



**7/7 3 5 FLIGHTS UP DRAMA**

**\$2 MILL BO 117 SCREENS PG-13 92 MINUTES**

**Morgan Freeman (UNFORGIVEN, STREET SMART, DOLPHIN TALE, OBLIVION, OLYMPUS HAS FALLEN, NOW YOU SEE ME, GONE BABY GONE)**

**Diane Keaton (ANNIE HALL, THE GODFATHER, SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE, THE FIRST WIVES CLUB, BABY BOOM)**

As a married couple, Ruth (Keaton) and Alex (Freeman), are on the verge of closing a deal on a new apartment, they sit around a table in their current Brooklyn digs while their broker niece, Lily (Cynthia Nixon), fields call after call. No extraneous diegetic music, no contrived twists—just Lily's fast-talking phone manner confirming dropped bids and setting up appointments while Ruth and Alex nervously stand by, waiting with baited breath to see whether they're about to close in on a new apartment.

Too bad the rest of the film isn't a real-estate thriller, but instead an alternately touching and eye-rolling dramatization of an elderly couple's troubles upon being uprooted from their longtime apartment. What makes the story resonate beyond its very New York-based concerns about gentrification is the way it taps into a more-timeless conflict between embracing stasis and risking change. For Ruth and Alex, this manifests itself in the decision to sell their current apartment—in which they've lived since the 1970s, right after getting married—and find a new place in Manhattan, much to Alex's chagrin. Through occasional flashbacks and bits of Alex's voiceover narration, we get glimpses not only of how they met, but also broader reminiscences of how much their neighborhood has changed and how much Alex will miss it.



This will rent as well as **STILL ALICE, FOXCATCHER, MAGIC IN THE MOONLIGHT, IF I STAY, and ST. VINCENT.**



**7/7 2 MAGGIE SCI FI**

**\$2 MILL BO 89 SCREENS PG-13 95 MINUTES**

**Arnold Schwarzenegger (CONAN THE BARBARIAN, TOTAL RECALL, TWINS, ERASER, TRUE LIES)**

**Abigail Breslin (ENDER'S GAME, AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY, NEW YEAR'S EVE, LITTLE MISS SUNSHINE)**

"There's a lot we don't know about this thing," asserts the doctor (John L. Armijo). Like so many doctors in so many films set in so many small towns, this one has known his patient since she was born, and her dad longer than that. Also like so many doctors in such circumstances, he's trying to soothe fears of apparent catastrophe, offering hope in what's unknown. Still, what he does profess to know about "this thing" doesn't seem quite reassuring: "Your arm," he says, "is not going to fall off."

That Maggie ( Breslin) and her dad, Wade (Schwarzenegger), are even worried that her arm might fall off has to do with the particulars of her infection: namely, she's a zombie. Or, actually, not quite yet. The movie traces the difficulties of her transformation, imagining her infection as if it is much like any other outbreak. Background TV reports refer to it as the "necroambulist epidemic," and suggest the incubation can take six to eight weeks. The symptoms sound familiar to anyone who's seen a zombie movie: loss of appetite for regular food, craving for flesh and blood, eyes turning ghastly white, heavy wheezing). But here they are framed in a way to make the outbreak strange, as a terminal disease to be managed until it cannot be, at which point, all kinds of unknowns become terrifying.

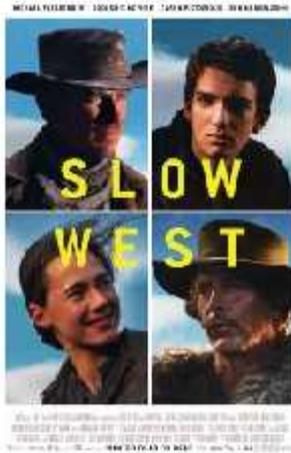
Maggie also intimates, more subtly, Wade's own sense of guilt and dismay and the impossible mix they make for him, a dad who couldn't protect his child and now contemplates her death. Who knew that Schwarzenegger's face, old and ravaged and weighted with pains unspeakable, might be so brilliant, so evocative, so suitable to convey grief and unease. When you're not peering into his face as he looks off screen, toward his daughter receding, you're seeing close mobile frames of his actions, his hand on a doorknob or holding his shotgun, his gloomy focus on a road ahead as he presses his ancient pickup truck into service one more time.

