felicity Jones in *Breathe In*; Nicolas Cage set out to bring killer John Cusack to justice in *The*

*Frozen Ground*; and Simon Pegg and Nick Frost once again teamed up with director Edgar Wright for the final part of their Cornetto trilogy *The World's End*. Finally, the month came to a close on the 26th, when we saw Greta Gerwig headline the indie comedy *Frances Ha*; and Hugh Jackman once more donning the metal claws in *The Wolverine*. If you want to check out some handy reviews of just a handful of these releases then check out pages 8-12.



# COMING SOON: SEPTEMBER

Unfortunately, the summer is nearly over and the month of September is right around the corner. But don't cry: here's some exciting films out that month to calm you down!

The first batch arrives on the 6th, when we will see director Richard Curtis take on the rules of time travel in *About Time*; a gay couple try to adopt a child during the bigoted decade of the 1970s in *Any Day Now*; Vin Diesel returns as the titular anti-hero in *Riddick*; and Roland Emmerich debuts his take on a siege at the White House in *White House Down*.

Up next on the 13th is a unique comedy about the world of voice-over artists in *In A World...;* a sequel to the popular horror film *Insidious 2*; the animated Medieval tale *Justin and the Knights of Valour*; Ron Howard's tale of a deep rivalry in the world of Formula 1 racing



Chris Hemsworth and Daniel Brühl are competitive Formula 1 drivers in the real-story drama *Rush*

entitled *Rush*; and Mark Ruffalo and Gwyneth Paltrow are members of a sex addition clinic in *Thanks For Sharing*. Think the month stops there? Then you think wrong, because following that on the 20th of the month is Woody Allen's latest comedy-drama *Blue Jasmine*; Halle Berry becomes personally involved in a kidnapping in *The Call*; Bryan Cranston and daughter Alice Eve are taken hostage by a blind criminal (trust me, it's smarter than it sounds) in *Cold Comes The Night*; Oscar-nominated actress Naomi Watts portrays the

Peoples' Princess in *Diana*; and Jeff Bridges and Ryan Reynolds are dead cops in *R.I.P.D.* Finally, on the 27th, a woman takes her obsession with Jane Austen to new and unexpected levels in *Austenland*; Sylvester Stallone and Arnold Schwarzenegger team up to break out of prison in *Escape Plan*; James McAvoy plays a dirty cop in *Filth*; Kristen Wiig restructures her life in *Girl Most Likely*; and Justin Timberlake must outwit Ben Affleck in gambling thriller *Runner Runner*. All this and more in the wonderful and exciting month of September...



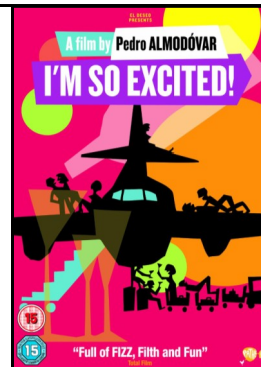
Bernie

- Also available on Blu-Ray
- Released: 19/08/13



The Look of Love

- Also available on Blu-Ray
- Released: 19/08/13



I'm So Excited!

- Also available on Blu-Ray
- Released: 26/08/13



Olympus Has Fallen

- Also available on Blu-Ray
- Released: 26/08/13



# REVIEWS

## STAR RATING SYSTEM



JUST DON'T



I WOULD'N'T



MEH



WORTH A LOOK



RATHER ENJOYABLE



SEE IT NOW!



**DIRECTOR:** Edgar Wright

**CAST:** Simon Pegg, Nick Frost, Martin Freeman, Paddy Considine, Eddie Marsan, Rosamund Pike, Rafe Spall, Steve Oram, Alice Lowe, David Bradley, Mark Heap, Michael Smiley

**RUNNING TIME:** TBC mins

**CERTIFICATE:** 15

**ONE-SENTENCE PLOT**

When five friends reunite to complete an abandoned pub crawl from their youth, all hell quite literally breaks loose...

**NOW FOR THE REVIEW...**

The most remarkable feat on display in all three films in Edgar Wright and Simon Pegg's "Cornetto" trilogy, including this newest and final entry, is their ability to stand strongly on their own without relying on connectivity or recycled jokes and characters. Each film is different and thus has a unique tone in each - with *Shaun of the Dead*, it was a romantic-comedy with zombies; with *Hot Fuzz*, the police were front and centre in an all-out action film; and now, with *The World's End*, it's the mature and surprisingly touching tale of a group of friends coming together after many years and re-bonding with one another... in a town populated by sinister robots and a decidedly apocalyptic theme.

As with the others, *The World's End* works best as its own creation. There may be a few moments where the tropes of the Cornetto trilogy are present and correct, albeit done much more subtly here (that infamous Cornetto line, for instance, is represented only by the brief appearance of a wrapper for said ice cream), but it remarkably has strong enough legs to not just walk, but run.

