

6/2 3 CAMP X-RAY DRAMA
\$1 MILL BO 109 SCREENS R 117 MINUTES

Kristen Stewart (STILL ALICE, THE TWILIGHT SAGA 2, SNOW WHITE AND THE HUNTSMAN, THE RUNAWAYS, WELCOME TO THE RILEYS)

This film abounds in the heavy-handed symbolism we've come to expect from 13 years of War on Terror movies, built on a kinship between two leads that harkens back to Stanley Kramer's hoary issue dramas of the 1950s. Kristen Stewart stars as Amy Cole, a doe-eyed private deployed to Guantanamo Bay for 12-hour-long suicide-watch shifts, and Payman Maadi is Ali, a detainee arrested in the film's opening minutes with no cause or charges given. The world's least-experienced filmgoer will probably be able to tell from their meet-cute that a Very Important Lesson is due, but for a spell the question of a happy ending is an open one thanks to the film's feeling of despair, imparted largely by James Laxton's smartly anemic location cinematography.

It's only once military salutes to the American flag are intercut with images of detainees praying toward Mecca, and characters have begun addressing the question of who the *real* terrorists are, that *Camp X-Ray* segues from being an utterly average potboiler to a flummoxing would-be polemic. The film seems to fancy itself a step-by-step procedural, yet Sattler's script confirms nothing for the audience that they couldn't discern from the get-go: Detainees are abused and neglected, to the point that the wardens themselves appear prisoners of a rigidly unfair paradigm. Maadi gives a fair toss to the thankless task of representing the post-9/11 "other," but he conspicuously stands out from the pack due to his articulateness and creativity. Stewart's turn as Amy mostly consists of pouting and biting her lower lip, looking alternately bored, or like she might burst into tears at any minute.



This will rent as well as **CAKE, MAPS TO THE STARS, ROSEWATER, THIS IS WHERE I LEAVE YOU, WHAT IF, and BEGIN AGAIN.**



6/2 1 FOCUS ACTION

\$53 MILL BO 3128 SCREENS R 105 MINUTES

Will Smith (HITCH, I ROBOT, WINTER'S TALE, HANCOCK, MEN IN BLACK 3, ENEMY OF THE STATE, WILD WILD WEST)

Margot Robbie (TV—NEIGHBORS, PAN AM)

Nicky Spungeon (Smith), a flimflam man whose never known a life outside the game. Raised on the streets and capable of turning something like Super Bowl week into a multimillion dollar hustle, he runs into Robbie's Jess Barrett as she's trying to scam a mark in a fancy hotel. Calling her out, he agrees to become her mentor. It's not long

before they are in New Orleans with a large group of assistants, fleecing football fans out of their hard-earned wares. After a big con with a very high roller, Nick gets cold feet and sends Jess packing. She is devastated.

Three years later, they meet up again in Buenos Aires. He's working for a Grand Prix race car owner named Garriga (Rodrigo Santoro). She's his current arm candy. At first, they both agree to avoid each other. But Nick has a hard time keeping his feelings to himself. Throughout, Garriga hopes to slip false information to the competition, creating an advantage for his team in the process. While Nick tries to maintain focus and find a way back into Jess's good graces, it appears that their naturally affection for each other will lead them both to ruin. Or riches. Or both.



In essence, *Focus* is a rom-com with dimension. There's substance in the meet cute and a real threat of danger in the will they or won't they. Once Garriga and his henchmen come into play (including Gerald McRaney as a goon with a gift for gab greater than Smith's), the movie kind of loses steam. It's time to play wrap up and, frankly, we don't want to see Smith and Robbie "return" to the real world. Indeed, *Focus* finds a way to keep us fully engaged even when the various pros and cons are taking us to places we've been to dozens of times before.

Still, this is one of the better movies made about the con game, and that goes directly to Ficarra and Requa's main strength. They understand their material, and make sure the audience does as well. They are equally good at setting up characters. When they pay off, the results are amazing (see *Phillip Morris*). When they don't, as in the odd *Crazy, Stupid, Love*, we still don't mind the journey to such shoulder shrugging. The duo still need to find a voice—slick and polished is not an aesthetic—and there are times, like a pre-Robbie sequence with Smith, where their lack of vision clouds our perception.

On the other hand, the duo deserves credit for treading where others have gone and succeeded before (see *The Sting*, *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, and numerous other examples of the genre). *Focus* won't inspire fawning praise or wicked rejection. Instead, it's a solid Hollywood entertainment, and when you consider when it's being released, that's both a blessing and a curse. We critics are lucky something this likeable came along in the middle of the winter wasteland of post-awards season. Hopefully, audiences overlook the familiarity to find the freshness and fun within.

This will rent as well as **THE GAMBLER, TAKEN 3, A MOST VIOLENT YEAR, UNBROKEN, THE DROP, INTERSTELLAR** and **ST. VINCENT**.



6/2 1 JUPITER ASCENDING SCI/FI/ACTION
\$51 MILL BO 1948 SCREENS PG-13 127 MINUTES

Channing Tatum (THE BOOK OF LIFE, FOXCATCHER, 22 JUMP STREET, WHITE HOUSE DOWN, HAYWIRE, THIS IS THE END)

Eddie Redmayne (MY WEEK WITH MARILYN, THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING, LES MISERABLES, POWDER BLUE)

Mila Kunis (THIRD PERSON, BLOOD TIES, OZ THE GREAT AND POWERFUL, FRIENDS WITH BENEFITS)

Mila Kunis plays Jupiter Jones, a grumpy young woman who hates cleaning houses with her Russian immigrant family in Chicago. Her voiceover lays out a fantastic origin story in which she's birthed on a cargo ship bound for America after her starry-eyed astronomer father is killed by thugs back in Russia. "This is bullshit," Jupiter concludes. One is inclined to agree after the action shifts off-planet, where a trio of royal siblings who have a thing for "harvesting" planets blithely squabble over the rights to Earth. The creepiest of the Abrasax kids, Balem (Eddie Redmayne), starts scheming in dark ways that will certainly involve Jupiter and disadvantage his brother Titus (Douglas Booth) and Kalique (Tuppence Middleton). We are assured of Balem's villainy not just because of his fey hand gestures and his tendency to toy with his bit of string. These are not baroque outfits, but also his straightforward as Balem the mannerisms of a kind- straightfoward as Balem Jupiter is as opaque. Even after a and his siblings are where Jupiter is rescued logically torturous scene from being kidnapped by grotesque aliens at a fertility clinic where she's trying to sell some of her eggs in order to buy a telescope. No matter that her rescuer, Caine (Tatum), is a galactic legionnaire with lupine genes and super-cool hover boots who blows apart half of Chicago's Loop during the ensuing chase scene and laser-cannon fight. Jupiter takes it all in stride, even after she's zipped off into outer space, informed that she's royalty, introduced to the late-Roman Empire ways of the Abrasax clan, educated on what "harvesting" will mean for the people of Earth.