At other times, the film follows Maggie's recollections, a night she spent with an infected, wise, apprehensive boyfriend named Trent (Bryce Romero), a last embrace with a best friend, or a brief, so brightly lit glimpse of her mother, many years gone, now angelic, sentimentalized, mesmerizing. Maggie and her dad share some moments, certainly, but as much as they try to share their last days together, they also live inside separate shells of dread, each knowing that the most unknown unknown is coming, not just death but death that will be deadly. They've both heard stories of what happens if those infected follow protocol, if they give themselves over to Quarantine; one especially horrific tale has it that promises of compassionate institutional care will be broken, that indeed, patients at "all phases are bunched together, people eating people." It can't be true, you might think, and yet you know it is.

*Maggie* doesn't confirm this horror, but does indicate that kind-and-gentle protocols have been disseminated as a kind of PR for those afflicted, a population growing by definition. Even as the infected are allowed to stay home for a time, when word is out that a turn is coming—whether that word comes from family or a worried neighbor—SWAT teams descend and people are carried away. Infection here is growing old, but it's monstrous. It's any sort of disease "management" that no agency or institution or government can possibly make better, only more apparently organized, easier for those not yet old, not yet afflicted. Wade and Maggie look into this void differently, but also with shared knowledge as well as shared ignorance. No one can know and still, everyone must.



A well done story that will rent as well as **WOMAN IN BLACK 2, DRACULA UNTOLD, SEVENTH SON, DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES, THE QUIET ONES, VERONICA MARS, and THE VOICES.**



7/7 3 SLOW WEST ACTION  
\$2 MILL BO 294 SCREENS R 84 MINUTES

**Kodi Smit-mcPhee (DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES, LET ME IN, THE CONGRESS, THE ROAD)**  
**Michael Fassbender (12 YEARS A SLAVE, X-MEN: DAYS OF FUTURE PAST, SHAME, 300, INGLORIOUS BASTERDS)**

This is is a photogenic trifle about a Scottish teen traveling through the rugged, dangerous terrain of frontier America in 1870 looking for his runaway love and her father. It begins with a "once upon a time," which instantly gives writer-director John Maclean's western the secret air of a fairy tale. Indeed, as Jay Cavendish (Kodi Smit-McPhee) lies on his back and stares at the stars, which twinkle as he pretends to shoot them with his gun, there's a sense of him as a little prince who's left the safety of some far-off land in search of adventure, or to fulfill some fabulously preordained destiny. Silas Selleck (Michael Fassbender), who narrates Jay's conventional story with the sort of regard that suggests he thinks it will be of value to someone in the future other than himself, meets him deep in Colorado and becomes the young man's protector against the elements and wolves who appear to them in sheep's clothing—literally so in the case of one particularly colorful bounty hunter, Payne (Ben Mendelsohn). It's a fable that makes the unexceptional appear slightly off-kilter through fussy artifice, and programmatically marches toward a bloody climax whose only true, if scarcely resplendent, surprise is its denial of a conventional happily ever after.

"A jack rabbit in a den of wolves" is how Silas describes Jay, convincing him that he's in need of chaperoning, and together they march west toward wherever it is that Rose Ross (Caren Pistorius) and her father, John (Rory McCann), are holed up. Oblivious to Jay, there's a bounty on the father and daughter's heads, and as such *Slow West* flirts with the possibility that Silas may not just be protecting the teen from the bounty hunters on their trail, but also using him to get to Rose and John himself. Of course, that Silas's charisma is so unmistakable, and that he redraws a line in the sand between himself and the archly seedy Payne at one weirdly and strikingly erotic point, it's evident where the rouge Irishman's loyalties lie. Meaning that the film's only real suspense comes from whether or not Jay will learn of the price tag for Rose and John's capture, and how they came to reach this remote American frontier. The details of the latter revelation suggest an homage to the second act of Arthur Conan Doyle's *Study in Scarlet*, only Maclean doesn't mine the unraveling of the foundation of a criminal act for a necessary sense of poignancy or desperation. The film's hopscotching into the removed past, or into Jay's dreams, simply exudes the inert air of peripheral contextualizing.