Or, given the heavy theme of alcohol in this film, stumble about with its arm around its equally-intebriated friends.

However, those going in expecting the gag-a-minute pace of the first two films may be somewhat disappointed. Make no mistake, there ARE jokes and many of them are very funny indeed. They are just as zany and out there as they have always been. But the humour this time round feels very constrained and not as constant, perhaps to make way for a much bigger touch of character and drama than ever before in this trilogy. Pegg's character Gary King, for instance, is a grown man-child who's hell-bent on recreating a youthful pub crawl with his friends because he recalls it as his happiest memory. Thanks to a career-best (and trilogy-best) performance by Pegg, King is his most complex and layered character yet as we see during the many events he and his friends take part in on a not-so-simple night. He exhumes a good chunk of the drama that's enough to make us feel sorry for him, even though he is not the easiest person to warm to during the film's first half.

Nick Frost, in another career/trilogy-best, takes on the straight man role normally reserved for Pegg and proves to be a more apt comic foil than he is a comedy relief. His chemistry with Pegg is present and correct, even when the two are at odds over a tragic and selfish act committed by Pegg in their youth, and their bromance once again provides the pure heart of the entire film. As for the other players, Paddy Considine and Eddie Marsan provide an even greater chunk of the heart and drama (the latter especially, as a bullied schoolmate who forms part of the gang) while Martin Freeman and Rosamund Pike do as much good as they can despite their limited material. There are also some major cameos abound which won't be ruined here because part of the film's joy, particularly with these cameos, is the sheer surprise of it all.

As well as expanding his directing talents to a more emotional level than before, Edgar Wright

also gives this sci-fi tale enough attention to be fun and action-packed as it is poignant. The many scenes of our heroes fighting the town's literally blue-blooded robots - or "blanks", as it prefers to call them - were reportedly choreographed by the same person who worked on Wright's previous film *Scott Pilgrim Vs. The World*, and the same level of enthusiasm and creativity in that film's fight sequences is transplanted well into these film's scenes which makes for an even more enjoyable viewing experience here.

The only element that might prove controversial with some is its ending, or to be more precise its epilogue. Without going into spoiler territory, know that it ends on a decidedly darker note than one would expect for a comedy like this. On the one hand, it marks a bizarre tonal shift that feels oddly out of place, and feels like the film forgot to take its anti-depressant medication for those final few minutes. But, on the other hand, it's probably a good thing that it ended this way and not how we would have expected it to end. It doesn't cop out and actually lets it play while doing nothing to stop it. That way, it makes everything all the more unpredictable and treats its audience as the intelligent and adaptable people that some of them are. So, there are reasons for and against for this ending, but it's a decent enough way to end the film and the Cornetto trilogy as a whole. Just don't expect to be in the highest spirits as you exit the cinema.

**OVERALL VERDICT**

Balancing genuine character and drama with its very funny sense of humour and leading chemistry between Simon Pegg and Nick Frost, *The World's End* is a fine closer of a trilogy while also being a fine film in its own right. But seriously though, what was up with that ending?







**DIRECTOR:** Guillermo Del Toro  
**CAST:** Charlie Hunnam, Idris Elba, Rinko Kikuchi, Charlie Day, Burn Gorman, Robert Kazinsky, Max Martini, Ron Perlman, Ellen McLain

**RUNNING TIME:** TBC mins

**CERTIFICATE:** 12A

**ONE-SENTENCE PLOT**

In the near future, humanity designs giant robots that can fight off equally-large monsters...

**NOW FOR THE REVIEW...**

After a summer mostly consisting of disappointments and brooding, serious-faced heroes in agonising and depressing situations, it's a cheerful notion that Guillermo Del Toro has not only made *Pacific Rim* (the director's first film in five years after 2008's *Hellboy II: The Golden Army*) easily the most fun and enjoyable experience you'll have this summer, but also surprisingly one of the most genuinely emotional as well.

What makes this film so engaging to watch is that it realises that its own premise is mind-bogglingly silly – giant monsters known as “kaiju” emerge from a portal at the bottom of the sea, so humans create giant man-piloted robots called “jaegers” to fight back – so it makes sure that it has as much fun as possible without ever coming off as pretentious (a trick that *Man of Steel* should learn for its now-in-development sequel) and, even more bizarrely, you actually buy all of the exposition given to us in the opening voiceover. When said monsters and robots do collide in

combat, the ten-year-old child inside of you will be sitting in his seat in awe because these fight sequences are nothing short of incredible to watch – the CGI is very impressive, the camera isn't shaking all the time so you can see what's going on, and the 3D is one of those rare instances where a conversion actually benefits the film rather than takes away. Special mention goes to cinematographer Guillermo Navarro - an Oscar-winner for Del Toro's *Pan's Labyrinth* – who makes credible use of the CG and production design to create some truly memorable images.

