

## 8/1 **2** THE CIRCLE DRAMA

\$24 MILL BO 3163 SCREENS **PG-13** 110 MINUTES  
DVD/COMBO

**Tom Hanks (CAST AWAY, BIG, SULLY, BRIDGE OF SPIES, THE MONEY PIT)**

**Emma Watson (HARRY POTTER films, BEAUTY AND THE BEAST)**

When Mae (Emma Watson) gets a chance to work at The Circle, a fictional tech behemoth, she's so thrilled at the thought of ditching her soul-deadening customer-service job that she can barely fake the chill required to ace the interview, which evokes Google's infamously unconventional and challenging questions. In *The Circle*, Mae's starry-eyed enthusiasm rhymes with the voyeuristic thrill of getting a glimpse behind the curtain of even a fictional version of one of those companies that collect so much information about us while they simultaneously retain a stubborn sense of mystery about how they operate. Complete with petanque pits and a professional-quality stage where hot bands play at parties that extend well into the night, The Circle's campus might be the glossy love child of a billionaire's private island and the world's best endowed and most exclusive college.

All that carefully curated "fun," however, is engineered not just to attract bright, energetic young people, but to keep them there as long as possible. The Circle wants its employees to give up all other attachments and interests, erase the distinction between work and time off, and post all their activities on The Circle-curated pages, allowing the company to capture and capitalize on reams of their personal data. Mae takes a while to catch onto that core truth, but James Ponsoldt's film makes it clear from the start. When charismatic CEO Eamon Bailey (Tom Hanks) delivers his weekly orations, the camera cuts frequently to the rapt faces of the employees packed into the auditorium, absorbing his Orwellian slogans like sponges and laughing eagerly at every studiedly casual reference to his personal life. It's a promising setup, but it soon fizzles out as the film, having used all its ammo on those relatively easy targets, leaves bigger issues about how companies like The Circle are affecting our lives largely unexplored.



Mae, meanwhile, becomes increasingly less coherent as the film progresses. The young woman's initially charming enthusiasm starts to look less like naïveté than willful ignorance as she acquiesces to The Circle's cult-like rules and social mores with no apparent qualms. In the end, dragging Mercer and her parents into her newly mediated life without asking their permission, exposing them to the unsolicited eyeballs and opinions of millions of strangers, seems more cruel—or, at best, blindly selfish—than clueless.

Mae appears to be as Machiavellian as the big bosses when she joins Bailey and CEO Tom Stenton (Patton Oswalt) on stage and in inner-circle meetings, volunteering to "go transparent" by sharing every bit of her life with the rest of the world and then helping to sell The Circle's new privacy-destroying, power-grabbing ideas with increasing slickness and ease. She regrets her complicity with the bosses after things go sickeningly wrong during one of her presentations, but she's still sounding the horn of full disclosure as the path to better living in her climactic speech in the film. Maybe she's had some grand insight into how obliterating everybody's privacy and collecting their data in a central repository can be a force for good rather than the totalitarian tool it's been (accurately) portrayed as throughout the rest of *The Circle*.

This will rent as well as **LIFE, THE GREAT WALL, SPLIT, COLLATERAL BEAUTY** and **THE EDGE OF 17**.



8/1 **1** GOING IN STYLE COMEDY

\$44 MILL BO 3546 SCREENS PG-13 96 MINUTES  
DVD/COMBO 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX

**Morgan Freeman (UNFORGIVEN, OLYMPUS HAS FALLEN, NOW YOU SEE ME, THE DARK KNIGHT, THE BUCKET LIST)**

**Michael Caine (ALFIE, THE LAST WITCH HUNTER, HARRY BROWN, HANNAH AND HER SISTERS, BLAME IT ON RIO)**

Populist to a fault, this remake of a 1979 George Burns-Art Carney vehicle stars Michael Caine as Joe, a retiree living in and about to get priced out of gentrifying Brooklyn on the other side of the street from his former co-workers and current diner denizens Willie (Morgan Freeman) and Albert (Alan Arkin). All three are living check to check. When the steel mill they devoted half their lives to gets stripped by foreign interests and greedy bankers, and the pensions they depend on dry up, Joe starts seriously weighing the risk-benefit ratio of pulling a *New York Post*-friendly bank heist.