An interesting film that will rent as well as did **A MOST VIOLENT YEAR, JOHN WICK, UNBROKEN, KILL THE MESSENGER, THE DROP** and **2 GUNS**.





7/7 2 **WOMAN IN GOLD** DRAMA  
\$31 MILL BO 2011 SCREENS PG-13 109 MINUTES

**Helen Mirren (RED 2, THE HUNDRED FOOT JOURNEY, THE LAST STATION, THE DEBT, LOVE RANCH, HITCHCOCK)**  
**Ryan Reynolds (R.I.P.D., TED, SAFE HOUSE, THE CHANGE-UP, DEFINITELY MAYBE)**

As Jewish Austrian emigré Maria Altmann ( Mirren) retains attorney Randy Schoenberg (Reynolds) to pursue the restitution of *Adele Bloch-Bauer I*, stolen from her family by the Nazis and subsequently housed in Vienna's Belvedere Gallery, *Woman in Gold* hews closely to the clarion call that followed the Holocaust: "Never forget." "I have to do what I can to keep these memories alive," Maria tells Randy, himself the grandson of Jewish Austrian composer Arnold Schoenberg. "Because people forget, you see. And then, of course, there's justice." It's their "shared history," as Maria says, that binds the protagonists together as they wade into an Austrian bureaucracy fiercely protective of its tarnished "patrimony," and much of the film focuses on the protracted legal battle over the portrait's rightful ownership. Though Mirren intermittently charms as the prim, slightly impish Maria bringing it further toward comedy. *Woman in Gold* often appears afraid of the rougher emotions it might dredge up; the palette is so muted, the camerawork so tactful, that the film is forced to displace any sense of the past's still-raw wounds onto the dialogue's many statements of purpose. "It wasn't enough to rob your family and try to destroy it," Austrian journalist and Altmann ally Hubertus Czernin (Daniel Brühl) says to this end. "No. You had to be eradicated from history."

With the exception of a daring escape from Vienna on the eve of World War II, the series of flashbacks woven through *Woman in Gold*, featuring newlywed Maria (Tatiana Maslany), her husband (Max Irons), and her prosperous family, aren't in themselves worthy of note. But in concert with the modern-day search for evidence of the painting's lineage, this attention to Maria's kinship with *Adele Bloch-Bauer I*, which depicts her aunt, evokes the poignant sense that provenance isn't only a measure of authenticity, but also a form of belonging. As Maria stands before the portrait in the Belvedere, or as Randy listens to a Viennese chamber orchestra perform his grandfather's music, *Woman in Gold* briefly suggests the human texture of cultural heritage, framing the restitution of art stolen by the Nazis, like the museums and memorials that reach across Europe, as a refusal to forget.

This will rent as well as **SELMA, BIG EYES, UNBROKEN, THE IMITATION GAME, WHIPLASH,** and **THE JUDGE.**





7/14 2 EX MACHINA SCI/FI  
\$13 MILL BO 1915 SCREEN R 108 MINUTES

**Alicia Vikander (SEVENTH SON, SON OF A GUN, THE FIFTH ESTATE, ANNA KAREINA, TESTAMENT OF YOUTH)  
Domhnall Gleeson (UNBROKEN, BROOKLYN, CALVARY, ANNA KARENINA)**