On top of all that, it would be very easy to lose actual characters to the wondrous effects going on around them but here they are both memorable and incredibly likable. Charlie Hunnam has great charisma and charm as the lead male, while Charlie Day and Burn Gorman have nice chemistry together as a comedy duo who could have been insufferable (and there is the chance that Day's voice may grind some viewers) but they're tolerable enough to like and root for. Idris Elba also puts another great performance onto his growing CV as the potentially-clichéd commanding officer Stacker Pentecost (isn't that a great name?) who has enough secrets and hidden agendas to make a great character who can spew lines like “Today, we are cancelling the apocalypse” and make it sound incredibly cool. The true highlight of this cast, however, is Rinko Kikuchi as Mako Mori whose

own personal agenda against the kaiju and glimpses of backstory as hinted at in some cleverly done flashback sequences makes her arguably the most interesting person in the entire film. Thankfully not reduced to a simple love interest stock character, her determination and heartfelt emotion, as well as a handful of funny moments, is the making of a truly memorable character in a major motion picture. If a sequel is to be made and she isn't involved in some manner then it will be a major disappointment because we deserve to know more about this great character than we do now.

Although at times the acting might be a little off from some people (and sadly, as charismatic and charming though he is, Hunnam is the closest to being the main culprit in this field), you hardly notice that because you're so sucked into the inspired storytelling and incredible visuals. With all this and more, it's clear that Guillermo Del Toro has done what has been so rarely achieved throughout the 2013 summer blockbuster season so far: creating a large-scale film that has just as much emphasis on characters and story than it does on CGI, and is actually a lot of good, old-fashioned fun.

**OVERALL VERDICT**

Hands-down the best blockbuster to open this summer, and certainly the most fun and likable, *Pacific Rim* needs to be seen by everyone wanting value for their money at the movies.



**DIRECTOR:** Dan Scanlon  
**CAST:** Billy Crystal, John Goodman, Steve Buscemi, Joel Murray, Sean Hayes, Charlie Day, Helen Mirren, Alfred Molina, Nathan Fillion, Aubrey Plaza, John Krazinski

**RUNNING TIME:** TBC mins

**CERTIFICATE:** U

**ONE-SENTENCE PLOT**

Ten years before the events of *Monsters Inc.*, Mike (Crystal) and Sulley (Goodman) become enemies when they meet at the titular university...

**NOW FOR THE REVIEW...**

For nearly 75 years, Disney's mantra has been “things will succeed when you wish upon a star”. You can thank Jiminy Cricket from *Pinocchio* for that. But three quarters of a century later, Pixar has come into the picture to counteract this statement by effectively saying “actually, it doesn't always work out that way”. Now, this may be something of a depressing blow to all the children out there as well as the adults who grew up on that one ponder, but sometimes we do need to hear the truth, especially from Disney: face the fact that you're probably not good at what you want to be the most.

This is a mature, sensible way of looking forward into the future, but ironically it comes from a film that instead looks back in time – in a good way though, because *Monsters University* (the first prequel by the animation studio) offers a dimension that was previously unseen to the

original characters we know and love that we had no idea of before.

Of course, the main crux of the film is Mike and Sulley (once more voiced with enthusiasm by Billy Crystal and John Goodman respectively) meeting for the first time, not getting along and then of course going through obstacles that make them best friends before the events of the first film. But the interesting reveal is that it was Mike, not Sulley, who set out to be the best “Scarer” that he possibly could while Sulley puts in a half-assed effort, relying on his family name to get ahead in the program. Of course, anyone who saw the first film knows how everything will turn out, but it's getting from point A to point B that matters in the end. Both characters have to essentially put their egos aside to not only help themselves but help their fellow monsters as well. Thankfully, this allows for a digestible amount of character development at the right moments which are handled well and with great dignity.

It turns out that the rest of the film is also fun to watch as well, although there are some problems along the way. Much of the film is dedicated to the “Scare Games” competition which pans out with all the usual clichés of in the underdog story – gang of misfits who rise to the top; opposing team members who are smug jerks; snooty person in charge who serves as the closest thing to a true antagonist; it's sadly all here. But they are still rather enjoyable, perhaps because we know what to expect. Point A to Point B.

As for the new characters, they are all likable and memorable, but the true standouts are said snoot Dean Hardscrabble, with an awesome centipede-inspired design and the chilling voice of Helen Mirren; and the free-spirited but bizarre addition known as Art, a monster with as much mystery and randomness to him as the next person. He provides some of the biggest laughs of the movie, and for good reason.

But in the end, *Monsters University* is a very enjoyable film not just because of its nostalgic qualities, its tired but entertaining plot, or even its fun and likable characters. Instead, it's a sign that Disney, like its younger versions of Mike and Sulley, are becoming more mature with its themes and messages of simply “wishing for your dreams to come true”.

It should also be worth mentioning the wonderful little short that precedes the film. Titled *The Blue Umbrella*, it makes clever use of photo-real backdrops and people while, as usually is with a Pixar short, providing a sweet story that everyone can enjoy. Perhaps not as powerful a short as Disney's recent Oscar-winning cartoon *Paperman*, but it's definitely on par and another fine collection to the animation giant's extended collection of short wonders.