As directed by Zach Braff in journeyman mode, which is to say sans interest in Wes Anderson-swiping symmetry, *Going in Style* embraces the broadness of its premise, and is at the very least blessed with three actors all perfectly willing to disgrace themselves for a paycheck. (In a meta sense, the film is almost an adaptation of Caine's on-screen career in particular.) The glint in Caine's eye as he entertains the idea of pulling off an impossible, far-from-[Italian job](#) is the definition of professionalism in the face of artistic adversity. Enough so that you can see how the slightly more ambivalent Freeman and Arkin are spurred to up their game, though it's clear from the outset that they're slumming in cut-rate *Grumpy Old Men* turf even long before Ann-Margaret starts prowling the supermarket aisles, purring and fondling eggplants.



This will rent as well as **CHIPS, OFFICE CHRISTMAS PARTY, WHY HIM, BAD SANTA 2, and KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES.**



## 8/1 **3** SLEIGHT SCI/FI

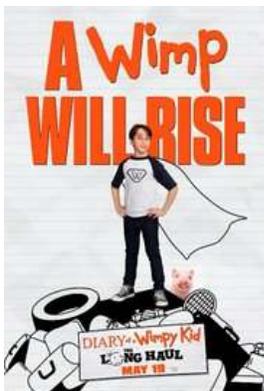
\$4MILL BO 590 SCREENS R 89 MINUTES DVD/COMBO

**Jacob Latimore (COLLATERAL BEAUTY, THE MAZE RUNNER, RIDE ALONG)**

If you've been waiting for a film about a superhero who's also a drug dealer, J.D. Dillard's *Sleight* links up not only these two dissimilar occupations, but adds street magician into the mix. Rapper turned actor Jacob Latimore plays

Bo, a Los Angeles native in his early 20s who's tasked with caring for his younger sister, Tina (Storm Reid), after the untimely passing of their mother. By day, Bo performs magic tricks so blatantly spectacular you'd think he'd put David Blaine out of business, but in fact, Bo only manages to collect meager tips from Sunset Strip tourists and passersby, so by night he slings drugs for local drug kingpin Angelo (Dulé Hill).

Aside from the burden of the curious metal contraption embedded in his right arm, which periodically requires tech maintenance and a bit of disinfectant, Bo has little difficulty managing his numerous identities: as a performer, a hustler, and a brother. That is, until Angelo upgrades him from part-time dealer to full-fledged member of his violent, territorial entourage. Bo's promotion comes just as he's starting to develop a romance with community college student Holly (Seychelle Gabriel), which means he finds the perfect balancing act of his life suddenly and catastrophically thrown out of whack.



## 8/8 **1** DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE LONG HAUL

FAMILY \$22 MILL BO 3174 SCREENS PG 91 MINUTES  
DVD/COMBO 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX

**Jason Drucker (TV---EVERY WHICH WAY, CHICAGO FIRE)**

Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Long Haul is a good movie for kids who have been a fan of the series of books, but it's actually really, really good. Because if people are a fan of [the books] this would be a very, very good thing for them to watch. It would be like a five out of five movie for them. I would rate it seven out of ten because it's not the greatest movie I've ever seen but it's still very good.

The Heffleys [mom Susan (Alicia Silverstone), dad Frank (Tom Everett Scott), teenager Rodrick (Charlie Wright), tween protagonist Greg (Jason Drucker) and toddler Manny (Dylan and Wyatt Walters)] are going on a road trip which their mom got from a magazine called "Family Frolic" and it pretty much just ends up being a disaster. And Greg really likes a certain YouTuber (Joshua Hoover) and he is at a place near where they are going. A really funny part is Greg doesn't understand how maps work. Like he says it's

only two inches away, but that's on the map and not the real world. There's this family called the Beardos that are a random family that Greg runs into when they stop at their first motel and they keep showing up.

I think they didn't really get it right with the Beardos because the main Beardo, Mr. Beardo (Chris Coppola), is fatter than he's supposed to be and there's actually no girl in the family. In the book, they actually run into the Beardos three times, not two. They left out the waterpark when they think the Beardos stole their stuff but Greg got the wrong locker number.

There were a few lines that were not the same as the books but the acting was pretty good. I thought Manny was actually a pretty good actor even though he had a stunt double and he was about five.