In a landscape where the arrival of every sci-fi film suggests a capitulation to the morally and politically jejune *Star Wars* universe, it's easy to see why *Ex Machina* registers itself as intelligent life. When Caleb (Domhnall Gleeson), who's selected by Nathan (Oscar Isaac) to conduct a Turing test on his latest creation, Ava (Alicia Vikander), arrives on his employer's reclusive island lair, he immediately and excitedly gets to work. In between sessions with Ava, Caleb and Nathan drink and exchange ideas, both inside Nathan's fancy abode and outside on the strikingly diverse terrain of his private Nordic Isla Nublar. Topics of discussion include the history of gods, autism, nature versus nurture, and automatic art—this last one while the men stand before an enormous Jackson Pollock painting. Garland, unlike George Lucas, may not be in the business of selling us toys, but his itemizing of ideas has an equally dumbing-down effect. Why think when the film can do it for you?

At least this lack of spontaneity is consistent with Nathan's challenge in trying to find action that *isn't* automatic. That's one way of describing Caleb's sessions with Ava, which occur throughout the film as he sits within a glass-walled compartment and are often punctuated by massive power outages that don't allow Nathan to observe Caleb and Ava via his camera system. That Ava reveals to Caleb that she can control the outages becomes proof of her capacity for autonomy—and soon their initially schematic meetings become flirtatious and they begin to plan her getaway. At which point *Ex Machina* shows its hand as a battle for liberation against patriarchal might, and one where the lines between victim and victimizer are further blurred upon Nathan revealing that he selected Caleb to conduct the Turing test based on his browser history. Caleb sits across from Ava only because Nathan knows his "type."



The film's amusing Tinder stunt at SXSW, wherein Ava got to toy with festival attendees via the dating app, is consistent with the film's acknowledgment of how exploitation is built into the algorithms that run our lives. One understands Caleb as a stand-in for the average Joe and Nathan as an amalgamation of Bluebeard, doctors Frankenstein and Moreau, and your run-of-the-mill douchebag Silicon Valley millionaire, only one you can share a pint with. More easily understood is their ideological tussling, which illuminates nothing about Ava as artificial intelligence that isn't obvious from the manicured-seeming nether regions of Nathan's other robots, including his servant Kyoko (Sonoya Mizuno), or from Ava's decision to don a pretty white dress before hightailing it out of her island prison: that she's a high-tech blowup doll—a manifestation of Nathan's male heteronormative fantasies.

One understands that Ava, more so than the clones in *Never Let Me Go*, has been deprived of the cultural interactions necessary to making her feel like she's part of a world alive with history, tradition, rules, and entertainment—not to mention that she's capable of agency. If Nathan's desire to keep the nuances of her programming a secret from Caleb suggests a desperate mode of self-preservation, Isaac's peacocking cannily suggests as much, but one wishes that *Ex Machina* had pushed further. The casualty of Garland's refusal to give full expression to the man's weird science—the very algorithms by which he codes his AI's gendered sense of self—or the personal demons that drive him to drink means that Ava's desire to escape his clutches lacks for emotional epiphany. Like the frequent cutaways to the evil lair's scenic surroundings, from snow-capped mountains to trickling waterfalls, her ambition is stock. In the end, more than just the machine remains an enigma.

Fun movie that will rent as well as **ENDER'S GAME, INTERSTELLAR, DRACULA UNTOLD, ANNABELLE, WOMAN IN BLACK 2, THE GIVER, and EDGE OF TOMORROW.**



**7/14 2 IT FOLLOWS HORROR**  
\$16 MILL BO 1,655 SCREENS **R** 100 MINUTES

**Maika Monroe (THE BLING RING, LABOR DAY, BAD BLOOD, THE GUEST)**  
**Keir Gilchrist (TV—UNITED STATES OF TARA, FAMILY GUY, THE WINNER, DELETE)**

As the camera pivots slowly to the right, the soundtrack throbbing with sinister synth washes, a girl runs from her home, pausing briefly in the middle of her suburban street to stare in horror at a threat that's invisible both to the audience and the neighbor who kindly asks her if she needs her help. Before running back into the house, before driving off into the dead of night, before tearfully calling her father from a lonely beach, and before Mitchell jump cuts to a ghoulish vision of the girl's corpse, leg broken and dreadfully twisted back toward its head, the camera unbelievably, in one unbroken movement, flips between positioning the audience as victim and victimizer.