**OVERALL VERDICT**

*Monsters University* is proof that Pixar is getting back on track, providing a fun comedy for everyone to enjoy.







**DIRECTOR:** James Mangold  
**CAST:** Hugh Jackman, Hiroyuki Sanada, Tao Okamoto, Rila Fukushima, Will Yun Lee, Svetlana Khodchenkova, Brian Tee, Famke Janssen  
**RUNNING TIME:** TBC mins  
**CERTIFICATE:** 12A  
**ONE-SENTENCE PLOT**  
 Wolverine (Jackman) travels to Japan, where a blast from the past makes him more vulnerable than ever...

**NOW FOR THE REVIEW...**  
 First up, the news you've been waiting for: yes, this film is much, much, MUCH better than the despised X-Men Origins: Wolverine. It's action-packed, there's a story that intelligible enough to follow, it makes sense within the continuity of the rest of the X-Men film universe (it takes place after X-Men: The Last Stand), and it mostly stays true to who the character of Logan/Wolverine is in the first place.

It starts off well enough, with a flashback to WWII Japan featuring some grisly make-up/VFX work - unsure which it is, but it's still impressive - after a certain event happens, before switching the attention on a post-X3 Wolverine (Hugh Jackman, awesome as ever) who now appears to be a hermit living in the mountains before being mysteriously summoned to Japan. And, funnily enough, what follows seems to be pretty strong too. Not only are there many fun action scenes to watch our not-so-merry mutant get into the middle of, but there's some decent character moments, two memorable, likable and

strong-willed female leads (there are actually three main female roles, but we'll get to the third in a minute), and, of course, the unique-for-a-summer-blockbuster setting of Japan which makes for some lovely scenery and a calming backdrop for the film's quieter moments. So far, it's a pretty decent summer film that not only entertains its paying audience but also hints at a greater intelligence than one would expect.

And then, we get to the third act of the film. This, in every definition of the phrase, is where things go horribly, horribly wrong.

Strange as it may be to say about a film like this, but it feels like it was ripped out of a comic book, in the sense that it has a cartoony feel with so many twists and turns that it's hard to keep track at times. After all the strong elements that had come before, all of it feels remarkably out of place and unsatisfactory to all the plot threads already established. Not only that, but the action is phenomenally weak compared to what had come before - one earlier action scene saw Wolverine fight off the Japanese mob on top of a moving train, but to be fair how DO you top something like that? - as are the villains our hero has to face against. One of them, a Svetlana Khodchenkova-looking mutant with poisonous powers known as Viper, is aggressively weak and only evokes bad memories of Poison Ivy in Batman and Robin rather than be truly intimidating. Seriously, her character and performance might as well be a

line of tents, it's so camp. The other, basically a large samurai version of Iron Man, has an identity reveal so stupid and so nonsensical when you take into account everything that had happened before that it nearly kills the tension surrounding everything. Ironically, there's too much comic book influence in this closing act.

It should also be worth mentioning that Famke Janssen pops up in frequent dream sequences as past X-(wo)Man Jean Grey, who was killed for the greater good by guess-who in X-Men: The Last Stand. One, these sequences and her subsequent appearance add little to the overall situations except to inflict guilt on Wolverine after what he did in that film. Two, it reminds us all that the awful X-Men: The Last Stand exists. Two strikes, but not out.

Thankfully, there's something after the credits that gets things back on track for "future" events in the X-Men film universe (hint, hint) but until that comes about, acknowledge that The Wolverine is a strong and entertaining entry in the franchise and cleans up everything that the last Wolverine movie made a mess of. Except for that last act, which doesn't fit the film's tone but doesn't destroy the film either.

**OVERALL VERDICT**  
 A lacklustre third act almost details everything it does right, but *The Wolverine* is a significant improvement on its last solo outing and has enough strength to stand on its own as well.



**DIRECTOR:** Louis Leterrier  
**CAST:** Jesse Eisenberg, Mark Ruffalo, Woody Harrelson, Melanie Laurent, Isla Fisher, Dave Franco, Michael Caine, Morgan Freeman, Common  
**RUNNING TIME:** 115 mins  
**CERTIFICATE:** 12A  
**ONE-SENTENCE PLOT**  
 When a group of magicians appear to have committed a robbery, an FBI agent (Ruffalo) must deduce the trick...

**NOW FOR THE REVIEW...**  
 You don't need a deck of cards to create the illusion that everything is as it seems, when it really isn't. Instead, we now have *Now You See Me* at our disposal which, although perfectly resembling a fun and fast-paced action thriller, has one or two major setbacks which threaten to derail the entire trick.

