



4/2 3 JOHN DIES AT THE END HORROR/COMEDY

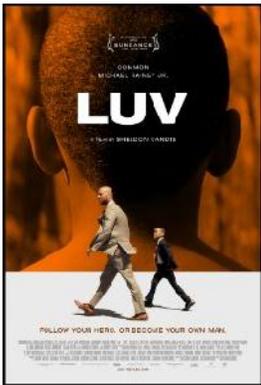
R 99 minutes

Paul Giamatti (WIN WIN, IDES OF MARCH, SIDEWAYS, BARNEY'S VERSION, THE HANGOVER II)

Give or take the titular disclosure, this movie is a thoroughly unpredictable horror-comedy -- and an immensely entertaining one, too. Thirty-odd years after unleashing "Phantasm," writer-director Don Coscarelli delivers a gonzo gorefest about college dropouts investigating an E.T. invasion while tripping on "soy sauce," a drug that makes crystal meth look like cotton candy. Pic gets nuttier as it goes, supported by snappy dialogue, an expert mix of digital and makeup f/x, and indelibly screwy performances, including Paul Giamatti's aptly low-affect turn as a jaded reporter.

Inasmuch as the narrative makes sense at all, it would seem that twentysomething pals Dave (Chase Williamson) and John (Rob Mayes) are in the ghostbusting biz of solving paranormal "problems," including that of a woman whose deceased b.f. has been harassing her. Much of the pic takes place in flashback, as soy-sauced Dave doles out barely coherent details to Giamatti's world-weary scribe. Surreal action scenes are executed with wit and energy, and the tech credits, including Robert Kurtzman's ornately yucky makeup, are killer. Canine thesp Bark Lee is brilliant.

Hard to pinpoint, but fans of **BACHELORETTE, FUN SIZE, DREDD, THE WATCH, LAWLESS, PROMETHEUS, BATTLESHIP, DARK TIDE,** and **JACK AND JILL.**



4/2 3 LUV DRAMA

\$90,000 27 SCREENS R 94 MINUTES

Michael Rainey, Jr. (HIS FIRST FEATURE FILM)

Dennis Haysbert (TV'S THE UNIT, 24—MOVIES- JARHEAD, THE DETAILS, ABSOLUTE POWER, WHAT'S COOKING)

The impetus for young Woody's (Rainey,Jr) day-long life lesson is rather abrupt, as he's thrust into his Uncle Vincent's companionship on a whim. When Vincent drives him to school, after a breakfast at the home the two share with Vincent's mother, Woody is caught in a lie about his flirting skills with girls, which prompts Vincent to keep driving, force Woody to skip school, and administer his own testosterone-fueled education. The first stop is a tailor, where Woody is fitted for the same sort of suit that Vincent wears as ruse and armor, the packaging for the new brand of self he's aiming to sell after eight years in prison. En route to a bank where Vincent aims to secure a loan for a new restaurant (the anchor for his plan to go straight), the pair pass a run-down building's mural of Malcolm X, and in the black banker's office, there's a framed, street-art-style portrait of Barack Obama. More subtle than it may sound, the juxtaposition speaks to director Candis's scan of the thin line between legit and illegitimate business, the shaky ground between different men of color in volatile areas, and the various levels of the black community in our ostensibly "post-racial" America (further muddying those waters, the film reveals that Vincent's old boss, Fish, played by Dennis Haysbert, now deals prescription drugs, because "people don't have health care and they're suffering").



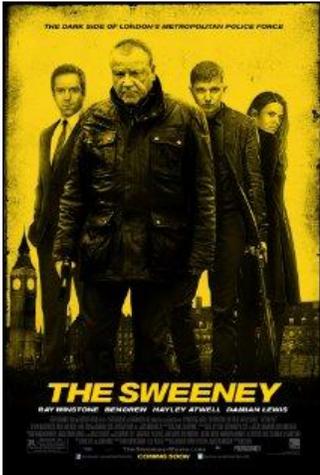
LUV watches as Woody takes all of this in, and lets the audience wonder if his personal filter will allow him to

soak up more good than bad. In addition to swinging by workplaces, where Woody asks the pseudo-conman Vincent why he repeatedly lies, the two find themselves in alarmingly dangerous scenarios, with Woody held at gunpoint, caught in the crosshairs of a drug deal gone awry, and, presumably, scarred for life. Vincent's penchant for wantonly putting Woody in harm's way make him an especially flawed antihero, whose feral ways are harder to shed than he thought, and whom Common aptly portrays with ace complexity. It's quickly, though not vexingly, clear that Woody will be the one to muster the goodness Vincent can't, but a late scene involving another shady deal fails to support the arc. Stepping up as a point man



Vincent's enemies won't recognize, Woody parlays the day's training into a precious moment of hard-talking triumph, and the scene is played for pint-sized amusement instead of earned and honest realism

The acting here is quite good from basically an unknown cast. Fans of gritty films like **BEASTS OF THE SOUTHERN WILD, THIS MUST BE THE PLACE, CHASING MAVERICKS, SEVEN PSYCHOPATHS, LIBERAL ARTS** and **360** will definitely find a lot to like with this one.