This will rent as well as **LEGO BATMAN MOVIE**, **ROCK DOG**, **MONSTER TRUCKS**, and **A MONSTER CALLS**.



**8/8 3 THE DINNER** DRAMA  
\$2MILL BO 545 SCREENS R 120 MINUTES  
DVD/BLU RAY

**Richard Gere (THE DOUBLE, BROOKLYN'S FINEST, I'M NOT THERE, AMERICAN GIGOLO)**

*The Dinner* is set over the course of this very long meal, in which presumably left-leaning intellectuals eat food that costs thousands of dollars—enough to improve the lives of people about whom they presume to care. This irony immediately crushes the life out of the film, giving it the tenor of a smug sermon.

Worse, the narrative often emphasizes the point of view of Paul, another of Coogan's insufferable know-it-alls, who actually calls himself a "warrior of the underclass" without a trace of self-awareness. Moverman and Coogan know that Paul's a fraud, and he's gradually revealed to have significant mental problems and issues of latent racism, but we're still watching the actor in another of his mono-tonally editorializing performances—literally, in this case, as Coogan assumes an American accent that further flattens him out. Claire and Katelyn, meanwhile, are unsurprising Lady Macbeth types: vipers who believe the ends to justify the means.

The film's one good, if self-conscious, joke is that Stan, the smooth operator working on an amendment to the Affordable Care Act while riding in his fabulous limo, is the idealist of the group, rather than Paul, the presumed aspiring artist and intellectual, or the type that's typically utilized by pop culture as an avatar of liberal decency. Gere walks away with *The Dinner*, though he has an advantage over his co-stars, as Stan is the only character who's allowed to exhibit detectable elements of human decency, regarding the film's big reveal with the gravity and outrage it unambiguously warrants.

The family has assembled to discuss Paul and Claire's son, Michael (Charlie Plummer), and Stan's son, Rick (Seamus Davey-Fitzpatrick), who've done something so unforgivably disgusting that it intentionally pulls the viewer out of the film. It's gradually shown that Michael and Rick



happened upon a black homeless woman sleeping in an ATM booth, pummeled her with trash, and set her on fire with matches and burned her to death, all while laughing over her screaming body and filming it for a YouTube video. This uncompromisingly nasty scene is Moverman's way of illustrating his stereotypically cautionary view of the callousness of millennials, whose souls are seen by the film as being killed by modern social technology, and this association is extended to the adults when Katelyn is seen coldly scrolling through her phone after talking of the murder, attempting to emotionally blackmail Stan into acquiescing to the group's determined moral relativity. (The revelation of the killing, while shocking, also yields a howler: Why is this family, particularly the family of a politician, discussing this act of psychopathy *in public*? It's a detail that's intended, no doubt, as another wrinkle of satire.)



## 8/8 1 KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD

ACTION \$40 MILL BO 2678 SCREENS PG-13  
126 MINUTES DVD/COMBO 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX

**Charlie Hunnam (TV—SONS OF ANARCHY—FILM—PACIFIC RIM, THE LEDGE, CHILDREN OF MEN)**

A companion of sorts to director Guy Ritchie's glibly revisionist take on Sherlock Holmes, *King Arthur: Legend of the Sword* updates a legendary English character with modern sensibilities that nonetheless betray a fondness for anachronisms native neither to the present nor the medieval past. In the opening sequence alone, an assault on Camelot features armored siege elephants right out of Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*, an unwieldy reference point that feels dated in 2017.

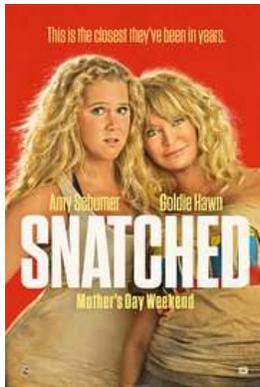
Ritchie also covers Arthur's (Charlie Hunnam) backstory mostly in dizzying montage, quickly establishing his uncle Vortigern's (Jude Law) betrayal of King Uther Pendragon (Eric Bana) before whipping through the orphaned prince's exiled upbringing in a brothel. Ritchie is no stranger to rapid-fire montages, but the approach locks the film into the rhythms of one of his wisecracking crime movies, a pace ill-suited to a depiction of a time period we often associate with lumbering carts and soldiers weighed down by heavy armor.