But these setbacks are fairly minor, and not worth talking about so early on in this review. For the moment, however, take pride in knowing that the film creates an enormous amount of enjoyment for anyone watching. This is especially true of the film's major magic performances, created mostly through the use of practical effects with little emphasis on CGI - an undisputed triumph in a major theatrical release nowadays - which astound as they do leave you wondering just how on Earth they were able to pull it all off. Of course, the use of computers must have come in somehow, but even if they did it is very tricky to tell real and fake apart in this instance, and whoever got the actors to take part in

these stunts should get whatever praise coming their way in earnest. Its running time is just under two hours long, but the quickened pace somehow makes it seem like about half an hour less. Director Louis Leterrier seems to have taken cues from his experience directing the first two *Transporter* films and in the process found a way to tell a crafty story about bank-robbing magicians that is always on the move, rarely stopping for a moment's breath. Just imagine Christopher Nolan's *The Prestige* if it had swallowed a gallon of Red Bull, and you have this vision.

However, it directly leads into one of the film's biggest problems, in that there is very little characterisation to be found during most of it. So much time is spent on expanding the story or various people giving long and winded speeches of exposition - probably the reason why they got Morgan Freeman to play a magician expositor here - that only thin marginal space is provided for the characters to branch out and become interesting. Other than that, they're just archetypes who don't truly progress or grow in the slightest - Mark Ruffalo's FBI agent (the closest to an actual lead in a film, despite the promotional material's heavy focus on supporting players Jesse Eisenberg and co) is the grumpy cynic; Eisenberg is the jerk; the ever-reliable Woody Harrelson is the sarcastic one; and so on, and so on. Other actors, meanwhile, are given so little to do that you wonder why they were cast in small roles in

the first place. Michael Caine, for example, only appears in roughly six scenes maximum as a major financier for the group, but gets little else more to do other than be a certain foil for them in one scene (no spoilers here!).

Speaking of spoilers, the ending of the film is perhaps the most controversial element of the film and yet another of the film's major flaws. Again, nothing will be revealed here but be prepared for a final major twist that, when you start to think about it, doesn't make much sense when you know who certain characters are thus it all seems way too out of character for them. It will be frustrating to some, but to others it will just add to the insane amount of brainless fun that the film provides.

That's what this film is, at the end of the day - brainless fun. It's still smarter - to an extent - than other major Hollywood films released around this part of the year, but thankfully it doesn't take itself too seriously which enables everyone watching it to have fun with its various contrivances and out-of-nowhere plot twists, which ironically make us even more invested in its outcome. It can be silly at times, but it's a kind of silly that we desperately need this time of year.

**OVERALL VERDICT**  
 It aims to be smarter than it is at times, which can lead to mixed results especially in the character department, but *Now You See Me* is still enjoyable enough with a few interesting tricks up its sleeve.







**DIRECTOR:** Shawn Levy  
**CAST:** Owen Wilson, Vince Vaughn, Rose Byrne, Max Minghella, Joanna Garcia, Jessica Szohr, B.J. Novak  
**RUNNING TIME:** 119 mins  
**CERTIFICATE:** 12A  
**ONE-SENTENCE PLOT**  
 Two out-of-work salesmen apply for an internship with Google, but soon find themselves behind on the times...  
**NOW FOR THE REVIEW...**  
 One of the most popular complaints about *The Internship* by other reviewers is that the entire film is like one extended advertisement/propaganda piece that shows that above everything else, Google is The Best Place To Work, Ever©. While that is certainly true, with the product placement hitting you like a jackhammer to the head resulting in the most blatant use of corporate tie-ins since AOL with *You've Got Mail*, this particular criticism has apparently overshadowed many of the film's other faults. And given that there are too many to count, it's miraculous how no-one else seems to be talking about them as much.  
 Once you get past the oh-so-subtle advertising, it's an opportunity for Owen Wilson and Vince Vaughn to re-team on-screen after the success of 2005's *Wedding Crashers*. Unfortunately, this movie seems to be mooching off that film's triumphs because not only is the chemistry between Wilson and Vaughn – and Wilson and Vaughn themselves, for that

matter – on auto-pilot, but it also forgets the two elements that made *Wedding Crashers* so memorable but where this movie fails completely: its humour and characters.  
 When the film's first supposed big laughs include mean-spirited jibes at an unattractive young girl and then Alzheimer's, you know you're in for a painful ride. From there on, the film commonly mistakes stupid and obnoxious for quirky and charming, demonstrated many times with our two main protagonists (but more on them soon), and not one does it result in full-on laughter. Even the one joke that actually is quite funny – it involves a night club, and a sudden smash cut to the men's – they ruin immediately by repeating it three times. It's clear desperation to get as many laughs from the audience as possible, going so far as to kill their only moment of legitimate gold.  
 As if their stilted chemistry wasn't bad enough, Wilson and Vaughn are given characters that are literally too stupid and too difficult to root for or care about. The whole film relies on the simple idea that two grown men get a job at one of the biggest companies in the world, but they have no idea how to work technology. This is 2013 – no-one in this day and age can't be completely oblivious to how these things work, even if they did grow up out of the time frame. Heck, anyone with a basic degree can tell you what an HTML is. This movie is seriously pushing the boundaries of reality by stating that these guys don't have the