This will rent as well as **INTERSTELLAR, EXODUS: GODS AND KINGS, THE GIVER, AS ABOVE SO BELOW, HERCULES, EDGE OF TOMORROW** and **ROBO COP.**



6/2 1 MCFARLAND USA DRAMA
 \$41 MILL BO 2932 SCREENS PG 129 MINUTES

Kevin Costner (DANCES WITH WOLVES, THREE DAYS TO KILL, THE BODYGUARD, FIELD OF DREAMS, SILVERADO)
Maria Bello (PRISONERS, THIRD PERSON, GROWN UPS 2, CARJACKED, THE COMPANY MAN, THE COOLER)

Until they hit upon the college capering of Kurt Russell as Dexter Riley, Disney didn't have much success in the live action arena. Oh sure, their documentaries earned Oscar kudos, and they could churn out a classic or two (Mary Poppins, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea) when need be, but for the most part, said division was more Grayfriars Bobby than Old Yeller. Once the former child star stepped up and saved the company's fortunes, the House of Mouse was back in the game.

Of course, as quickly as they amassed a reputation in the non-animated field, their rate of success regressed. Soon, just like their cartoon creativity, they saw limited returns on their corporate brand. It's taken a while, but Walt's workers have found a new film formula to bank on. Call it "the inspirational true life sports story", best served by examples such as Miracle, The Rookie, Million Dollar Arm, and now, McFarland USA. While it's yet another instance in that long line of Great White Bwana helping people of color cinematic clichés, the acting and approach are so welcoming we don't care about such personal disparities.

Kevin Costner is the fittingly named Jim White. He's a former football coach and teacher whose current fortunes find him in the migrant worker outpost known as McFarland, California. Hoping to restart his sports dreams at a new school, he quickly learns that the locals aren't much into athletics, but a few are especially fast runners. Before you can say "state champions", White has collected together a mostly Hispanic team of quality cross-country competitors. While learning the ways of their harsh daily existence, his footpath protégés soon come face to face with the subtle racism that comes from their spoiled suburban competitors. With success come some disruptive spoils.

At a certain level, the struggles of an athlete are highly anti-cinematic. Most problems are internal, and therefore not the most meaningful when it comes to visualizing competition. So it makes sense that Caro films her races with an attention to detail and scope. We become involved in the back and forth, the subtle strategizing and necessary endurance to take one's body across such long distances. We also appreciate the old fashioned work ethic and dedication required. Because of the setting, one is tempted to treat this movie like Stand and Deliver, an attempt to explain the fringes of society to the rest of the dying middle class. But Caro skips the big picture for more intimate insights.

There's also a polite, PC quality about the inherent racism such a situation might cause. No one is slurred, and when comments like "Are we in Mexico?" are made, the characters make sure to redirect the conversation away from any possible ethnic bias. We aren't dealing with "illegals" here, or people trying to play the government for free handouts. Instead, McFarland is portrayed as honest, hardworking, and humble. When the suburban schools show up with their noses in the air, it's the team's intensity and agility that win out, not a sudden parsing of prejudice.

This will rent as nicely as **WHEN THE GAME STANDS TALL, DUMB AND DUMBER 2, TAMMY, 22 JUMP STREET, THE FAULT IN OUR STARS, THE BLIND SIDE, NEIGHBORS, and INTO THE STORM.**





6/2 1 THE SPONGEBOB MOVIE FAMILY
\$127 MILL BO 2958 SCREENS PG 92 MINUTES

VOICES OF: Antonio Banderas, Eddie Deezen, Billy West,

Poseidon willing, there's still a place in the market for *SpongeBob SquarePants*. Which is, of course, not to suggest that the lack of tolerance so vehemently defended by Focus on the Family roughly a decade ago is even remotely vanquished. Rather, the newest missive from the pineapple under the sea emerges from the deepening trench separating irony and sincerity in family films. In one corner, the likes of *The LEGO Movie*, whiplash-quick and sure to serve as a primer on meta for tomorrow's baby Barthes enthusiasts; in the other, the entirety of Pixar's ilk, movies which practically slit their wrists, bleeding teal and orange, in order to show you their beating pulse. More than a decade and a half since its inception, Nickelodeon's *SpongeBob SquarePants* still defies categorization into either column, and even if *Sponge Out of Water* doesn't scale the zany heights of either the TV show's prime or its prior cinematic outing, its dedication to the transgressive power of frivolity—a deportment that marks its true gay card—remains the franchise's greatest weapon.

Did someone say meta? The framing device of *Sponge Out of Water* literalizes the medium's role as the message itself vis-à-vis a magical storybook that makes true anything written on its pages. The crewless pirate Burger-Beard (Antonio Banderas, serving up B-list Captain Jack Sparrow) kicks the self-referential proceedings off as he swipes, Indiana Jones-style, the creaky, antiquated tome and tells a flock of seagulls the tale therein—a story about how the Krusty Krab's secret Krabby Patty recipe vanishes into thin water during one of the diminutive Plankton's elaborate heist attempts. Only Plankton and SpongeBob witness the scroll's disappearance, and so the cheery yellow brick credulously suggests his nemesis join forces to track the recipe down, lest the entire neighborhood of Bikini Bottom plunge into post-apocalyptic chaos. (A running gag involves Plankton's inability to vocalize the term "teamwork," at one point emerging from his mouth as "time bomb.")