If King Arthur is one of the earliest Western literary figures in what Joseph Campbell called the "monomyth,"<sup>4</sup> this incarnation of the folkloric British leader has been reverse-engineered from the recent trends of brash, simultaneously selfless and self-involved heroes. He grows up to defend the prostitutes who raised him, regularly beating money out of johns who rough up his friends. But when Vortigern's ongoing attempts to find and snuff out his nephew result in Arthur being discovered and coming into possession of Excalibur, the young man quickly begs off his responsibilities.

Part of what makes characters truly mythical is how well they endure and adapt to changing times, but this Arthur is comically reduced to a follower of fads. He picks up martial arts from a Chinese friend, George (Tom Wu), drops cynical quips like a third-rate Snake Plissken, and even sports a hell of a fade haircut. Hunnam's brooding demeanor never conveys inner nobility, only the sort of reluctance to lead that so much contemporary, politically distrustful art sees as necessary moral proof of one's ability to hold power.

This will rent as well as **THE GREAT WALL, ASSASSIN'S CREED, NOCTURNAL ANIMALS, BLAIR WITCH, and THE MAGNIFICENT 7.**





**8/8 1 SNATCHED COMEDY**

\$48 MILL BO 3511 SCREENS R 90 MINUTES  
DVD/COMBO 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX

**Amy Schumer (TV—INSIDE AMY SCHUMER, GIRLS—FILM—TRAINWRECK)**  
**Goldie Hawn (PRIVATE BENJAMIN, THE BANGER SISTERS, HOUSE SITTER, DEATH BECOMES HER, SWING SHIFT)**

After 15 years of semi-retirement, *Snatched* marks Goldie Hawn's return to the movies, and at first blush the project seems a natural comeback for the actress. Produced by Paul Feig and written by Katie Dippold, whose combined credits include some of the biggest female-centered comedies of the past few years, the film pairs Hawn with another golden-haired comedienne, Amy Schumer, whose lovably insouciant woman-child shtick suggests a slobbier, edgier update of Hawn's bubbly baby-doll persona.

As Linda, a straight-laced suburban mom on vacation in Ecuador with her boorish, hard-partying daughter, Emily (Schumer), Hawn is as loveable as ever, even as she's unimaginatively positioned as the straight woman for Schumer's heedless antics. Linda is conceived as little more than a generic tight-ass, and the mother-daughter relationship ostensibly at the film's heart is largely reduced to tired jokes about how moms can be overprotective and don't understand how to use Facebook.

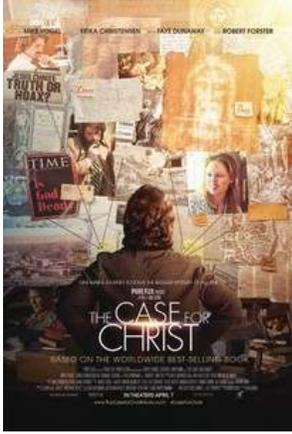
But then Linda and Emily are kidnapped, and the film begins to take a turn into surprisingly strange and dark territory, dispensing with any pretense of realism in favor of absurdist gags involving harpoon killings, monstrous tapeworms, and a cartoonishly rugged adventurer (Christopher Meloni) who seems to have stepped straight out of [Romancing the Stone](#).



If the film never gets quite weird enough to really subvert its mainstream comedy formula, its gradual embrace of the bizarre at least keeps things interesting. So, too, does the film's supporting cast, particularly Ike Barinholtz as Emily's loser-nerd brother Jeffrey and Bashir Salahuddin as the perpetually irritated state department bureaucrat Jeffrey pesters over the phone. In just a few scenes, they develop what Hawn and Schumer never really manage: an off-kilter comedic chemistry that's funny and robust.

It's not surprising that even in a film set in Latin America it's the white actors who're front and center, but it's dismaying how comfortable the filmmakers are in treating the film's few Ecaudorian and Colombian characters as mere props for violent gags. Dippold and Levine are smart enough to winkingly call attention to some of their own racial stereotyping, but they're never quite clever enough to turn a critical eye on their protagonists or to interrogate the cultural assumptions embedded in their own white-women-in-peril narrative.