4/2 3 THE SWEENEY ACTION

OPENS THEATRICALY MARCH 1 R 112 MINUTES

Ray Winstone (THE DEPARTED, RUN FOR YOUR LIFE, SNOW WHITE AND THE HUNTSMAN, 44 INCH CHEST)

Damian Lewis (TV'S HOMELAND, LIFE ON MARS, STOLEN)

Bash first, ask questions later is the default setting for the elite police unit in a defiantly anachronistic actioner named after the cop show that topped British TV ratings in the 1970s. Jack Regan (Winstone) is a plainclothes detective with London's Flying Squad, which in Cockney rhyming slang becomes the Sweeney ("Sweeney Todd"/"flying squad").

Dispatched with haste to stop violent robberies in progress, Regan and his team are cops who get the job done but don't play by the rules. Their aggressive tactics pose bureaucratic headaches for the division's long-suffering boss, Frank Haskins (Lewis), and provoke outright hostility from persnickety internal-affairs chump Ivan Lewis (Steven Mackintosh). It doesn't help that Regan is having an affair with pretty Flying Squad member Nancy (Hayley Atwell), who also happens to be Lewis' wife.

The storyline involves the robbery of a relatively humble jewelry store, which ends in the murder of a witness. Director Love allows the audience to be too far ahead of the Flying Squad detectives, who initially fail to grasp the significance of the summary execution caught on the store's TV monitor. Flawed assumptions and the team's reliably confrontational policing methods land Regan in hot water, giving Lewis the upper hand in the internal power struggle.

Much of the action is routine, although the central set piece, chasing masked criminals through London's Trafalgar Square and National Gallery, is a praiseworthy highlight. A car chase-heavy climax should resonate with fans of the original show, but Regan's brief incarceration, while allowing a witty allusion to a memorable moment from Winstone's 1977 breakthrough vehicle, "Scum," seems untethered to plausible reality and legal process.

This is a pretty good action cop flick with a good cast. The appeal will easily be to those that liked **SINISTER, THE LONG GOODBYE, THE PAPER BOY, THE SAMARITAN, KILLER JOE, LOCK STOCK AND BARREL, RAMPART, and THE GUARD.**



4/9 3 HYDE PARK ON THE HUDSON DRAMA

\$7 MILL BO 246 SCREENS R 94 MINUTES

Bill Murray (STRIPES, LOST IN TRANSLATION, TOOTSIE, CADDY SHACK, MAD DOG AND GLORY, GROUND HOG DAY)

Laura Linney (NANNY DIARIES, SAVAGES, KINSEY, MYSTIC RIVER)

The world explored in this film is one of copious juicy secrets, the least tantalizing of which is the lesbianism of Eleanor Roosevelt (Olivia Williams), who occupies a separate cottage on the family's titular New York estate, making furniture with "the sort of women who like each other," as the royals' butler puts it. The real dirt, tucked away in an era when even the president's need for a wheelchair was kept private, concerns FDR's handful of mistresses, particularly Daisy (Linney), who narrates the movie and also happens to be the big man's distant cousin.

Written by playwright Roger Nelson, Hyde Park on Hudson is largely derived from Daisy's diaries about the affair, unearthed after her death in 1991 at the age of 100. In the film, she cozies up to the president while he's also bedding his secretary, Missy (Elizabeth Marvel), a tough pill for the smitten Daisy to swallow, especially after she's given him cinema's most PG-rated handjob. The circus of indiscretions is witnessed on the sly by the visiting king and queen, who offer dishy commentary.

The centerpiece of this is a historic picnic that apparently cemented the nations' bond, and thus served as the first step to victory over Hitler. Franklin's testy mother, Sara (Elizabeth Wilson), is up in arms about her son's insistence on serving the royals alcohol, but everyone's just fine with serving them hot dogs, the ultimate no-frills belly-filler, and, perhaps, a little phallic jab of announcing one's territory. The very stars-and-stripes menu item becomes an exhausted running joke, with the ever-uppity queen aghast at the notion of such a thing, and the more malleable king whittled down until he's finally ready to wrap his lips around it.



The moral is that there's great value in "special relationships," be them between world leaders or illicit lovers. It's a nice way to link the movie's key events, but it doesn't change the fact that Nelson and Michell bite off far more than they're able to chew, resulting in an odd blend of touched-on topics. As the troubled mistress, Linney is as good as her viewers have come to expect, and she's gifted a pulse-quickening revelation scene that's better than anything else in the film.

Fans of **THE KING'S SPEECH**, **COSMOPOLIS**, **HOPE SPRINGS**, **LIBERAL ARTS**, **THE IRON LADY**, **TEMPEST**, **ANNA KARENINA**, and **THE BEAST EXOTIC HOTEL** will love this one too.