Their quest takes them through a dazzling array of inventive set pieces, many introducing new styles of animation, as Plankton burrows into SpongeBob's cotton-candy brain (and discovering a perverted sort of Candy Land as reimagined by Terry Gilliam), the two travel through time and space via some sort of sausage-powered photo booth, Jupiter smashes into Saturn when a bilingual dolphin takes a 10,000-year-overdue bathroom break, and all paths lead them to the ultimate den of iniquity: a smarmy beachfront food truck. The multiplex being at the moment Marvel's world, in which we are all reluctantly obliged to live, *SpongeBob* and his allies end up flexing their superhero muscles to save Bikini Bottom from burger-starved oblivion. It's a sop to current fashion that would be a bigger disappointment were it not for the series's blessed lack of seriousness. As overblown as its final act seems, the details in the margins—in this case, the seagulls interrupting an 11th-hour musical number by singing "You're making the movie too long"—help keep *SpongeBob*'s universe blissfully free from baggage.

This will rent as well as **THE HOBBIT: BATTLE OF FIVE ARMIES, INTO THE WOODS, DUMB AND DUMBER TO, BIG HERO 6, THE BOXTROLLS, DOLPHIN TALE 2, and 22 JUMP STREET.**



6/9 1 THE DUFF DRAMA

\$33 MILL BO 2622 SCREENS PG-13 101 MINUTES

Mae Whitman (TV—PARENTHOOD, TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES, MASTERS OF SEX)

Bella Thorne (TV—BIG LOVE, LITTLE MONK,--FILM -- BLENDED, ALEXANDER AND THE TERRIBLE, ONE WISH, RASPBERRY MAGIC)

Lucio Fulci films as much as Juno loved Herschell Gordon Lewis, and has efficiently cloaked her insecurities within a force field of observational humor. When she's informed by Wesley (Robbie Amell), her next door neighbor and childhood bestie who now gets along just fine as a "manwhore," that the only reason her two closest friends, Casey and Jessica (Bianca A. Santos and Skyler Samuels), hang out with her is because they're using her as their own Designated Ugly Fat Friend (or DUFF, per Urban Dictionary), it sends her into a tailspin of self-doubt.

The movie comes close to dealing with the idea that Bianca's own rude awakening to her apparent -black-sheep status is, in fact, something she's always known subconsciously (to say nothing of her two hotter, more desirable friends' hidden motivations), but doesn't give itself any time to explore the socio-psychological implications behind that before Bianca ends up subjected to a gauntlet of cyber-bullying that would leave even Carrie White feeling pity for her. When Bianca turns to the only person in school she can trust, Wesley (because his brutal "honesty" makes him somehow more trustworthy in her eyes), it puts her onto the radar of Wesley's on-again, off-again girlfriend Madison, a quintessential Mean Girl 2.0 (played by increasingly pigeonholed Disney ice princess Bella Thorne).



There's really nothing particularly wrong with the film's fundamental endorsement of embracing your inner DUFF, though in suggesting that basically everyone is a little bit of a DUFF at heart also means that technically no one is a DUFF. But even given the context of the film's self-esteem battlefield, that practically all of Bianca's moments of actualization arrive at the hands of everyone else in her life, most crucially the dumb but cute jock who routinely points out all of her flaws, deposits the heroine and everyone in the audience looking toward her for image-maintaining guidance back at square one.

This will rent as well as **DUMB AND DUMBER 2**, **LUCY**, **INTO THE STORM**, **IF I STAY**, **NEIGHBORS**, **HORRIBLE BOSSES 2** and **THINK LIKE A MAN 2**.



6/9 1 **KINGSMAN: THE SECRET SERVICE**

THRILLER

\$121 MILL BO 3256 SCREENS R 129 MINUTES

Colin Firth (MAGIC IN THE MOONLIGHT, THE KING'S SPEECH, THE RAILWAY MAN, MAMMA MIA!, LOVE ACTUALLY)

Samuel L. Jackson (PULP FICTION, REASONABLE DOUBT, SNAKES ON A PLANE, DJANGO UNCHAINED, THE AVENGERS, UNTHINKABLE, COACH CARTER)

Mark Strong (ZERO DARK THIRTY, WELCOME TO THE PUNCH, THE EAGLE, GREEN LANTERN, ENDGAME, BODY OF LIES)

We are introduced to Gary "Eggsy" Unwin (Taron Egerton) when he is a small boy. He's lost his father, and a family friend named Harry Hart (Colin Firth) has shown up to lend support and a secret medallion. Years later, our young hero is on the wrong side of the law when he gets the chance of a lifetime. Harry offers him a position in the Kingsmen, a freelance espionage agency that serves as the new "knights" of the British Empire. Eggsy is initially skeptical, but with little keeping him at home, he decides to try out.



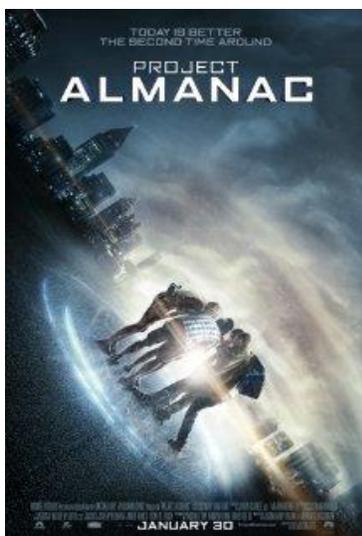
Along with a few other recruits, they are put through rigorous testing by the Kingsmen's leader "Arthur" (Michael Caine) and instructor Merlin (Strong). In the meantime, Harry is following up on the death of another member of the organization (Jack Davenport). That agent was trying to rescue a professor (Mark Hamill) tied to a tech billionaire (Samuel L. Jackson) who has been a vocal activist against global warming. After

digging a bit deeper, it turns out that Richmond Valentine (Jackson) plans to use specially designed SIM cards to send a signal around the world, a tone which produces violent behavior and will result in global genocide. It's up to the Kingsmen and their new recruit to stop him.

So once again, we are going from rookie to royalty, a complete and utter failure into a wholly unique and gifted hero. We get training, travails, the tricks to prove mantle, and the timing which offers a last act redemption for an already deflated lead. It all flows together with minimal bumps along the way, and Vaughn elevates his game visually, turning all the action scenes into eye-popping pronouncements of the value in high tech CG imagery and rapid-fire editing. The visual side of this film is frisky and fun, including a moment when a microchip malfunctions and a whole room of dignitaries has their minds mushroom cloud blown—literally.

This fun thriller will rent as well as **INTERSTELLAR**, **JOHN WICK**, **ST. VINCENT**, **THE DROP**, **NO GOOD DEED**, and **A WALK AMONG THE TOMBSTONES** and **EDGE OF TOMORROW**.