After their movie date is mysteriously cut short, Jay (Maika Monroe) happily consummates her budding relationship with Hugh (Jake Weary) against the backdrop of an ominously abandoned factory. But Jay's post-coital bliss quickly turns sour after Hugh knocks her out and hogties her to a chair, explaining to her that he's infected her with a sexually transmitted haunting. No exorcism will save Jay from this shape-shifting killer, presently manifest as a naked girl, that will appear to her and follow her at random—though she can stave off the promise of death, if only for a little while, by sleeping with someone else and passing the haunting on.



In one particularly unnerving pirouette of the camera, Jay remains oblivious to the figure that moves slowly toward her from across campus as she speaks to an employee inside her school, so when she exits the building and the film cuts to another scene, the audience is left choking on the unresolved tension—of never knowing if the figure is Jay's tormenter or just another kid at school.

*It Follows*'s sense of horror is chic, but far from cold-eyed, for the director mines the uncertainty of his characters for humor, too, as in a scene that sees Jay and her friends searching for Hugh in order to get his advice on how to best deal with Jay's ghostly stalker. But the nostalgia for the vintage that abounds throughout the film—the old black-and-white movies, a strategically placed game of Parcheesi, the late-night screening of *Charade* that Jay and Hugh attend—feels scarcely expressive of the characters' desires. And the titular menace can, as metaphor, feel too catch-all: for STD transmission, the phenomenon of "gift giving," and, more generally, the prickly, vulnerable crawlspace between adolescence and adulthood.

This will rent as nicely as **THE VOICES, EXODUS: GODS AND KINGS, OUIJA, HORNS, ANNABELLE, WOMAN IN BLACK 2, and AS ABOVE SO BELOW.**



7/14 1 **THE LONGEST RIDE** DRAMA  
\$36M 3336 SCREENS PG-13 139 MINUTES

**Scott Eastwood (FURY, DAWN PATROL, TROUBLE WITH THE CURVE, TEXAS CHAINSAW 3D)**

**Alan Alda (TV'S MASH, THE BLACKLIST, THE BIG C— FILM—WHAT WOMEN WANT, FLIRTING WITH DISASTER, MURDER 1600, CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS, SWEET LIBERY)**

**Britt Robertson (DELIVERY MAN, WHITE RABBIT, ASK ME ANYTHING)**

That all Nicholas Sparks adaptations spiritually take place in red-state America goes without saying. But this movie may be one of the first to literally set up an apparatus wherein staying put in the sticks and getting your cutoffs muddy with your hayseed bae is the unquestionable right choice, and jetting off to New York City to thrive in one of the world's cultural centers is most definitely the wrong one. Sophia (Britt Robertson) is the bookish, wrapped-too-tight sorority girl forced to contemplate that decision, and the rolling abs of Luke (Eastwood) are responsible for decelerating her reaction time. Winding down her last semester at a North Carolina college before an internship at some minimalistic art gallery presumably thrusts her into the venal world of Sunday supplements and brunch boots, Sophia is pulled away from her laptop to enjoy some rowdy distraction at the nearby bull-riding competition. Like any bookworm, she starts vibrating uncontrollably at the sight of ropey cowboy butt squeezed into distressed 501s, and it's not eight seconds before Luke, fresh out of another successful saddle sesh, tosses her his Stetson and cell number.

The two save an old man (Alan Alda) from a burning car wreck amid a mild thunderstorm, and before drifting out of consciousness, the man adamantly urges Sophia to save the box of love letters he has in the front seat. Rather than return to her life, she starts binge-reading the stash in the waiting room, studiously ignoring the potential parallels between the old man's love story and her own. One doesn't have to be as cynical as, well, myself to note how perfectly Sparks it is that Sophia's emergence comes from reading someone else's clichéd romantic prose, or that while she's learning what love means, her taciturn, barrel-chested slab of beefcake is off flexing his sturdy frame, recklessly straddling one rearing mass or another and risking his neck in order to prove his physical worth.