4/16 1 DJANGO UNCHAINED ACTION
\$158 MILL BO 3012 SCREENS R 165 MINUTES

Jamie Foxx (RAY, HORRIBLE BOSSES, DUE DATE, LAW ABIDING CITIZEN, THE SOLOIST)

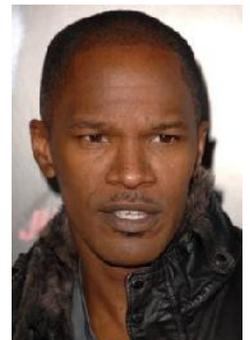
Christoph Waltz (INGLORIOUS BASTERDS, WATER FOR ELEPHANTS, CARNAGE, THE THREE MUSKETEERS)

Samuel L. Jackson (PULP FICTION, UNTHINKABLE, LAKEVIEW TERRACE, IRON MAN, SNAKES ON A PLANE, COACH CARTER)

Leonardo Di Caprio (A BRONX TALE, TITANIC, INCEPTION, GANGS OF

NEW YORK, CATCH ME IF YOU CAN)

Jamie Foxx is Django, who we meet as part of a chain of slaves shuffling through a cold night. Django is found and freed by Dr. King Schultz (Waltz) a dentist-turned-bounty hunter. If one thing hurts the film, it's that Tarantino again has Waltz play a loquacious killer, as articulate as he is amoral. It's a delightful performance, but too close on the heels of his turn in *Basterds*. Schultz knows that Django can identify the three men he wants to find and slay, but has never seen. A deal is struck: Django will help Schultz, Schultz will then help train Django to free his wife, Brunhilde (Kerry Washington) a runaway who was forcibly separated from her husband and sent to the Mississippi plantation, Candyland.



Set two years before the Civil War, *Django* plays like someone Monday morning-quarterbacking American History. It's ridiculous, but it's no lark. Rather, the operatic lunacy of the film feels like the only way to talk about the real lunacy of slavery in America

Django Unchained is also funny—and smarter than it looks at first glance. A scene of a night raid plays as the funniest, most violent riff on the Klan since Mel Brooks gave Cleavon Little a sheriff's star. There's a lot in *Django Unchained* about slavery and social order as performed constructs—accepted roles—and about how such a surreal lie as slavery defined our history. Leonardo Di Caprio's plantation owner Calvin Candie, a preening sociopath and slaver, likes to be called



"Monsieur Candie," considers himself a Francophile ... and can't speak French.

Like a blood-soaked *Blazing Saddles*, *Django Unchained* is a critique based in love, a celebration that understands what's worth condemnation. *Django Unchained* isn't just a product of how the young Tarantino watched a thousand Westerns and came to understand what was in them—it's also a product of how the young Tarantino watched a thousand Westerns and came to question what wasn't in them. The morality (or lack of thereof) of slavery and murder runs through the film, and Tarantino's observations cut deep.

The performances are astonishing. Foxx is heroic and haunted, Waltz a cavalier money-maker who becomes a moral man. Di Caprio is a bully and a dandy, Kerry Washington's Brunhilde is excellent as both vision of female perfection and real woman herself. And Samuel J. Jackson's Steven, the head house servant at Candyland, is both a coward and a collaborator, fearsome and pathetic, abusing as much power as Candie gives him against his fellow men.

The appeal will be through the roof for all that liked **THE AVENGERS, MONEY BALL, LIFE OF PI, ZERO DARK THIRTY, ARGO, SKY FALL, LOOPER, 3:10 TO YUMA, GLADIATOR, and THE HUNGER GAMES.**



4/16 3 SAVE THE DATE COMEDY
OPENING THEATRICALY IN MARCH R 97 MINUTES



Lizzy Caplan (CLOVERFIELD, BACHELORETTE, 127 HOURS, THE HOT TUB TIME MACHINE)
Alison Brie (TV'S MAD MEN, COMMUNITY—FILM –SCREAM 4, FIVE YEAR ENGAGEMENT)

Sarah (Caplan), a bookstore manager and aspiring artist (her drawings mix Hallmark with R. Crumb), has just moved in with Kevin (Geoffrey Arend), the frontman in a band that includes Andrew (Martin Starr), fiancé of Sarah's sister, Beth (Alison Brie). None of these tightly connected characters seem to know each other: Andrew and Beth talk as if they're trying to

pick each other up at a bar, and Sarah apparently has no idea who Kevin is, i.e., the kind of guy who would propose marriage in the middle of a gig in front of 200 strangers, and be surprised when a mortified Sarah runs out of the club and the relationship. As breakup scenes go, it's excruciating, but not in a way that endears any of the characters to the audience.

Beth, while not exactly Bridezilla, is obsessed with her upcoming nuptials (Andrew less so). Thus, Sarah is subjected to the misery-loves-company sentiments of her nearest and dearest, even as she's getting swept off her feet in slo-mo by bookstore customer and Sarah worshipper Jonathan (Mark Webber), who talks as if he's auditioning for "How I Met Your Mother." Kevin hasn't a chance with Sarah anymore -- he doesn't know it, but keeps hoping -- yet even though Jonathan seems like the perfect guy for Sarah, she's resistant: Something in her is perversely opposed to happiness. Either that, or Mohan needs to keep the movie going for another 68 minutes.

Scripted with a surfeit of glib humor by Mohan, Jeffrey Brown and Egan Reich, "Save the Date" is essentially a series of two-shots and setpieces that seem constructed to allow for commercial interruption. There's little narrative tissue tying everything together, save for Sarah's romantic indecision, which is the kind of flimsy premise upon which a catalogue of post-adolescent romantic comedies have been hung. Again, the characters seem to be strangers to one another; there are none of the gaps in conversation that imply familiarity, and for which skilled writers would compensate through craft.