basic knowledge of people half their age by this point. And then, by sheer luck, they get the opportunity to work somewhere fantastic – or at least that's how the movie wants you to think – and what do they do? They act like complete and utter morons in ways that would get them sacked on the spot. They confuse the technological term "bug" for the literal definition; they irresponsibly go out and party with their younger teammates (you actually feel sorry for most of them, being emotionally manipulated by these grown children) during an important assignment; and they don't even know what the *X-Men* are. Why are we supposed to support these idiots, at all?  
 At this rate, they don't deserve the success that the incredibly clichéd and generic underdog story give us, complete with the stock English-accented bully. In fact, HE should have won the placement in the end. Yeah, he's a complete douche but at least he's smart and, more importantly, works hard for his future career. When the film makes you side with the bad guy, it's a horrible, horrible sign that the film you're watching, with its borderline infuriating characters, is complete tripe.  
**OVERALL VERDICT**  
 If there is a worse comedy this year than *The Internship*, it will be a huge surprise. With hateful lead characters, a clichéd story, and the most in-your-face advertisement ever for Google, you'll come out pining for Bing instead.



**DIRECTOR:** Sofia Coppola  
**CAST:** Emma Watson, Leslie Mann, Taissa Farmiga, Israel Broussard, Katie Chang, Claire Julien, Erin Daniels, Paris Hilton, Kirsten Dunst  
**RUNNING TIME:** 90 mins  
**CERTIFICATE:** 15  
**ONE-SENTENCE PLOT**  
 A group of teenagers rob the houses of various celebrities, just for fun...  
**NOW FOR THE REVIEW...**  
 Automatically, it makes logical sense for *The Bling Ring* to be a perfect double feature with *Spring Breakers*, another film from earlier this year that features disillusioned youths engaging in horrific and immoral anti-social activities. However, if one is asked to compare, chances are that *The Bling Ring* will be the film that they prefer.  
 Unlike Harmony Korine's earlier film – the boozing and bikinis in which are replaced here by fashion accessories and Frappuccinos in plastic cups – Sofia Coppola's latest establishes its environments, characters and scenarios much more clearly, and paints a better picture of the shallow, entitled youth of modern day America than Korine attempted to do.  
 Thanks to Coppola's expert direction and witty screenplay, she intentionally portrays this particular group of teenagers – led not by Emma Watson's Nicki as the trailers may imply (incidentally, Watson does great work in a role completely out of her comfort zone) but instead debuting actress Katie Chang's Rebecca – as a

despicably unlikable bunch of brats. Rebecca, for one, is a lost cause as soon as we see her casually stealing various items from people's cars on an empty street at night, and later breaking into a classmate's house during broad daylight and stealing various items including their parents' fancy car.  
 What makes it even more repulsive – and same goes for later when she and the others break in to the targeted celebrities' homes – is that she doesn't even attempt to disguise herself or remove traces of her ever being there. She, like her insufferably vapid pack of "friends" including her apparent new BFF Marc (Israel Broussard) whom she uses to get what she wants – namely the easily accessed addresses of these famous people – with little remorse, wants to be caught only to obtain the same amount of public notoriety that her idols have been given.  
 It raises conflict for viewers of the film because we so desire to see them get caught, if only to knock some common sense into them, but when they do you can't help but feel that in some warped way they had succeeded in their master plan to get within the public eye. As they walk into their hearing (not a spoiler, because it's all based on real-life fact), photographers and camera crews harass them like they would do to other celebrities in Los Angeles. One could easily mistake it all for being for a cheap reality show - art does, in a very disturbing way, imitate life in this instance.

*The Bling Ring* has the bigger advantage over *Spring Breakers* in depicting today's youth, however, because it injects them with a far more believable substance than bloodshed with no consequences; delusions of grandeur, fuelled by celebrity culture, social media, technology, and other little tidbits that we as mankind created. As the titular group take "selfies" on their iPhones or BlackBerries, sometimes with the very items they stole from Paris Hilton and the like, and them post them on Facebook, it becomes clear that this is a new generation that is scarier than we ever imagined because they believe in a society where anyone can become famous for doing anything and they will do the most reprehensible things to achieve it. And, worst of all, we shaped them that way.  
 The film's final few moments is like a final scare in a horror movie - Nicki is being interviewed on television, talking about how her next-door neighbour in her jail block was Lindsay Lohan, one of the Bling Ring's victims; and she ends it by shamelessly promoting her new website. Coppola essentially ends her film with the strong hint that this criminal fascination for the famous will never go away.  
**OVERALL VERDICT**  
 A stunningly-made and well-acted portrayal of self-absorption within today's celeb-obsessed youth, that's all the more scary for its realism and sense of entitlement.