One year earlier, Luke was violently thrown from a practically undefeated bull-nado and spent two weeks in a coma. Disregarding doctor's orders, his only current priority is to buck his way to the top. Though Luke's fretful mother is quick to sermonize, "It's just eight seconds, and you could be wasting a whole lifetime," it's not like the film offers up any other explanation for Sophia's attraction to him. Her interests are consistently debased, as when she invites Luke to meet the art dealer she intends to intern under, and his reaction to the collection she brought from New York to display to prospective buyers is a smirk: "I think there's more bullshit here than in my field." In contrast, the supposedly selfish bouts Luke spends riding bulls are filmed in loving, time-warping, snot-whipping slow motion, cementing his competitive quest as the unambiguous lynchpin of his gallantry.

This will rent as well as **THE BOY NEXT DOOR, THE FAULT IN OUR STARS, HORRIBLE BOSSES 2, THE TWO FACES OF JANUARY, THE GIVER, BEGIN AGAIN** and **GOD'S NOT DEAD**.





7/14 1 PAUL BLART 2 COMEDY  
\$58 MILL BO 2882 SCREENS PG 94 MINUTES

**Kevin James (HERE COMES THE BOOM, GROWN UPS 2, ZOOKEEPER, THE DILEMMA, HITCH)  
D. B. Woodside (TV—PARENTHOOD, SUITES, MURDER ONE, PRIVATE PRACTICE—FILM—THAT AWKWARD MOMENT)**

Beginning with some archival footage from the last installment, Blart quickly dispatches of the Jayma Mays love-interest-turned-wife from *Paul Blart* by explaining that they divorced six days later. Then, his loving mother gets hit by a milk truck. These developments both leave Blart crying as he quickly shuffles away to his bedroom, running past his dutifully supportive young daughter Maya (Raini Rodriguez). He's such a helpless sad sack that when Maya gets accepted to UCLA, she's afraid to break the news to her dad. On the other hand, when Blart receives an invite to the annual security officer's convention in Las Vegas, he and his daughter are swiftly off to enjoy the amenities.

Despite its location, *Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2* might be the least Vegas-y Las Vegas movie ever, and it's not simply because of the film's PG rating. There is a courtesy scene at a Cirque du Soleil show (has this been funny since *Knocked Up* in 2007?) in which Blart spins around on a wire taking out various performers, and another scene where Blart briefly gambles on a game of craps only to lose all his money. However, the iconic strip, Vegas' distinctive architecture as well as the city's seedier elements are relegated to the backdrop for a simplified version of the *Paul Blart* plot.

After one of Blart's admirers informs him that he might be delivering the keynote address at the security convention, she punches him in the throat and walks away. When Blart can't find his daughter and she doesn't pick up his first phone call, he immediately concludes she's been abducted (that won't actually happen until later in the movie). At least 50% of Blart's problems would be solved by learning how to text with the same cell phone on which he's constantly making calls.

The ensuing battle between Blart and Vincent's henchmen is also empty of any tension because there's nothing at stake. These criminals are stealing art we didn't know existed and threatening violence they seem incapable of showing. The film's shootout scenes, which have Blart riding on a souped-up Segway, are funny if you enjoy seeing nameless bad guys get repeatedly blown back into swimming pools by bean bag guns.