At the same time, it all goes down easily enough: Starr is very good, Andrew being the only character who exhibits anything like awareness of what's happening beyond his own navel. And Caplan has a bright future, one that will likely include more substantial efforts than this.

This movie will appeal to those that liked **WON'T BACK DOWN, HIT AND RUN, LIBERAL ARTS, BUTTER, WHY STOP NOW, ONE FOR THE MONEY, and FOR A GOOD TIME CALL.**



4/23 1 A HAUNTED HOUSE HORROR/COMEDY
\$40 MILL BO 2167 SCREENS R 86 minutes

Malcolm Wayans (THE WAYAN'S BROTHERS)

The gist of the Michael Tiddes-directed film is that Malcolm (Wayans) and his girlfriend, Kisha Essence, move in together only to discover that their home has suddenly become occupied by an occult presence that the previously happy couple is forced to contend with in typically uproarious fashion. What becomes clear early on is that horror-movie conventions aren't the source of this film's humor" so much as Wayans's ability to scream in a high-pitched voice and get disgusted when Kisha farts in her sleep.

Notable set pieces include a ghost that enjoys smoking weed, an act of simulated sex with a trio of stuffed animals, and the application of jumper cables to a recently deceased dog. The filmmakers' approach toward executing said material is merely a matter of making it as crude and infantile as possible and be funny.

A HAUNTED HOUSE makes no attempt to actually deconstruct found-footage films, specifically the **Paranormal Activity** series, its primary reference point; instead, it's content to merely use this horror subgenre's trappings as the

platform for an interminable series of dick jokes told by one-dimensional characters, several of whom exist for little reason other than to embody done-to-death stereotypes: a Hispanic maid who can secretly speak English, a gay psychic who tries to "convert" Malcolm, and a quartet of gang-bangers.

Still, this move will be engaging for those that liked **CABIN IN THE WOODS, THE COLLECTION, DEADFALL, PARANORMAL ACTIVITY 4, TOTAL RECALL (REMAKE), ABRAHAM LINCOLN VAMPIRE SLAYER, THE RAVEN, GHOST RIDER 2, and DARK TIDE.**



4/23 2 BROKEN CITY ACTION
\$20 MILL BO 2622 SCREENS R 109 MINUTES

Mark Wahlberg (CONTRABAND, BOOGIE NIGHTS, DATE NIGHT, THE FIGHTER)

Russell Crowe (GLADIATOR, A BEAUTIFUL MIND, 3:10 TO YUMA, CINDERELLA MAN, PROOF OF LIFE, THE INSIDER)

Catherine Zeta-Jones (CHICAGO, TRAFFIC, HIGH FIDELITY, ROCK OF AGES, PLAYING FOR KEEPS)

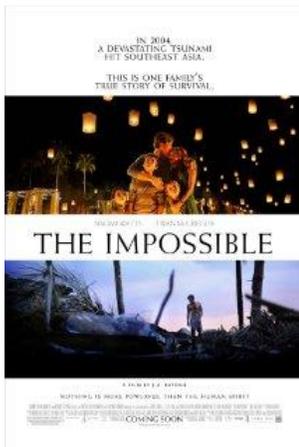
A portentous, slow-panning opening shot establishes Billy Taggart (Wahlberg) as one of New York's not-so-finest, having gunned down a gang member allegedly in self-defense. Billy doesn't go to trial but his indiscretion gets him thrown off the force, a politically expedient decision made by Mayor Hostetler (Crowe) and NYPD Commissioner Fairbanks (Jeffrey Wright) in one of several closed-door meetings.



Seven years later, Billy is barely getting by as a private investigator until he receives a call from Hostetler, offering \$50,000 in exchange for evidence that his wife, Cathleen (Catherine Zeta-Jones), is having an affair. Billy's snooping leads him to conclude that Cathleen's lover is none other than Paul Andrews (Kyle Chandler), campaign manager for Jack Valliant (Barry Pepper), a city councilman hoping to unseat Hostetler in the upcoming mayoral race. Naturally, this revelation is far too juicy and preposterous to be the whole story, and Billy turns out to be the mayor's unwitting pawn in a vast, painful conspiracy centered around a multibillion-dollar deal to level a public housing project.

As various secrets spill out and bodies begin to surface, the detective joins the crusade to take down Hostetler and, in the process, settle an old score. Yet by the time the script gets around to bringing Billy's dark history into play, it feels like a gimmicky narrative trump card rather than an organically developed aspect of the character. Wahlberg's Billy is a recovering alcoholic and maybe a cold-blooded killer, but really, he's just a blank slab of muscle the movie needs to drive the momentum forward, someone to engage in high-speed pursuits, attack guys with baseball bats and generally keep audiences from nodding off during the talkier stretches.