This will rent as well as **TRAINWRECK**, **NEIGHBORS 2**, **CHIPS**, **A DOG'S PURPOSE**, **LA LA LAND** and **KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES**.



**8/15 2 THE CASE FOR CHRIST DRAMA**

**\$16 MILL BO 1386 SCREENS PG 112 MINUTES  
DVD/COMBO 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX**

**Mike Vogel (TV---BATES MOTEL, UNDER THE DOME, PAN AM)**

Lee Strobel (Mike Vogel) works as an investigative reporter for the Chicago Tribune, and lives with his wife, Leslie (Erika Christensen) and young daughter, Alison (Haley Rosenwasser). When a nurse, Alfie (L. Scott Caldwell), saves Alison from choking at a restaurant, Leslie agrees to join Alfie's church and becomes a believer in Christianity while Lee remains an atheist. Hoping to save his unstable marriage, he uses his investigative reporting skills to try to prove that the resurrection of Jesus Christ did not actually occur. Meanwhile, he reports on the case involving a police informer, James Dixon (Renell Gibbs), accused of shooting a cop.

Based on the book by Lee Strobel, the screenplay by Brian Bird avoids schmaltz, excessive preachiness, and heavy-handedness to instead focus on how Lee turned from an atheist to a Christian. That journey feels believable because it's grounded in humanism every step of the way. You even get a glimpse of Lee's relationship with his estranged father, Walter (Robert Forester). Lee's conversations with his wife are poignant and thought-provoking, and it's interesting to observe how their complex relationship evolves as Lee changes innately while asks tough questions to variety of scholars about the resurrection of Christ. One of those scholars who helps him to see the light, so to speak, is psychologist Dr. Roberta Waters (Faye Dunaway).

Thanks to the warm, wise and sensitive screenplay as well as Mike Vogel's solid acting skills, the audience can easily find a window into the mind and soul of Lee which makes him all the more relatable. You'll feel happy when he's happy, sad when he's sad and enlightened when he's enlightened. In other words, Mike Vogel finds the emotional truth of his role. He gives the best performance of his career. At a running time of 1 hour and 52 minutes, *The Case for Christ* manages to be a captivating, tender, and heartfelt journey well worth taking.

This will rent as well as **THE SHACK, BEFORE I FALL, COLLATERAL BEAUTY.**



**8/15 1 EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING DRAMA**  
**\$33 MILL BO 2673 SCREENS PG-13 96 MINUTES**  
**DVD/COMBO 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX**

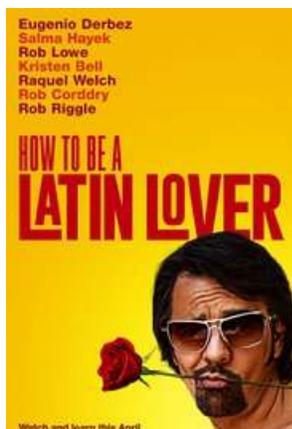
**Amandla Stenberg (TV—MR. ROBINSON, SLEEPY HOLLOW)**

Amandla Stenberg (smiling bashfully throughout) plays Maddy, a teen girl who would be a high school senior but for the fact that she's quarantined to her hermetically sealed, fully irradiated, autoclaved, and *Architectural Digest*-worthy home. For her entire life she's had contact with only her doctor mother, Pauline, (Anika Noni Rose), her friendly day nurse, Carla (Ana de la Reguera), and Carla's apparently mute daughter, Rosa (Danube R. Herмосillo). She suffers from a disease that's left her immune system powerless against even the slightest infection, but as it turns out, she's most vulnerable to the hot piece of boy bait who just moved in next door, Olly (Nick Robinson).

*Everything, Everything* seems to posit that, despite having spent more than 6,500 days living in Los Angeles, Maddy has never happened to capture a glimpse of a random tawny shirtless skater, of perhaps a particularly short-shorted and thick-thighed U.P.S. truck driver. No, the sight of Olly goofing off with a bundt cake proves the only thing capable of rewiring Maddy's brain away from posting one-sentence book reviews on her personal website and onto making like a distaff teen Jimmy Stewart in *Dear Window*. The scenario reduces to an illogical conclusion the notion that falling in love means losing the sense that anything else in the world matters, which director Stella Meghie drives home by staging Maddy and Olly's early text-based conversations in Maddy's own imaginary universe. The two banter in sterile fantasy environments surrounded by no one but, incongruously, a silent astronaut. (When they finally do start talking IRL thanks to some machinations from Carla, Meghie steals Woody Allen's bit in *Annie Hall* where the characters say one thing while subtitles translate their actual thoughts.)