This will be renting as well as **DELIVERY MAN, GROWN UPS 2, HORRIBLE BOSSES 2, DUMB AND DUMBER TO, NEIGHBORS, and NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 3.**



7/14 2 **THE SECOND BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL** COMEDY

\$33 MILL BO 2125 PG 122 MIN

**Maggie Smith (TV—DOWNTON ABBEY—FILM—MY OLD LADY, QUARTET, HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX, GOSFORD PARK)**

**Judi Dench (PHILOMENA, SKYFALL, J. EDGAR, MY WEEK WITH MARILYN, QUANTAM OF SOLACE)**

**Dev Patel (TV—NEWSROOM—FILM—CHAPPIE, SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE, THE LAST AIRBENDER)**

**Bill Nighy (THE WORLD'S END, I FRANKENSTEIN, ABOUT TIME, WRATH OF THE TITANS, TOTAL RECALL)**

Like its predecessor, this is a charming example of what great actors can do with mediocre material. The film unfolds, like a landlocked episode of *The Love Boat*, by cutting between parallel storylines. Most of these involve sex—never shown, but clearly implied—or romance between two elegantly dressed, immaculately coiffed seniors. The audience also follows wide-eyed, young Sonny (Patel) and wise-owl Muriel (Smith), the co-owners of the Indian hotel turned active adult-retirement community of the title, as they work to line up a loan to expand into a second hotel. Meanwhile, Sonny prepares to marry his improbably hot fiancée, Suneina (Tena Desae), nearly blowing the whole thing by paying too little attention to her and too much to his hotel.

This could easily have felt like one of those painfully awkward movies in which dark-skinned individuals are treated as a colorful backdrop to the dawning epiphanies of a handful of lighter-skinned Westerners—and, judging by the bored expressions on the faces of a couple of beautiful little girls in the background of some of the shots, that may be how it felt to some of the extras involved. But if you accept the basic premise of the series, that the hotel gives British elders who felt invisible in their own country an opportunity to launch a vibrant new stage of life in a place that's more welcoming to older people, and warmer in almost every way, than home, there's pleasure in watching these characters blossom, as the cast conveys their inner lives with delicate detail and panache.



Smith's Muriel, who started out bitter and angry in the first film, her imperious wit curdled into mean-spirited bile by a lifetime of servitude in England, has now claimed her natural place as a leader, whose sharp eyes miss nothing and whom the other residents rely on most for advice and moral support. Quiet, diminutive Evelyn (Dench) is also coming into her own, still too shy to act on her love for Douglas (Nighy), but gaining enough confidence in the marketplace to be offered a job as a buyer for the textiles she has become expert at purchasing at the local market.

This will rent as well as **INTO THE WOODS, FOXCATCHER, MY OLD LADY, MAGIC IN THE MOONLIGHT, MR. TURNER, THE DEBT, and THE RAILWAY MAN.**



7/28 1 HOME ANIMATED FAMILY  
\$168 MILL BO 4123 SCREENS PG 94 MINUTES

**VOICES OF: Jim Parsons, Rihanna, Steve Martin.**

"You can never go home again" is a phrase usually offered with a dash of rue, but DreamWorks Animation's latest offering makes that maxim sound like a hopeful promise. Based on a kids' novel with a fairly solid reputation, *Home* wastes very little time annoying the ever-loving heck out of anyone who doesn't still coo "Oooh!" every time that instructional card commanding audiences to put their 3D glasses on now flashes up. With highly trained dorkiness, *The Big Bang Theory*'s Jim Parsons narrates as the central goober known by all as Oh (as in, "Oh shit, this guy again!"). In an awfully tight contest, Oh is the most irritating of the Boov, a gelatinous alien race that moves from planet to planet like a pinball in a Three Stooges game trying to escape detection by the angry, retaliatory Gorgs.

The Boov arrive at Earth, relocate all inhabitants to densely packed social crop circles in Australia, and suspend all nonessential items into giant floating spheres of detritus hovering above the planet's cities, in what constitutes the film's one genuine visual coup. Because she had a cat on her head during the Boov's mass Christmastime human-vacuuming operation, young Tip (Rihanna) gets left behind in a city now swarming with pint-sized, variety-show extraterrestrials. Oh accidentally sends an invite to his housewarming party to the entire galaxy, including the Gorgs, and gets banished. And just when you thought the plot couldn't make any less sense, Oh retrofits a car so that it runs on Busta Lime-flavored slushie mix.