This is a pretty good movie with a cast and story that will entertain all that liked **CONTRABAND, KILLING THEM SOFTLY, ALEX CROSS, FLIGHT, SEVEN PSYCHOPATHS, TAKEN 2, SAFE HOUSE, THE GREY, and GONE.**



4/23 2 THE IMPOSSIBLE DRAMA
\$17 MILL BO 886 SCREENS PG-13 114 MINUTES

Naomi Watts (KING KONG, FAIR GAME, 21 GRAMS, THE RING TWO, STAY, MULHOLLAND DRIVE)
Ewan McGregor (STAR WARS 3, TRAINSPOTTING, BEGINNERS, BLACK HAWK DOWN, SHALLOW GRAVE)

The most harrowing disaster movie in many a moon, **THE IMPOSSIBLE** marries a tremendous feat of physical filmmaking to an emotional true story of family survival. Cannily fusing spectacle and uplift in a distinctly Spielbergian manner, talented Spanish helmer J. A. Bayona captures the devastation wrought by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami with a raw,

sickening intensity, demonstrating a surefooted but rather less elemental touch in the calculated-to-resonate aftermath. Wrenchingly acted, deftly manipulated and terrifyingly well made, this not-for-the-squeamish

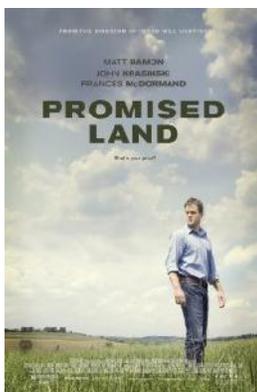
The title refers to the extraordinary circumstances by which the Belon family, vacationing in Thailand in December 2004, managed to weather the deadliest catastrophe in the country's history. Sergio G. Sanchez's screenplay (with a story credited to surviving wife and mother Maria Belon) dramatizes the events with a lean, pared-down simplicity. Not a frame is wasted, as British-born businessman Henry Bennett (Ewan McGregor) and his doctor wife, Maria (Naomi Watts), arrive at a Thai beach resort with their three boys on Christmas Eve, arguing, laughing and playing like any loving family right when disaster strikes.

In a staggeringly vivid 10-minute reconstruction, 98-foot-high tidal waves sweep through Thailand's coastal towns, flinging people, cars and debris around like dolls. Almost immediately, the enormous walls of water separate Maria and oldest son Lucas (Tom Holland) from Henry and the two younger boys, Thomas (Samuel Joslin) and Simon (Oaklee Pendergast).

Steadying themselves by clinging to a felled tree, Lucas and a badly injured Maria eventually find their way to dry land. Detailing every groan, scrape and shudder with almost unbearable deliberation, the film documents their agonizingly slow journey to a crowded hospital; meanwhile, Henry searches for them amid the wreckage of the resort, unsure of how best to take care of Thomas and Simon in the meantime.

Collaborating again after their impressive 2007 debut feature, "The Orphanage," Bayona and Sanchez get many things right here, starting with their decision to eschew a more panoramic view of the disaster to follow one family's journey from start to finish. The stripped-down approach suits an intimate story of individuals pushed to their limits -- to a place where survival and reunion become their sole priorities. TV news footage is kept to a refreshing minimum; any context about the scope of the tragedy is gleaned primarily from the Bennetts' sympathetic conversations with their fellow refugees. Lessons about the nobility of sacrifice and the satisfaction of helping others in times of crisis emerge stirring and organically from the characters' experiences, along with spontaneous moments of life-affirming humor.

The cast is terrific and the tension throughout is so real and frightening. Fans of **ZERO DARK THIRTY, LIFE OF PI, THE SESSIONS, ARGO, THE MASTER, FLIGHT, END OF WATCH, ARBITRAGE, SAFE HOUSE** and **INDEPENDENCE DAY** will all love this one.



4/23 2 PROMISED LAND DRAMA
\$9 MILL BO 1676 SCREENS R 106 MINUTES

Matt Damon (WE BOUGHT A ZOO, GOOD WILL HUNTING, THE DEPARTED, THE BOURNE SUPREMACY)
John Krasinski (TV'S THE OFFICE, BIG MIRACLE, IT'S COMPLICATED, LEATHER HEADS, DREAM GIRLS)
Frances McDormand (FARGO, ALMOST FAMOUS, BURN AFTER READING, MOONRISE KINGDOM, PRIMAL FEAR)

Thirty-eight-year-old Steve Butler (Damon) is a top salesman for Global, a \$9 billion fracking company that sends him to small towns nationwide to buy land from locals for the purposes of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking -- a drilling process in which the soil is blasted with pressurized chemicals to release natural gas. As he and his associate Sue (Dormand, dependably snappy) go door-to-door, obtaining signatures in exchange for assurances of economic salvation, Steve harbors conflicted feelings about a job he's clearly good at. Himself a farm boy turned big-city professional, he retains an honest affection for the blue-collar work ethic and humble, salt-of-the-earth spirit he encounters, and he's painfully aware that he's effectively gutting entire communities under the pretext of revitalizing them.