6/9 2 PROJECT ALMANAC SCI FI/COMEDY
\$24 MILL BO 2900 SCREENS **PG-13** 106 MINUTES

**Amy Landecker (TV—TRANSPARENT, LOUIS, REVENGE
---FILM—ENOUGH SAID, CLEAR HISTORY, DAN IN
REAL LIFE)
Virginia Gardner (TV---THE GOLDBERGS, GLEE, HART
OF DIXIE)**

“Take it down a notch, Seacrest.” So says Chris (Virginia Gardner), behind the camera that’s focused on her brother David (Jonny Weston) at the start of Project Almanac. The fact that you don’t see her right away, on top of his cocky-nerdy self-performance, sets up what’s coming. Technically, he’s selling himself to MIT in a video demonstration of his latest experiment, concerning a drone he can manipulate from glowing sensors on his fingers.

Before you can say, CHRONICLE this movie suggests that such super-seeming powers, as cool as they might seem, are never quite within the young genius’ control. Neither is that self-performance, remarked by Chris even as David proceeds to thrill himself with the show, attended by his supporting cast: Chris, David’s classmates, and fellow geekboys Adam (Allen Evangelista) and Quinn (Sam Lerner). David’s a whiz, his team agrees, so they’re willing to go along working on schematics and soldering chips, setting in motion the adventure that will become David’s character arc.

David’s a decent kid with a difficult background, which means Chris shares it (even though her experiences, good and bad, are generally left off-screen.) Their mom (Amy Landecker) is headed out to job interviews in almost every scene where she appears; their dad (Gary Weeks) is dead in a pre-film car wreck, though he shows up in home video (David’s seventh birthday party, the Last Time He Saw His Father). Brother and sister, although in Project Almanac it’s mostly brother, mourn his loss. This predictable frame extends to their shared sense of alienation at high school: in the cafeteria and hallways, the four sit apart from others, contriving the film’s titular project.



That project derives from David’s investment in his dead dad, sparked when he starts looking at the birthday party video and spots himself in it, himself as he is now, at age 17, reflected in a mirror. This leads to an investigation and lo, the discovery of dead dad’s plans for a time travel machine.

Ah yes, the time travel machine. As one might anticipate, this seeming plot focus is really just the trick by which the film gets at the tribulations embodied and endured by young “Seacrest”. David never does quite take it down a notch. His self-interest leads him to make some wrong decisions and to disregard the rules he and his friends set as to who travels when and how, as well as to what ends. He confronts a series of crises, more moral-adjacent than actually moral, beginning with his desperation to impress the prettiest girl in class, Jessie (Sofia Black-D’Elia). She happens onto the group’s early experimenting when David decides to use her car battery to power it. He makes this decision unilaterally, without her permission, but because she’s in place to serve as his love interest who becomes a crisis, well, she’s only impressed by his arrogance—or, rather, his “brilliance”.

This will rent as well as **INTO THE WOODS, MAPS TO THE STARS, THE MAZE RUNNER, THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY, LUCY, THE GIVER,** and **TRANSCENDENCE.**



6/9 3 SERENA DRAMA

\$4 MILL (so far-in theaters now) 2152 SCREENS R
109 MINUTES

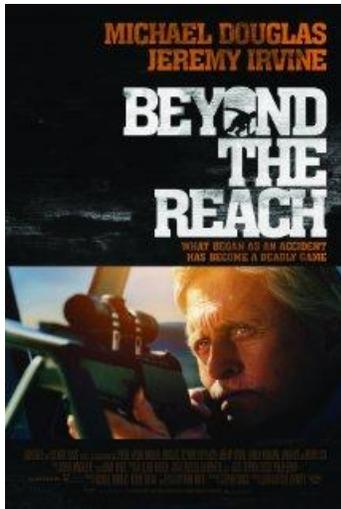
Bradley Cooper (AMERICAN HUSTLE, SILVER LININGS PLAYBOOK, LIMITLESS, THE A-TEAM, THE MIDNIGHT MEAT TRAIN)

Jennifer Lawrence (X MEN-DAYS OF FUTURE PAST, AMERICAN HUSTLE, WINTER'S BONE, THE DEVIL YOU KNOW)

Ron Rash's *Serena* is the story of a blossoming timber operation in North Carolina in the 1930s, headed by the rich and virile newlyweds George and Serena Pemberton. At war with the American government over a potential seizure of their land for a National Park, the Pembertons grow increasingly distrustful of the men working underneath them as well as, eventually, one another. Rash, writing with beautiful, nearly Biblical authority, likens the elemental destruction of the Pemberton woods to the erosion of the working class's hope in the wake of the Depression, and eventually to the unknowable recesses of a broken woman scorned.

The brutal quotidian of working life on a timber operation, the entire point of the book, has been reduced to a few expository lines about worker mishaps. Pemberton's camp is merely a stage, devoid of texture, rich in picturesque banalities, on which actors walk on and off, delivering dialogue that explains motivations and context. The audience is never allowed to sort anything out for itself. This should rent as well as **IMITATION GAME**, **FOXCATCHER**, **ROSEWATER**, **TWO FACES OF JANUARY**, **BOYHOOD**, and **SKELETON TWINS**.





6/16 **3** **BEYOND THE REACH** THRILLER
\$3 MILL BO 276 SCREENS R 95 MINUTES

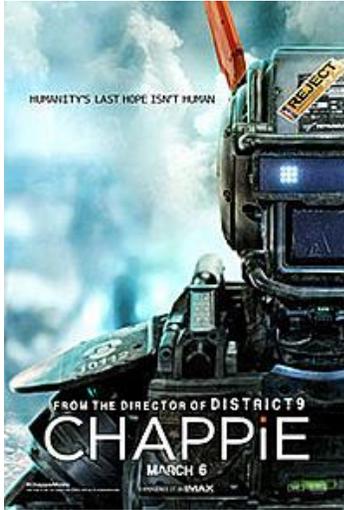
Michael Douglas (WALL STREET, FATAL ATTRACTION, THE WAR OF THE ROSES, THE CHINA SYNDROME)
Jeremy Irvine (WOMAN IN BLACK 2, THE RAILWAY MAN, WAR HORSE, NOW IS GOOD)

This film's triumph strikingly photogenic. As Jeremy Irvine's Ben runs, slinks, and sometimes crawls through the Mojave Desert in nothing but his undies, the dirt and dust of the environment, along with the brutally burning powers of the sun above, wondrously accentuate the actor's lean, muscular torso. When Ben is charged with taking Michael Douglas's slimy

moneybags, Madec, out into the desert on a hunting trip, things begin innocently, though weirdly, from the hotshot Cali douchebag rattling off how expensive his shit is to pushing his good-ol'-boy companion to join him in an impromptu impersonation of Wall-E and Eva's famous meet-cute. The odd couple shares a laugh, but their shared interest in the Pixar film isn't enough for them to coolly deal with Madec's accidental shooting and subsequent murder of a desert hobo, Charlie (Martin Palmer), with whom Ben shares a history. One thing leads to another, and after forcing Ben to take off his clothes and hightail it across the desert and toward a presumably sun-scorched and ultra-dehydrated death, Madec mostly lords outside his \$500,000 gas-guzzling, espresso-making monster driving machine while uttering one-liners.