This will rent as well as **SLEEPLESS, LION, COLLATERAL BEAUTY, PASSENGERS** and **INFERNO**.





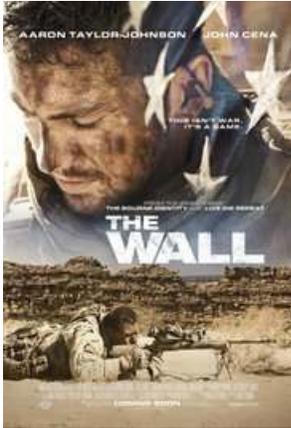
**8/15 1 HOW TO BE A LATIN LOVER COMEDY**  
\$34 MILL BO 1203 SCREENS **PG-13** 110 MINUTES  
DVD/COMBO

**Eugenio Derbez**  
**Rob Lowe (TV—THE WEST WING, CODE BLACK, THE LION GUARD)**

Having the desire to become filthy rich with a desire of seducing woman with his Latin sex appeal (and libido), Maximo (Eugenio Derbez) marries Peggy (Renee Taylor), a wealthy rich older woman who is twice his age. Twenty-five years later, spoiled and bored from pleasing his now 80-year old wife, Maximo gets a sudden surprise when he finds out that Peggy ends up dumping him for a younger man. Forced out of Peggy's mansion and stripped of his lifestyle privileges, Maximo desperately is looking for a place to stay, ending up on the apartment doorstep of his estranged sister, Sara (Salma Hayek) and her awkwardly nerdy son, Hugo (Raphael Alejandro). Anxious to return to his life of luxury and wealth, Maximo uses his nephew's crush on a fellow classmate named Arden (McKenna Grace) to get to Arden's grandmother, Celeste (Raquel Welch), widowed billionaire. As Maximo attempts to rekindle his sexual appeal as a Latin lover, he finds himself strangely grow fond of bonding with his sister and nephew, conflicted about the life that he had to the one he's now a part of.

This will rent as well as **FIST FIGHT**, **OFFICE CHRISTMAS PARTY**, **WHY HIM**, **BAD SANTA 2** and **THE EDGE OF SEVENTEEN**.





**8/15 3 THE WALL ACTION**  
**\$2 MILL BO 895 SCREENS R 90 MINUTES**  
**DVD/BLU-RAY**

**John Cena (SISTERS, DADDY’S HOME, TRAINWRECK THE MARINE)**

*The Wall* avoids the missteps of recent war films by eliding politics and maudlin backstories for its characters, instead using cat-and-mouse thriller tactics to depict warfare on a purely visceral level. Given our current political climate, one may understandably suspect the titular wall to stand as a cheap metaphor for the cultural divide between U.S. Sergeant Allen Isaac (Aaron Taylor-Johnson) and Juba (Laith Nakli), the infamous, near-mythical American-trained Iraqi sniper who ambushed and wounded Isaac and Staff Sergeant Shane Matthews (John Cena). But the unsteady wall of the film is nothing more than a shield which barely protects Isaac from enemy fire.

Director Liman’s efficient, muscular direction and the film’s impeccable sound design direct our focus toward the harshness of the setting and the crisis being faced by the slowly dying Isaac. Once the sergeants are cornered by Juba, much of the film’s remaining runtime consists only of Isaac trying to work his way out of an impossible situation while Juba psychologically toys with him over the radio, wearing him down mentally as he bleeds out from his festering wound. Since Isaac’s antenna was shot and Matthews lies injured and passed out since the ambush, Juba serves as Isaac’s only means of contact.



Throughout, their verbal sparring never moves beyond the superficial: Juba provokes Isaac to talk about his past mistakes during the war and Isaac berates Juba for using his U.S. military training to hunt down American troops and contractors alike. And this quarreling detracts from the film’s attentiveness to the hazards of Isaac’s present position. There are, however, only a few brief stretches where the intensity of the man’s grueling battle against the increasing perils of his still-bleeding knee, the harsh desert winds, and the crumbling wall behind which he hides loses its suspense.