Steve's moral reservations catch up with him on a job in Pennsylvania farm country, where a whip-smart high-school science teacher (a fine Hal Holbrook) successfully challenges Global's agenda and calls for the town to vote on the company's proposition rather than blithely accept it. An even peskier obstacle arrives in the form of Dustin Noble (Krasinski), a dogged activist who launches an anti-Global campaign, teaching locals that fracking is not only laying waste to a proud agricultural tradition, but also contributing to air/water pollution and killing livestock

Once slated to direct, Damon invests his misguided if fundamentally decent Everyman with a low-key, world-weary intelligence, suggesting a salesman whose silver tongue has grown heavy over time; the actor generates a nicely tense screen rapport with Krasinski, ideally cast as a grassroots charmer who knows just how to get Steve's goat. The strong ensemble also boasts sharp character work by Scoot McNairy, Titus Welliver and Tim Guinee as locals with varying opinions on the drilling issue, while the casting of real-life residents of Avonmore, Penn., as extras adds considerably to the film's texture.

A timely story that is well done and will entertain all that liked **ARBITRAGE**, **ZERO DARK THIRTY**, **HITCHCOCK**, **END OF WATCH**, **SAFE HOUSE**, **BERNIE**, **RAMPART**, and **THE DEBT**.



4/30 3 THE DETAILS DRAMA
\$100,000 BO 76 SCREENS R 91 MINUTES

Tobey Maguire (THE CIDER HOUSE RULES, SPIDER MAN, PLEASANTVILLE, DECONSTRUCTING HARRY, SEA BISCUIT)
Elizabeth Banks (PITCH PERFECT, THE HUNGER GAMES, WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE EXPECTING, PEOPLE LIKE US)
Laura Linney (TV'S THE BIG C, THE TRUMAN SHOW, DRIVING LESSONS, MYSTIC RIVER, LOVE ACTUALLY)

Starring Tobey Maguire as Seattle doctor and paterfamilias Jeff Lang, the film continually involves our blinkered hero in a series of boundary-crossing incidents, ranging from the relatively harmless to the downright criminal. Jeff is a squirmy little shit, concerned principally with enlarging his suburban home, fending off raccoons from his yard, and engaging in X-rated online correspondence with young Asian women, since his wife, Nealy (Elizabeth Banks), doesn't want to screw anymore. Out of some sense of remorse, and possibly to win his wife's approval, Jeff takes it upon himself to improve the fortunes of an older black man, Lincoln (Dennis Haysbert), with whom he plays basketball. When Jeff learns that Lincoln suffered a car accident in collage that ended a very promising basketball career, and that he suffers from kidney failure and has to work double shifts to make ends meet, the do-gooder moves into action, first getting Lincoln a good job as a basketball coach and then offering him one of his kidneys.

But good intentions often go awry, most significantly, if indirectly, because the apparently irresistible Jeff is twice presented with easy sexual possibilities which he's unable to refuse—first by an old med-school friend, Rebecca (Kerry Washington), unhappily married to a boor, Peter (Ray Liotta), with an odd sense of honor, then by his loony next-door neighbor, Lila (Laura Linney), who extracts sex as payment for not turning him into the city for a building violation. All these things, along with Jeff's unwillingness to come clean to his wife and a much more serious incident later in the film involving Lincoln, are vaguely his fault, and still the film can't commit to holding Jeff at all culpable since, after all, his only real crime is being a self-centered yuppie.





Every time Jeff is potentially at fault, the burden of culpability is placed on a character so crazy that the good doctor's actions seem perfectly sane by comparison. Needless to say, Jeff never seduces anyone; he's simply the victim of feminine wiles, at least in the case of Linney's unfortunate character. A lonely, vindictive, undersexed woman, Lila is half-crazy and fully irritating, but what's worse is that her loopiness, presumably intended to serve for some unsuccessful dark comedy, is played as a sort of caricature of the hysterical woman, making the role, along with Haysbert's bowing-before-white-folks basketballer, among the most unpalatable characterizations in recent cinema.

And when Liotta's jealous husband confronts the doctor about screwing his wife, essentially calling him out as the little shit he is and wondering why he hasn't come clean with his own wife, these perfectly reasonable criticisms are covered up by the fact that the man chastising our hero is also essentially unhinged, a judgment that becomes clear once he throws \$75,000 worth of cash into the river. Even when Jeff finally does own up to his wife, his shame is immediately tempered by her making a similar confession of her own. **VILLE**,

But guilt comes back with a vengeance as the cast does a great job of portraying the angst and craziness of each situation. This is a good little movie that will appeal to all that found pleasure with films like **CELESTE AND JESSE FOREVER, LIBERAL ARTS, THIS MUST BE THE PLACE, PERKS OF BEING A WALLFLOWER, WHY STOP NOW, THE WORDS, TAKE THIS WALTZ** and **SAFETY NOT GUARANTEED**.



4/30 1 GANGSTER SQUAD ACTION
46 MILL BO 3013 SCREENS R 113 MINUTES

Josh Brolin(W. TRUE GRIT, MILK, MEN IN BLACK 3, IN THE VALLEY OF ELAH)

Ryan Gosling(CRAZY STUPID LOVE, DRIVE, BLUE VALENTINE, IDES OF MARCH, BLUE VALENTINE)

Nick Nolte(48 HOURS, HAVE YOU EVER SEEN THE RAIN, TROPIC THUNDER, LORENZO'S OIL, CAPE FEAR, TEACHERS)

Emma Stone(THE HELP, THE AMAZING SPIDER MAN, FRIENDS WITH BENEFITS, ZOMBIE LAND)

Sean Penn(MYSTIC RIVER, I AM SAM, STATE OF GRACE, TAPS, CASUALTIES OF WAR)

The cops play things as dirty as the crooks in in this movie. It is an impressively pulpy underworld-plunger that embellishes on a 1949 showdown between a dedicated team of LAPD officers and Mob-connected Mickey Cohen (Penn) for control of the city.