This cat and mouse film will rent as well as **THE HUMBLING, THE HOMESMAN, KILL THE MESSENGER, LEFT BEHIND, THE JUDGE, and IF I STAY.**



6/16 1 CHAPPIE SCI/FI

\$31 MILL BO 3102 SCREENS R 120 MINUTES

Dev Patel (TV'S—THE NEWSROOM, SKINS—FILM—SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE, THE BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL)

Hugh Jackman (X-MEN: DAYS OF FUTURE PAST, PRISONERS, THE WOLVERINE, REAL STEEL, BUTTER)

Ninja and Yo-Landi are representative of something called the “zef” movement, a South African combination of the crass and the everyday marked by a devotion to trashy, discarded cultural elements. If by this they mean hideous white hip-hop half-speak, bad prison tattoos, and

haircuts circa a Barbie and a pair of scissors, then they more than encapsulate said concept. And these are our stars.

Yes, Hugh Jackman and Dev Patel are also on hand, but it's Die Antwoord and a CG robot that take center stage. The dichotomy between the two sides is stunning. It's a battle between professionals and pretenders.

Patel is Deon, a star engineer in Michelle Bradley's (Sigourney Weaver) high tech robotics company. Having just been embraced by the city of Johannesburg as a means of providing police protection to the populace, everyone is happy with the new drone scouts. Everyone, that is, except Hugh Jackman's Vincent. An ex-soldier with his own militarized machine ready to patrol the streets, he wants Deon to fail and will stop at nothing to undermine his current efforts to place actual consciousness into one of his automaton.

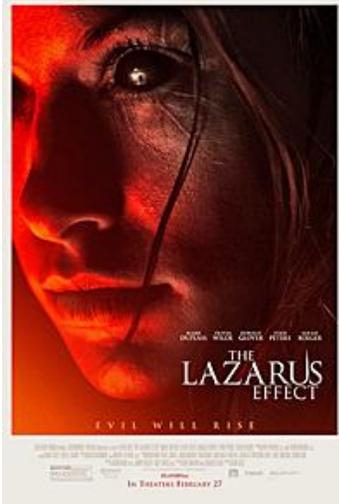


In the meantime, Ninja and Yo-Landi are in trouble with a gang leader. They owe him millions and decide that the only means of payback is an armed vehicle heist. Of course, they have to countermand the robot police somehow, so their next brilliant idea is to kidnap Deon and make him “switch them off”.

Turns out, our scientist is hiding a secret: he has stolen a droid and intends to turn it “human”. Some fast movements over a computer keyboard later and “Chappie” (voiced by Blomkamp regular Sharlto Copley) is born.

At first, Chappie is a child-like innocent. He is afraid of everything and unsure of this new world around “him”. But as Ninja and Yo-Landi brainstorm with the rest of their crew, they come up with another plan: they will use the robot as a way of getting the money they need. In the meantime, Vincent finds out what Deon has done and uses that information to override the city's security. In a panic, they let the villain unleash his ED-209 wannabe, and before you can say Robocop, Chappie and this flying weapon are battling it out in the middle of a shootout between Ninja and Prison Rapist.

A fun film that will rent as well as **TAKEN 3, NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 3, JOHN WICK, NIGHT CRAWLER, LUCY, HORRIBLE BOSSES 2, THE EQUALIZER, and EXPENDABLES 3.**



6/16 1 THE LAZARUS EFFECT SCI/FI
\$26 MILL BO 2666 SCREENS PG-13 83 MINUTES

Olivia Wilde (RUSH, THIRD PERSON, DRINKING BUDDIES, THE INCREDIBLE BURY WONDERSTONE, COWBOYS & ALIENS)

Mark Duplass (TV—THE LEAGUE, THE MINDY PROJECT—FILM—TAMMY, DARLING COMPANION, PEOPLE LIKE US, SAFETY NOT GUARANTEED)

Olivia Wilde has a gift for investing her characters with displays of discomfort that subtly articulate the baggage of the past. In *The Lazarus Effect*, she reveals her character Zoe's understanding that Niko (Donald Glover) wishes he could be more than friends with her with a simple turn of the head. But she works on a subtext-driven register that's ill-fitting for this insipidly plotted and shot horror film about research scientists trying to bring the dead back to life. Once the powers that be learn of the success of their first trial (on a pooch that quickly shows signs of going full-on Cujo), their project is shut down for nefarious reasons that are, like the cameo by Ray Wise, swiftly swept under the rug. Zoe's fiancé, Frank (Mark Duplass), insists that they take matters into their own hands by replicating the results of their trial on a second dead dog, but when an incoherently staged electrocution kills Zoe, she becomes the test subject. One plot contrivance leads to another, with Zoe emerging from beyond the grave as the mean-girl version of Scarlett Johansson's Lucy, firing on just about all cylinders of her brain. And where Luc Besson might have staged *The Lazarus Effect's* jump scares with a sense of decorous claustrophobia, director David Gelb doesn't evince so much as a single compositional sleight of hand, merely delighting in turning lights on and off and watching Zoe appear in random places. Worse, though, is how feebly the live-wire debate of faith versus science underscores the exchanges between the doubting Frank and the devout Zoe, and how a certain trauma from Zoe's past isn't mined for insight into how guilt informs her violence.