Liman’s acute attention to details shows he can still exact as much control over a minimalist setting and narrative as he can with a more grandiose production like [Edge of Tomorrow](#). Shot in anamorphic 16mm, *The Wall* is full of grainy textures that enhance the grit and grime on Isaac’s visage and the extremities of the barren environment in which he finds himself trapped. This heightens our experience of Isaac’s material reality and provides an immediacy to his increasingly perilous predicament. And all the while, Taylor-Johnson’s physically demanding performance rises to the forefront and dominates the screen, ratcheting up the tension amid a swirling mix of blood, sand, sweat, spit, and dirt. It’s ultimately this ability to boil the exploits of battle down to its essential elements—its physical grind and mental and emotional exhaustion—that helps *The Wall* pack a surprisingly savage punch.



**8/29 1 BAYWATCH ACTION/COMEDY**  
**\$55 MILL BO 2936 SCREENS R 125 MINUTES**

**Dwayne Johnson (THE FATE OF THE FURIOUS, SAN ANDREAS, CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE, TOOTH FAIRY, THE OTHER GUYS)**

Zac Efron (DIRTY GRANDPA, NEIGHBORS, PARKLAND, NEW YEAR'S EVE)

Defend the bay, at all costs. Lifeguard "lieutenant" Mitch Buchanan (Dwayne Johnson) is the longtime protector of Emerald Bay, keeping its denizens safe and the bay the place to be, along with Emerald lifeguard veterans Stephanie (Ilfenesh Hadera) and CJ (Kelly Rohrbach). He and the others take their jobs seriously, which the community thanks them for.

Buchanan's team has three openings on it, and they are filled by the sassy Summer (Alexandra Daddario), the dorky yet persistent Ronnie (Jon Bass), and the bad-boy, two-time Olympic gold medal swimmer Matt Brody (Zac Efron). The latter addition tests Buchanan's patience. While the initiation of the newbies is occurring, shady activity and dead bodies are proliferating on the bay, and it seems to suggest that new beachfront owner Victoria Leeds (Priyanka Chopra) may be connected. Though this is a job clearly for the authorities, who better to crack the case than The lifeguards of Emerald Bay?

This will rent as well as **NEIGHBORS 2, JOHN WICK 2, CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE, LOGAN, PASSENGERS** and **THE ACCOUNTANT.**





**8/29 3 BORN IN CHINA DOCUMENTARY**  
\$15 MILL BO 1508 SCREENS G 79 MINUTES  
DVD/ COMBO

**VOICE John Krazinski**

*Born in China* is neatly organized around not only the changing of the seasons, but a Disney-branded “circle of life” ethos, threaded by imagery of cranes; in Chinese mythology, the birds are said to carry a soul from its death to its reincarnation. The majority of the film splits its time evenly between different families of snow leopards, golden monkeys, and giant pandas, and in each explores the dynamic between alternately curious, mischievous, and helpless young and the parents that strive for their best interests.

There are moments here that remind us of what should be all too obvious in a nature documentary: that the subjects we’re observing are wild animals, ones whose priorities and behavioral patterns are actually a great deal different from our own. But too much of *Born in China* falls into the usual pattern for Disney, which is to turn any subject into an extension of the most normative idea of family and domesticity. The few Chinese signifiers here even betray an effort to understand the culture that is this film’s namesake, instead offering stereotypical references to kung-fu, lip service to Buddhist ideologies, and Krasinski mangling the pronunciation of “Szechuan.”

It’s condescending to a child’s intelligence to expect that their interest in animals should be limited by the degree to which they’re humanized, or that they can only understand another culture through its most familiar aspects, and increasingly it feels as if this is the limitation of Disney Nature and Disney in general. But even the hackneyed stories imposed on this footage can’t entirely devalue the footage itself, and *Born in China* boasts not only some truly impressive access to snow leopard habitats, but also the rare glimpse of a giant panda mother raising her cub in the wild. The end-credits sequence finally feels like the removal of a falsifying filter, as outtakes involving the filmmakers’ interactions directly with their subjects instantly and excitingly create the understanding of a mutual fascination.