Loosely derived from true events, as chronicled in Paul Lieberman's book, Will Beall's screenplay concerns the moment when, shortly after Bugsy Siegel left for Vegas, Cohen made his play for Los Angeles. An ex-boxer whose belt-winning brutality forms the backstory of Penn's portrayal, Cohen evidently had most of the city's peace officers in his pocket, which posed a challenge for police chief William Parker (Nick Nolte, sounding gruff as ever). The way Parker sees it, the only way to keep L.A. from going the way of Gotham, Chi-Town and Sin City is to wage guerilla war on Cohen's operations.



His ideal general is a WWII vet named John O'Mara (Brolin), a gung-ho sergeant so intent on playing the hero, he singlehandedly brings down one of Cohen's prostitution rings in the first reel. With Parker's blessing, O'Mara assembles the pic's eponymous team of enforcers, whose job it is to upset Cohen's gambling, sex and drug rings around town -- an assignment complicated by the fact that dirty cops are often participating in these activities, and are all too eager to defend their patron.



It's here that a fascinating true-crime foundation gives way to fantasy; there are moments in **GANGSTER SQUAD** where Fleischer is so far out on a limb, it makes "Dick Tracy" look like a documentary. But it's all in the spirit of classic B-movie fun, and however over-the-top the action gets (a shootout in the lobby of the Park Plaza Hotel is a veritable orgy of bullet casings, blazing muzzles and flying shrapnel), every creative decision seems to be in service of telling the most entertaining possible story, backed by first-rate wardrobe and art contributions.

The story is entertaining and the cast is terrific. The feel of the era is everywhere. The appeal will be strong for those that liked **RED DAWN**, **ALEX CROSS**, **FLIGHT**, **THE EXPENDABLES 2**, **THE BOURNE LEGACY**, **END OF WATCH**, **SEVEN PSYCHOPATHS**, and **THE PAPERBOY**.



4/30 1 THE GUILT TRIP COMEDY
\$38 MILL BO 2431 SCREENS **PG-13** 95 MINUTES

Barbra Streisand (YENTL, THE FOCKERS, THE WAY WE WERE, WHAT'S UP DOC, NUTS, FUNNY GIRL)

Seth Rogen (50/50, PINEAPPLE PRINCESS, PAUL, FAN BOYS, OBSERVE AND REPORT)

Dialing down his zaniness, if not his volume, Rogen plays Andy, a permanently flustered Los Angeles-based organic chemist who's ready to launch his years-in-the-making invention, a cleaning product whose easily mispronounced name (Scioclean) poses the first of his many problems in pitching it to wholesalers. As a last-ditch marketing ploy, Andy plots a weeklong road trip to hawk his wares at company HQs across the country, starting with his hometown in New Jersey.

While there, he stops to visit his loquacious, long-widowed mother, Joyce (Streisand). Displaying all the general tendencies of a stereotypical Jewish mother with none of the cultural specifics, the overprotective, oversharing Joyce is allegedly responsible for Andy's adult neuroses, though we rarely see her venture beyond typical motherly meddling. In any case, Andy whines through the visit until he's about to head off, when he abruptly finds himself moved by his mother's loneliness and revelations of a long-ago lost love, and invites her along for the journey.



There are many genuine moments of warmth, and Streisand is consistently adorable in her tastefully dowdy duds, conveying the requisite amount of Babsiness without getting too fabulous for the character. Rogen, for his part, finds the right rhythm for Andy, although his disastrous pitch meetings eventually allow him the freedom to unleash his bellowing frustrations. (The film is chockablock with product placements, but these recurring pitch scenes provide some particularly canny, plot-friendly uses, allowing real-life companies -- K-Mart, Orchard, Costco, et al. -- to decline Andy's invention by referencing the high standards of the many fine products they already [offer](#). The shamelessness is almost admirable.)

A two-hander through and through, the pic carves out some moderate breathing room for Brett Cullen as a handsome Texan suitor and Kathy Najimy as a Jersey housewife, though most other characters are strictly relegated to scenery. Technical specs are all suitably professional, if never particularly distinguished.