This will rent as well as **THE WOMAN IN BLACK 2, NIGHTCRAWLER, OUIJA, OPEN GRAVE, LEFT BEHIND, DELIVER US FROM EVIL,** and **GODZILLA.**



6/16 1 RUN ALL NIGHT ACTION
\$24 MILL BO 2747 SCREENS R 114 MINUTES

Liam Neeson (TAKEN, A WALK AMONG THE TOMBSTONES, SCHINDLER'S LIST, NON-STOP, BATTLESHIP, UNKNOWN)
Ed Harris (FRONTERA, CYMBERLINE, PAIN & GAIN, GONE BABY GONE, A BEAUTIFUL MIND, A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE)

Harris and Neeson play brothers in crime Jimmy Conlon (Neeson) and now mob boss Shawn Maguire (Harris). The former works for the latter as a reliable and deadly hitman, though he's become a bit too fond of the bottle as of late. In the meantime, Shawn's son (Boyd Holbrook) has been trying to work a heroin deal with some deadly Eastern Europeans. When his father refuses to back his business plan, the kid grabs a gun and shoots up the place. It just so happens that this gangland killing occurs right in front of Jimmy's ex-boxer turned limo driver son Mike (Joel Kinnaman). Naturally, all witnesses have to be silenced.

Jimmy kills Shawn's son just as he is about to do the same to Mike. Shawn vows revenge on the whole Conlon family. Jimmy promises to do everything he can to protect them, including working a deal with a determined detective (Vincent D'Onfrio) who wants to close the books on decades of unsolved murders. When his own men fail at finishing off the father/son combo, Shawn hires an outsider (Common) who is glad to take them out. Naturally, it all ends in a wooded cabin with an injured Jimmy doing his best to keep his boy safe.

Where the movie works best is when Neeson and Harris reminisce. We learn of their past, their partnership, and their Jimmy can't live with himself. They've also destroyed his stuff bottled up inside, that speaks for decades of these men are Oscar expertise shows when they yards shooting at each other. words and less heavily might find ourselves liking



Had the movie used more edited chase scenes, we the results more.

This action film will rent as well as **TAKEN 3, GRUDGE MATCH, THE GAMBLER, JOHN WICK, EXPENDABLES 3, END GAME** and **PURGE: ANARCHY.**



6/16 1 UNFINISHED BUSINESS COMEDY
\$12 MILL BO 2777 SCREENS R 91 MINUTES

Vince Vaughn (THE WEDDING CRASHERS, DELIVERY MAN, COUPLES RETREAT, THE DILEMMA, DODGEBALL : A TRUE UNDERDOG STORY)

Dave Franco (22 JUMP STREET, NEIGHBORS, WARM BODIES, NOW YOU SEE ME)

Tom Wilkinson (SELMA, THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL, THE CONSPIRATOR, MICHAEL CLAYTON, DUPLICITY)

In the film, Vaughn plays Dan Trunkman, a mid-level white-collar businessman who fancies himself a David Mamet warrior, fears he's aging into a Willy Loman, and thus reacts to the news of an impending pay cut with the self-righteousness of Jerry Maguire taking his goldfish with him along with his pink slip. Vowing to beat his old boss (Sienna Miller) at her own game, he recruits two associates from his former office to join him in creating a competing startup. Neither of the two—the defeated and well-past-retirement-age Timothy McWinters (Tom Wilkinson) and the keen but dim Mike Pancake (Dave Franco)—are exactly sharks. One year later, and Dan still has them on his team, all three still limping toward their first big deal handshake, a quest that takes them to Berlin.

In virtually no other Vaughn film would his character begin his journey in this default position of nurturer. The whole point of his cinematic existence, the entire reason people continue to go to his films despite the fact that it became quite clear eight films ago that they would always be as formulaic and programmed as Girl Scout cookies, is that Vaughn is a paragon for reformed chauvinism. He's an irrepressible but highly tamable id. Not so here. Dan not only retains his two sparkle-free employees long after any reasonable professional would have cut them loose, but also bends over backward to be a reasonable, selfless father to his sensitive children. (The movie practically turns into one big "It Gets Better" bullying PSA whenever dealing Vaughn's big-boned son.) Without the promise of character reform, there's no comedic tension underlining Dan and company's desperate trip to Berlin, and there's nothing at stake over their wheelbarrow-sexing, gloryhole-stumbling, giant hamster ball-rolling antics.

This comedy will do as well as **DELIVERY MAN, GROWN UPS 2, DUMB AND DUMBER TO, HORRIBLE BOSSES TO, BLENDED, GRUDGE MATCH,** and **ANCHOR MAN 2.**





6/16 3 WELCOME TO ME DRAMEDY
\$3 MILL BO 476 SCREENS R 105 MINUTES

Kristen Wiig (NASTY GIRL, HER, THE SKELETON TWINS, THE SECRET LIFE OF WALTER MITTY, GIRL MOST LIKELY)

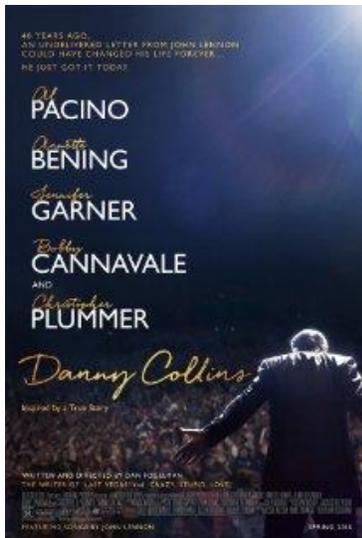
James Marsden (THE BEST OF ME, ANCHOR MAN 2, 2 GUNS, HOP, STRAW DOGS)

This film casts Kristen Wiig as Alice Klieg, a mentally unstable woman who wins the lottery and immediately buys her way onto television - with the movie detailing the character's subsequent efforts to transform her self-hosted program into an Oprah-like juggernaut. Director Shira Piven, working from Eliot Laurence's script, has infused *Welcome to Me*

Me with the feel of an appealing (yet undeniably low-key) comedy, and there's little doubt that the film benefits substantially from Wiig's entertaining, typically quirky turn as the larger-than-life protagonist - with the actress' engaging performance matched by an off-kilter roster of supporter players, including James Marsden, Jennifer Jason Leigh, and Tim Robbins. The movie's gleefully irreverent vibe paves the way for a number of genuinely hilarious moments in the first half, with the emphasis on Alice's off-the-wall programming choices ensuring that *Welcome to Me* often feels like cinematic cousin to 1989's *UHF*. (It never quite reaches the gloriously zany heights of that cult classic, however.) It's just as clear, though, that the film's thin premise is ultimately stretched beyond its breaking point, while Piven's decision to pepper the movie's final third with a host of predictably melodramatic elements wreaks havoc on the narrative's increasingly tenuous momentum (ie the whole thing begins to demonstrably run out of steam as it passes the one-hour mark). The end result is a passable little comedy that's unlikely to win over Wiig's detractors, although it's hard to deny that the actress sporadically delivers a far more raw and naked performance than one has come to expect.