**DIRECTOR:** Noah Baumbach  
**CAST:** Greta Gerwig, Mickey Summer, Adam Driver, Charlotte d'Amboise, Josh Hamilton

**RUNNING TIME:** 86 mins

**CERTIFICATE:** 15

**ONE-SENTENCE PLOT**

Frances (Gerwig) is a dancer figuring out her life when her roommate and best friend Sophie (Summer) moves out...

**NOW FOR THE REVIEW...**

Reviewing a film like *Frances Ha* has to be one of the most difficult things to do in the profession. While not exactly deep with intellectual thoughts, it is nonetheless hard for a singleton reviewer like this one to analyse Noah Baumbach's latest film for one reason and one reason only: it doesn't seem to be about anything.

Now, there is a plot – albeit an inconsistent one – about the young woman of the title trying to live after her best friend Sophie (a subdued Mickey Summer) moves out of their New York apartment. However, the film flakes its way through with not much concentration on keeping things coherent in terms of story and instead presents to us many scenes that either have nothing to do with it, or are just there to showcase the main character's quirkiness. It's like an extended episode of *Seinfeld*: things do happen, and yet nothing ever does.

But seeing how its main character (a tone-perfect Greta Gerwig, who delights

whenever on-screen in a film she co-wrote with Baumbach) goes through life without a concentrated and clear idea about where she's headed, maybe *Frances Ha* is deliberate in having little focus on fixed plot points and is trying to be as free-spirited as the person it is trying to represent. Unfortunately, charm can only go so far, and it reaches a point where it becomes infuriating that she does not seem to "get her sh\*t together" and grow up like she undoubtedly needs to. In a way, she resembles Baumbach's last on-screen titular protagonist *Greenberg* – like Ben Stiller's agitated man-child-of-sorts, *Frances* already has a path set out for her in her own egotistical mind which is never realised and gets less and less likely once reality hits them hard. It's a similar trope with many young people today to have these delusions of grandeur that are never fully realised because life simply got in the way, but with every episodic event that occurs here you'll be begging for this woman to mature quicker and quicker.

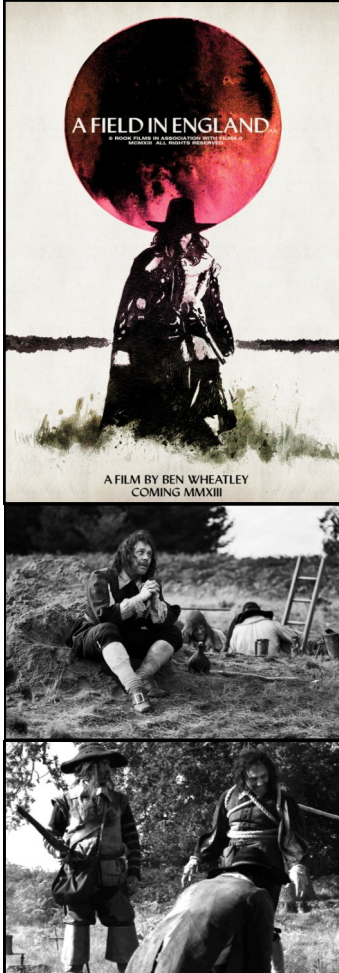
So, what we seem to have is a film that has little to offer in terms of plot and consistency, and a lead character whose charm and quirky nature doesn't entirely mask the irritating reality that she needs to grow up. Does it make it a bad movie? No, but it doesn't exactly make it a good one either – not to this reviewer, anyway. It doesn't seem to suck you in as much as you'd like it to, which is a shame because you want to really like

this movie but you're always held back from doing so. There are definitely things that work, though: Gerwig, as already established, is a delight in the role and delivers a good amount of wit in her co-written screenplay with Baumbach; a montage of *Frances* going home to her parents for the holidays is effecting all the way through to the final shot of their farewell at the airport; and the film ends on a cute note that neatly gives way to the film's title.

The obvious comparisons are going to be with the filmography of Jean-Luc Godard and especially Woody Allen's *Manhattan*, another New York-set black-and-white film about human interaction (or lack thereof). While *Frances Ha*, like those films, will undoubtedly find a much bigger audience of fans in the years to come like those films, it will have to make do for now with a critic who doesn't hate it nor love it at the same time – they're just a little indifferent to it and not as on board with it as everyone who contributed to its 91% Rotten Tomatoes rating. It's just not this reviewer's kind of film, put very simply.

**OVERALL VERDICT**

For some, *Frances Ha* will frustrate with its lack of cohesive storyline and the immaturity of its main character, but others will like it for its stylistic tone, witty screenplay and a fun central performance by Great Gerwig.



**DIRECTOR:** Ben Wheatley  
**CAST:** Reese Sheersmith, Michael Smiley, Julian Barratt, Richard Glover, Peter Ferdinando, Ryan Pope

**RUNNING TIME:** 117 mins

**CERTIFICATE:** 15

**ONE-SENTENCE PLOT**

During the English Civil War, a small band of battle deserters come across some mushrooms in the titular field, with psychedelic results...