Maybe some of *Home* works in the moment. (I can admit to being pretty fond of Matt L. Jones's deadpan befuddlement as a traffic cop tasked with finding the fugitive Oh.) And maybe its candy-shop visual strategy pays off in the short term. But whenever the movie turns to Oh and Tip bonding as the two go off in search of the latter's relocated mother, or whenever Tip teaches Oh the complexity of human feelings, or whenever the audience is asked to feel "mad sad" along with either of them, the foundation simply isn't there to support the gestures. And in those moments the film swings south faster than the Eiffel Tower penduluming down from the sky.

OH yeah, will rent as well as **MALEFICENT, THE LEGO MOVIE, PLANES 2, PENGUINS OF MADAGASCAR**, and **BIG HERO 6**.





7/28 3 THE WATER DIVINER DRAMA  
\$5 MILL BO 1856 SCREENS R 111 MINUTES

**Russell Crowe (A BEAUTIFUL MIND, MYSTERY ALASKA, GLADIATOR, 3:10 TO YUMA, AMERICAN GANGSTER)  
Olga Kurylenko (ERASED, OBLIVION, SEVEN PSYCHOPATHS, QUANTAM OF SOLACE)**

When Australian farmer Joshua Connor ( Crowe) sails for the Dardanelles in search of his three sons, presumed dead in the disastrous Allied campaign at Gallipoli four years prior, he encounters a world made modern by suffering. With the ink on the Treaty of Versailles not yet dry, Istanbul in 1919 heaves under the weight of World War I and its tenuous peace: Turkish nationalists loyal to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk march in the streets, the European powers carve the Middle East into colonial protectorates, a hotel proprietor's son (Dylan Georgiades) promises "clean sheets, hot water, no Germans

*The Water Diviner* is at its best in this simpler, more sincere vein, a moving portrait of the commitment to finding, naming, and honoring the dead. As Drew Gilpin Faust writes of the U.S. Civil War in her essential book *This Republic of Suffering*, commemorating the deceased rank and file is a relatively new development in the history of warfare, and *The Water Diviner*, with reference to mass graves at Waterloo and the immense project to retrieve and properly bury those lost at Gallipoli, is finely attuned to the work of remembrance in justifying unimaginable bloodshed as a sacrifice on the altar of patriotism. April 25, Anzac Day, marks the 100th anniversary of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) campaign in the Dardanelles, and the film perhaps soft pedals the crude nationalism at the root of such solemn occasions, including Armistice Day in Europe and Veterans Day in the U.S., to skirt any potential controversies. Even so, with an old photograph of Connor's sons, a blood-spattered diary, and three spent bullets found in shallow water, *The Water Diviner* suggests the near-religious power personal and historical memory wield, long after the guns go silent. "She wanted them to be buried in consecrated ground," Connor says, explaining his plan to bring his sons' remains back to Australia. "How much blood do you need," ANZAC Lieutenant Colonel Cyril Hughes (Jai Courtney) replies, "for it to be holy?"



. The second half of the narrative features ambushes and escapes, a murky, maudlin glimpse of trench warfare, a train-car cricket demonstration, and even a brief musical number, and Crowe responds, seemingly desperate to keep pace, with a mess of slow motion, match cuts, dream sequences, and action-adventure set pieces. Whatever questions *The Water Diviner* poses about the modern need for "consecrated ground" in which to lay the victims of patriotism are suddenly left dangling, and the film rushes on toward its finale with all of the sentiment, but none of the subtlety, that mark its opening stages. Indeed, by the time the cloying conclusion arrives, *The Water Diviner's* graceful, humane treatment of the commemorative impulse and the collective grief, viewed through the eyes of a man adrift in the Great War's vast wasteland, seems but a fast-fading memory, as distant in time and space as the Gallipoli campaign itself.

This will do as well as **A MOST VIOLENT YEAR, BLACK SEA, THE GAMBLER, UNBROKEN, A WALK AMONG THE TOMBSTONES, and A MOST WANTED MAN**