This one will rent as well as **CAKE, MAPS TO THE STARS, ST. VINCENT, THE SKELETON TWINS, IF I STAY,** and **THEY CAME TOGETHER.**



6/30 3 DANNY COLLINS MUSICAL DRAMA
\$5 MILL BO 647 SCREENS R 106 MINUTES

Al Pacino (SCARFACE, AND JUSTICE FOR ALL, THE GODFATHER, ANY GIVEN SUNDAY, THE HEAT)
Annette Bening (AMERICAN BEAUTY, BEING JULIA, THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT, THE GRIFTERS, POSTCARDS FROM THE EDGE)
Jennifer Garner (TV'S ALIAS---FILM—DALLAS BUYER'S CLUB, DRAFT DAY, JUNO, THE INVENTION OF LYING, PEARL HARBOR)

We meet Al Pacino's Danny Collins after a tantalizing glimpse of the promising but petrified young singer. Eric Michael Roy, who plays him on camera, and Davide Donatiello, who does his voice, look and sound uncannily like the real Pacino in his youth, when his tortured-soul realism was Method acting at its most electric. Cut to the older Collins, a perpetually smashed, paunchy sellout dabbling on the spray tan before heading on stage to deliver yet another canned concert. It's a jarring juxtaposition, since Danny's expertly faked enthusiasm and outsized gestures evoke Pacino's jazzed-up speeches in big-budget hokum. But the show Danny puts on for his geriatric fans is only one small piece of a beautifully modulated, gently bemused performance by the actor, who just might be identifying with his character's thirst to regain the artistic purity and passion of his youth.

Danny's journey begins after a scene or two in his coldly luxurious L.A. home. A shot of several beautiful young women in bathing suits lying by the pool at his birthday party while late-middle-aged men in suits eye them from behind their dark glasses nicely sums up why he needs to escape. Then Danny is given a letter John Lennon wrote to him when he was a young man, which was sold to a collector instead of being delivered to him. (The film was inspired by the story of singer Steve Tilston, who got that letter from Lennon in 2005, though the similarities between his story and Danny's end there.) Gobsmacked by the letter's message of encouragement and the phone number Lennon included, Danny wonders what might have happened if he'd gotten it back in 1971 and made the call, then decides it's not too late to return to his authentic self. He promptly dumps his gold-digging fiancée, cancels his tour, and checks into a hotel in New Jersey, where he tries to establish a relationship with Tom (Bobby Cannavale), the son he's never met, while getting back to his songwriting roots.



That all happens within the first few minutes, and the rest turns out as one might expect. But Pacino and his co-stars enliven the tidy narrative progression and resolution. Cannavale and Jennifer Garner, who plays Tom's wife, transcend their worst instincts, the former dropping the exaggerated blue-collar machismo and the latter the dimply desperation to be liked that often curdle their performances. And the soundtrack is as well chosen as the cast. Danny's ludicrous hits (the most popular is called "Hey, Baby Doll") and the Leonard Cohen-ish ballad he composes in the hotel help establish his character, the first telling us all we need to know about the schlock rock charade that is Danny's life as a star, and the second demonstrating that he could have made it on the folksinger circuit if he hadn't let go of that dream. The only other songs in the film are post-Beatles ballads by Lennon, whose lyrics and melodies are so clean and clear that they work even when their subjects dovetail a bit too neatly with the plot.

This movie will rent as well as **GET ON UP, WHIPLASH, STEP UP ALL IN, THE HUMBLING, JERSEY BOYS, CHEF, FADING GIGOLO,** and **SAVING MR. BANKS.**



6/30 1 GET HARD COMEDY

\$71 MILL BO 3121 SCREENS R 100 MINUTES

Will Ferrell (BLADES OF GLORY, STEP BROTHERS, SEMI-PRO, STRANGER THAN FICTION, OLD SCHOOL, ANCHOR MAN)

Kevin Hart (THE WEDDING RINGER, RIDE ALONG, TAKE FIVE, ABOUT LAST NIGHT, GRUDGE MATCH)

You see, our lead, James King (Ferrell) is one of those smug, self-involved wealthy businessmen who walks around his house naked, the better to show the hired help who's boss. He's preparing to marry the daughter of the company president (Craig T. Nelson) and everything seems cool until he is, somehow, convicted of fraud. Sentenced to ten years, James is desperate to learn some prison survival skills. Assuming that the African American man named

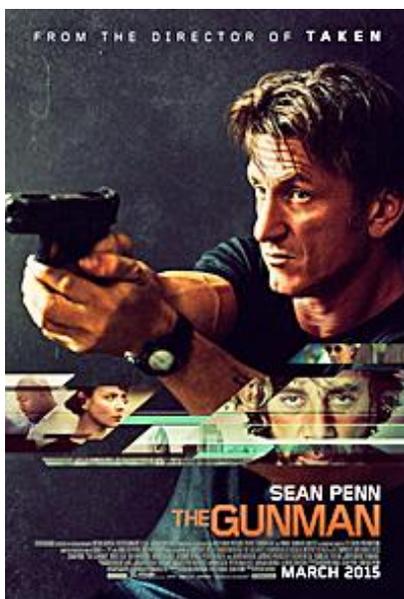
Darnell (Hart) who washes the cars has experience behind bars, he "hires" him to prepare him for life in the slammer.

Darnell is actually a nice guy with no criminal past. He's just a desperate dad trying to raise enough cash to move his family from their unsafe gangbanger neighborhood. So he takes the money and begins James's education. At first, he tries to teach him self defense. When that doesn't work, it's time to instruct the WASP-ish wimp on the fine art of prison sex.

This film really is every Red State Caucasian male's nightmare, a world where he has to give up his freedom (to prison), his manliness (to another man), learn how to defend himself in the (assumed) minority world, and perhaps most importantly, give up his dreams of financial dominance and mingle with the "common" folk.