**NOW FOR THE REVIEW...**

If you can wrap your brain around *A Field In England* on your first viewing, then congratulations: you have just won the utmost respect of this reviewer for he, unlike you, had little to no idea what on Earth was going on.

That's not to say that the film is horrible, because it really isn't. From a production standpoint, it's a marvel. Gorgeous cinematography dominates with every passing second; the decision to shoot this film in black-and-white perfectly sums up the drab and uncomfortable surroundings which shall be discussed momentarily; and the editing, in particular one extended psychedelic sequence at the end of the second act, is phenomenally tight and creates a frightening and hypnotic set of images that stay imprinted onto your subconscious long after watching it.

The film's biggest problem, however, lies in its script and direction. Amy Jump, who has previously written and taken on a co-editor role for husband Ben Wheatley's *Kill List* and

*Sightseers*, once again takes on writing duties here while Wheatley takes the helm. But the plot and how it is told over its ninety-minute runtime is so bare that you wonder why there was a script to begin with. Not much happens other than these men are just wondering about a field during the English Civil War and get into a strange situation. If there was more hint of a plot then there would be more reason to be invested but as it is it just comes across as awkward and rather cluttered.

Out of Jump's screenplays for Wheatley so far, *Sightseers* feels like the more rounded project but even then the majority of it was written by its stars Alice Lowe and Steve Oram with Jump only providing additional material. The other two, including this one, were solely written by her which might prove that she could do with a co-writer to help her polish what stands as a clumsy script at times.

Not helping is the fact that the characters aren't that memorable or fleshed out to become anything other than bland archetypes. We have the innocent, the cynic, the idiot, the undefinable one, and the villain. That's really all there is to them, as though Jump has stripped them of any interest whatsoever and asks us to define them by these characteristics alone. The only one who comes closest to a defining character is Michael Smiley's villainous Irishman O'Neill, but the film does not offer other dimensions to his character to make him truly stand out. All the

actors do fine, but they can do so much with the material they've been given. If anything, what stands out most is the surreal imagery which Wheatley obviously has a fascination for because he mines this gimmick as much as possible. Unfortunately, there are times when he doesn't know when to hold back. For instance, there is a brief scene which shows the characters frozen in position for no apparent reason, but the chilling effect is nullified when it is repeated a couple more times after in separate scenes. It's understandable to create some strange, uncomfortable visuals in what is essentially a strange, uncomfortable story, but one can have too much of a good thing and the imagery, as beautiful as it is, gets tiresome after a while even on the small screen this film was viewed on (this review is based on the DVD release as part of its multi-platform release, a first for a UK film).

Its confused and altogether jumbled attempts at telling a coherent narrative are mostly for naught, but that doesn't fault the film from being a stunning visual experience that you only need to see once to be marginally satisfied.

**OVERALL VERDICT**

Visually, *A Field In England* is a triumph that should be shown to aspiring film students but on a creative level it crashes and burns due to a weak script and mediocre directing. It's a missed opportunity, but an opportunity nonetheless.





# UK Film Release Dates

## AUGUST

### 2ND

- The Conjuring
- From Up On Poppy Hill
- The Heat
- Only God Forgives
- Red 2
- The Smurfs 2

### 9TH

- Alan Partridge: Alpha Papa
- Grown Ups 2
- The Lone Ranger
- Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters

### 16TH

- 2 Guns
- Bachelorette
- Kick-Ass 2
- Planes

### 23RD

- Elysium
- Jurassic Park 3D
- Lovelace
- The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones
- We're The Millers
- What Maisie Knew

### 30TH

- One Direction: This Is Us
- Pain and Gain
- The Way, Way Back
- You're Next

## SEPTEMBER

### 6TH

- About Time
- Ain't Them Bodies Saints
- Any Day Now
- No One Lives
- Riddick
- White House Down

### 13TH

- 42
- The Artist and The Model
- In A World...
- Insidious 2
- Justin and the Knights of Valour
- Rush
- Thanks For Sharing

### 20TH

- The Call
- Cold Comes The Night
- Diana
- R.I.P.D

### 27TH

- Austenland
- Blue Jasmine
- Filth
- Girl Most Likely
- Prisoners
- Runner Runner

**All release dates are correct as of time of press.**

## OCTOBER

### 4TH

- Emperor
- Getaway
- How I Live Now
- Sunshine on Leith
- The To Do List

### 11TH

- Baggage Claim
- The Fifth Estate
- Gravity
- Tarzan 3D

### 18TH

- The Broken Circle Breakdown
- Captain Phillips
- Escape Plan
- Turbo

### 25TH

- Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs 2
- Ender's Game
- Jackass Presents: Bad Grampa
- One Chance
- The Selfish Giant
- Seventh Son