This will appeal to all that liked **JACK AND JILL**, **THE SITTER**, **HIT AND RUN**, **TED**, **THE WATCH**, **PEOPLE LIKE US**, and **21 JUMP STREET**



4/30 3 MOVIE 43 COMEDY
 \$9 MILL BO 2023 SCREENS R 94 MINUTES

Elizabeth Banks (THE HUNGER GAMES, WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU ARE EXPECTING)
Richard Gere (ARBITRAGE, PRETTY WOMAN, AMERICAN GIGOLO)
Halle Berry (MONSTER'S BALL, SWORDFISH, DARK TIDE)

Armies of directors and writers collaborated on this compost heap of lowbrow buffoonery, unfettered vulgarity, sophomoric satire and stomach-turning scatological gags. (How scatological? At one point, a sweet young thing played by Anna Faris begs her boyfriend to defecate on her -- and while he doesn't actually get around to it, that doesn't mean the audience is spared a floodtide of fecal matter.) Seldom have so many labored so strenuously to produce real laughs. Indeed, the overall level of humor suggests the filmmakers did not wish to unduly tax their audience with anything as demanding as the subtle wit and sophisticated wordplay of DATE MOVIE and MEET THE SPARTANS.



The sketches range from merely juvenile (Richard Gere's electronics exec is befuddled by news that male teens want to have sexual congress with his "iBabe," a media player designed to resemble a naked woman) to uncomfortably distasteful (a young girl experiences her first period, and the sight of blood discombobulates males of all ages around her), with the occasional descent into the outright revolting (the aforementioned excremental explosion).

There is something like a framing device, involving an increasingly desperate would-be scriptwriter (Dennis Quaid) who pitches ideas to a studio executive (Greg Kinnear) while holding the latter at gunpoint. While sitting through "Movie 43," and feeling minutes pass like hours, one cannot help wondering whether a similar scenario unfolded in real life when the producers of this project set out in search of a greenlight. Who knows, maybe this is just one big spoof on the film business.

Fans of **KENTUCKY FRIED MOVIE, GROOVE TUBE, SPY HARD, SCARY MOVIE 3, THE NAKED GUN 2 1/2, THAT'S MY BOY, ZOOKEEPER,** and **GOD BLESS AMERICA.**



4/30 1 SILVER LININGS PLAYBOOK COMEDY
 \$91 MILL BO 2805 SCREENS R 122 MINUTES

Bradley Cooper (HANGOVER, LIMITLESS, THE A-TEAM, ALL ABOUT STEVE, VALENTINES DAY)
Jennifer Lawrence (THE HUNGER GAMES, DEVIL YOU KNOW, X MEN)
Robert De Niro (STANLEY & IRIS, GOODFELLAS, CASINO, HEAT, AWAKENINGS)
Jacki Weaver (THE FIVE YEAR ENGAGEMENT, PICNIC AT HANGING ROCK, THE PERFECTIONIST, THREE BLIND MICE)

In adapting Matthew Quick's 2008 novel, Russell doesn't merely aim to tell the story of Pat Solatano (Cooper), a former substitute teacher and cuckolded husband who's just emerged from eight months in a mental institution. From d.p. Takanobu Takayanagi's whooshing, zooming handheld camerawork to editor Jay Cassidy's jumpy, hyper-caffeinated rhythms, the intent is clearly to bring the viewer into close identification with Pat's troubled but weirdly upbeat mindset. At the same time, this ensemble laffer manages to take a longer view of the character's recovery, a journey aided in significant and quite unexpected ways by his friends and family.

Returning to his family's home in Philly suburbia, Pat reassures his warily supportive parents (Robert De Niro and Jacki Weaver) that he no longer needs medication, he's in the best

shape of his life, and he's determined to woo back his wife, Nikki, who left him around the time of his confinement. But despite his persistent belief in silver linings ("Excelsior!" he's fond of repeating to himself), it's not long before Pat's bipolar disorder, already apparent in his delusional tendencies and lack of anything resembling a verbal filter, begins to violently reassert itself.

The film's key tension is between Pat's refusal to become intimate with a woman besides his wife, and Tiffany's determination to open him up to new experiences, possibilities and people. Falling into his arms tearfully one minute, administering a sharp slap the next, Tiffany is a marvelously unstable element, daring Pat to judge her for her own past misdeeds, though she has no qualms about cutting through his defenses and attacking what she sees or doesn't see in him.

In a script that never lapses into mundane or uninteresting language, the scenes between Pat and Tiffany are sculpted with an almost David Mamet-like sharpness, amplified onscreen by the intimacy and focus of Russell's direction and the superbly harmonized lead performances. Exuding his usual cranked-up charisma, Cooper has one of his best roles here as a damaged soul whose misconceptions



nonetheless hide an unimpeachable core integrity. Yet it's Lawrence's Tiffany who has the most dynamic effect on the picture, always pushing Pat into a defensive position and, remarkably, making him look like a model of sanity by comparison.



Chris Tucker makes a rare and effective appearance as Pat's best mental-ward buddy, Weaver is a warm delight as his pacifist mother, and it's hard to remember the last time De Niro was this effortlessly endearing and relaxed onscreen. Danny Elfman's music and the soundtrack supervised by Sue Jacobs (Stevie Wonder's "My Cherie Amour" has a key plot function) compulsively thread in and out of the action, always serving to reflect Pat's heightened mental/emotional states. Other tech credits for the Pennsylvania-shot

picture are pro.

This will be huge for all that liked **ZERO DARK THIRTY, THE HOBBIT, ARGO, THE SESSIONS, END OF WATCH, LOOPER, THE DARK KNIGHT RISES, TAKE 2** and **PREMIUM RUSH.**