This will do as well as **DELIVERY MAN, GROWN UPS 2, RIDE ALONG, HORRIBLE BOSSES 2, TAMMY, 22 JUMP STREET** and **NEIGHBORS**.





6/16 2 THE GUNMAN ACTION

\$12 MILL BO 2612 SCREENS R 115 MINUTES

Sean Penn (GANGSTER SQUAD, MILK, ALL THE KING'S MEN, MYSTIC RIVER, 21 GRAMS, I AM SAM)
Idris Elba (TV—LUTHER, THE OFFICE, THE BIG C—FILM—NO GOOD DEED, PACIFIC RIM, PROMETHEUS, THOR)

Javier Bardem (SKYFALL, VICKY CHRISTINA BARCELONA, EAT PRAY LOVE, NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN)

The book upon which this is based, Jean-Patrick Manchette's *The Prone Gunman* was released in 1981. The story deals with a hitman named Martin Terrier, who longs to get out of the racket and marry

his childhood sweetheart. Suddenly, Penn inserts himself into the behind the scenes facets of the film and the screenplay turns into a diatribe on the corruption in the Congo, and how one man—our hero—is meant to pay for the crimes committed against it by the West.

You see, eight years previous, Terrier (Penn, looking buff and bronzed) was working covertly in the region, helping European and American investors recoup as much of their investment as they can while keeping their raping of natural resources hush-hush. Along with his pal Cox (Mark Rylance) and overseer Felix (Javier Bardem), they assassinate the Minister in charge of challenging big business, resulting in chaos. Terrier quickly leave the area, abandoning his girlfriend Annie (Jasmine Trinca) without so much as a goodbye.

Fast forward to today and our lead is back in the region, trying to help out. When he is attacked, he senses his past sins coming back to haunt him. He reconnects with Cox and Felix, and soon discovers that someone is trying to cover up the crime, and the only way to do that is to eliminate everyone involved. Cue the country-hopping as flights to London and Spain leads to Felix and Annie as a married couple, more conflicting clues, and at least one moment where our hero actually keeps his shirt *on*.

Penn plays things uber-serious, trying to sell his wounded warrior shtick with a scowl and a smoke. He's pumped up (he's got quite the biceps for a 55 year old) and handles the pre-stuntman sequences with ease. But we don't care about Terrier. We don't care about his past. We don't care about Annie. We don't care about retribution. All we want is some good clean (violent) escapist fun.

This one will rent as well as **NO GOOD DEED, TAKEN 3, BRICK MANSIONS, THE EQUALIZER, 2 GUNS,** and **TRANSFORMERS: AGE OF EXTINCTION.**



6/30 3 WHILE WE'RE YOUNG COMEDY
\$6 MILL BO 893 SCREENS R 97 MINUTES



Ben Stiller (ZOO LANDER, THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY, TROPIC THUNDER, THE SECRET LIFE OF WALTER MITTY)

Naomi Watts (THE RING 2, ST. VINCENT, 21 GRAMS, MULHOLLAND DRIVE, BIRDMAN)

Shortly after married, childless fortysomethings Josh (Ben Stiller) and Cornelia (Naomi Watts) abandon their friends for a younger, more artisanally inclined couple, *While We're Young* offers a montage of how its characters occupy themselves when left to their own devices. Aspiring documentarian Jamie (Adam Driver) watches VHS cassettes and raps on one of his vintage typewriters, which are mounted like deer heads on a wall of his Harlem apartment. His girlfriend, Darby (Amanda Seyfried), reads a clothbound book. Josh

and Cornelia, meanwhile, remain attached to their devices: He fiddles with his Apple TV as she dons massive headphones and cues up an episode of Radiolab. It's a quick, clever sequence that outlines familiar generational clichés: Aging yuppies embrace isolationist, on-demand technology while young hipsters cultivate a fetish for the prior generation's bygone habits and woebegone advances in consumer electronics.

Josh is a cerebral documentary filmmaker, foraging through the weeds of 10 years of raw footage as he tries to complete the follow-up to his breakout debut. Hopelessly ill-defined by Baumbach's script, Cornelia moonlights as a producer, but she's most notably the daughter of Leslie Breitbart (Charles Grodin), a legendary documentarian. Baumbach introduces the couple as if they were rejects from the final cut of *Friends with Kids*, grimacing cartoonishly as their friends embrace mommy blogs and the broader cult of active city parents. (One father, played by Adam Horowitz, sports a tattoo of his child's sonogram.) Josh and Cornelia rather eagerly ditch their social circle when Jamie and Darby sit in one of Josh's film classes and then invite the couple out for dinner. Jamie wants to start a new film. Darby—another female character we never see at work—produces almond milk ice cream. The elder couple get swept up in the micro-adventures of their beaming, charismatic new friends, joining in on "street beach" parties and voyages through the subway tunnels.



The movie is most consistently amusing when it addresses issues of cultural appropriation and throwback kitsch. Jamie plays Survivor's "Eye of the Tiger" to pump Josh up before a meeting with a potential investor, and Josh quips, "I remember when this song was just bad." When Josh, enamored with Jamie's style, begins to sport a fedora, Baumbach tosses in a hilarious shot-reverse-shot exchange, where the brims of their hats dominate the frame. Eventually, the film's charming young hipsters, expertly rendered both effervescent and vapid by Driver and Seyfried, come to seem morally rudderless schemers, particularly after Jamie co-opts one of Josh's subjects for his upcoming documentary. (He also snatches his editor, and the goodwill of Josh's father-in-law.)

Baumbach tips his cap to Woody Allen's *Crimes and Misdemeanors* in this subplot, and does some appropriating of his home, passing off footage from the Maysles' *Experiment on 114th Street* as the work of his fictional Leslie Breitbart at a dinner honoring the character at Lincoln Center. The dinner, complete with a disruptive and disputed aria by Josh about ethics in documentary filmmaking, is a classically large genre finale set in the very specific world of New York film luminaries (Peter Bogdanovich makes a cameo). The disconnect here is pointed (Baumbach's bid for commercial success culminates in a scene where Josh's private neuroses become embarrassingly public in a room full of his heroes), but its success

relies on a layered, inside-baseball meta-text that's a bit out of step with *While We're Young*'s frustratingly broad observational humor.

This will rent as well as **CAKE, FOXCATCHER, ST. VINCENT, LISTEN UP PHILLIP, BOOK OF LIFE** and **BOYHOOD**.