





## 6/5 DEATH WISH ACTION

\$37 MILL BO 2382 SCREENS R 107 MINUTES  
DVD/COMBO DIGITAL COPY WITH THE COMBO

**Bruce Willis (RED 2, A GOOD DAY TO DIE HARD, NOBODY'S FOOL, THE 6<sup>TH</sup> SENSE, THE EXPENDABLES, LOOPER, PULP FICTION)**

Opening with an audio collage of 911 calls and news reports about Chicago's spike in violence, *Death Wish* lays out an oversimplified snapshot of urban decay as a foundation for the brutality unleashed by one man after inner-city violence spills over into an affluent suburb. It's there that burglars break into the home of surgeon Paul Kersey (Bruce Willis), killing his wife, Lucy (Elisabeth Shue), and leaving their teenage daughter, Jordan (Camila Morrone), in a coma.

Frustrated by the slow police investigation into the crime that turns his life upside down, Paul decides to take the law into his own hands after acquiring an unregistered gun off of a gangbanger who's brought into the E.R. He quickly sets off a media frenzy as he kills random criminals, as well as those connected with Lucy's murder, yet for all the debate kicked up among talk shows about whether the hoodie-wearing man known only as the Grim Reaper is morally justified, the film never doubts Paul's brand of justice.

Paul views tough-looking men of color on the streets with feverish paranoia, even though he has no idea what race his wife's killers are. When he takes to the streets dispensing vigilante justice, only once does the film acknowledge the uneasiness of a hooded white man killing predominantly Latino and black gangbangers and being held up as a folk hero. But that qualm is swiftly brushed away as soon as Paul's actions garner broader public support, even among the bystanders whose lives he recklessly endangers.



Other characters throughout *Death Wish* reinforce Paul's worldview in subliminal ways. Detective Rains (Dean Norris), the lead investigator in Paul's case, spots the widower staring blankly at a wall of unsolved murders and reassures the man that most of the dead were gang members and that his wife's murder is "different." Roth's film never digs into the moral worth of Paul's actions, largely restricting all discussion on the matter to transition scenes depicting "morning zoo" radio hosts superficially debating the merits of the Grim Reaper's actions. Paul himself certainly doesn't question his behavior, save for one moment of pause when he learns that a fellow middle-aged white man died while trying to follow in his vigilante footsteps.

This title will rent as well as **DEN OF THIEVES, MOLLY'S GAME, THE COMMUTER, ONLY THE BRAVE and AMERICAN MADE.**



## 6/5 GRINGO COMEDY

\$7 MILL BO 1736 SCREENS R 105 MINUTES

DVD/COMBO 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX

DIGITAL COPY WITH COMBO

**Charlize Theron (THE CIDER HOUSE RULES, THE ITALIAN JOB, HANCOCK, SNOW WHITE AND THE HUNTSMAN, MADMAX: FURY ROAD)**

*Gringo* initially follows the exploits of Harold Soyika (David Oyelowo), a well-meaning but rather clueless underling at a pharmaceutical company who learns that he's going to be cut loose in the wake of a looming merger. As Harold's higher-ups, Charlize Theron and Joel Edgerton have good chemistry, but the broad humor that largely inhabits their characters' exchanges is of the faux-edgy comic variety, making it hard to tell whether the filmmakers are playing to pharma bros or mocking them: Throughout much of the film, Elaine (Theron) dismissively mispronounces Spanish words and Mexican names, while Richard (Edgerton) perpetually talks shit about his employees.

*Gringo* seems to prop up Richard and Elaine as its villains, but that changes once Harold discovers that his wife (Thandie Newton) is leaving him and, in a moment of desperation, fakes his own kidnapping while on a business trip to Mexico. When a Beatles-loving cartel leader, Black Panther (Carlos Corona), learns that Harold is the key to acquiring the formula for a medical marijuana pill that's taken the south-of-the-border market by storm, a pretend kidnapping becomes all too real and the film, in turn, becomes stuffed to the gills with scoundrels. And before this storyline can build up any steam, the filmmakers introduce a disposable thread involving a fledgling drug mule, Miles (Harry Treadaway), and his cheery, optimistic girlfriend, Sunny (Amanda Seyfried), who repeatedly cross paths with Harold in Mexico.



Anthony Tambakis and Matthew Stone's screenplay is an endless parade of plot twists that are almost all single-mindedly connected to one character or another's sheer vileness or stupidity. And within this tornado of chaotic backstabbing and conspiracies within conspiracies lies Harold, who simply wants what he deserves for always having done the right thing—except, that is, for his scam to extort his company for millions of dollars. That's an indiscretion that the filmmakers initially see as justified, before then conveniently sweeping it under the rug and thrusting Harold in one situation after another that bludgeoningly reinforces that he's always in the moral right.

Kinda fun and silly. It will rent as well as **FATHER FIGURES, DOWNSIZING, JUST GETTING STARTED, HOME AGAIN** and **LOGAN LUCKY.**



**6/5 THE HURRICANE HEIST ACTION**  
\$8 MILL BO 1893 SCREENS PG-13 103 MINUTES  
DVD/BLU RAY

**Toby Kebbell (WAR OF THE PLANET OF THE APES, KONG: SKULL ISLAND, FANTASTIC FOUR, DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES, GOLD)**

After his father was killed by a hurricane with a skull for a face, Will (Toby Kebbell) became a weatherman and vowed to work to end the hurricane menace. His brother Breeze (Ryan Kwanten) fell into a life of parties and alcohol, but has found some steady work of late as a repairman. Will is back

in town to monitor a tropical storm that is closing in, but he soon realizes the storm is picking up strength and could be one of the most devastating hurricanes ever. At the same time, Casey (Maggie Grace) has just delivered a fleet of trucks to the federal treasury, loaded with countless millions in old bills to be shredded. After a generator breaks down, she leaves to track down Breeze, who is contracted to do the repair work, but as soon as she steps out, a heist crew takes control of the compound. As Will tries to persuade his brother to leave town before the storm hits, Casey arrives to take him to the treasury, unaware of the robbery in progress at the time. As these three are drawn into this dangerous heist, they face both the ruthless criminals and a massive hurricane. Can they somehow thwart the heist and survive the crushing devastation of the storm?



The Hurricane Heist is like a bigger budget take on the disaster b movies genre, with no regard to logic or common sense and just a parade of bananas, over the top action and situations. A couple of white trash brothers reunite to battle criminals and mother nature here, with the help of a hot federal agent who is like a one woman militia. The premise is of course beyond ridiculous, but the movie never tries to be smart and seems content to be a bonkers, action driven disaster flick. The pace is brisk and the wait between hilarious, implausible action scenes is minimal, plus the terrible dialogue and over the top performances keep things fun. Maggie Grace is a competent lead and tries to keep a straight face here, while Toby Kebbell is barely conscious and Ryan Kwanten delivers a capable effort as total white trash. Ralph Ineson is a fun, campy villain, but the most memorable performance here to me was from Melissa Bolona. She is such an odd choice to play a high level hacker and she is so plastic in her presence, she could often be mistaken for a Real Doll. Her soulless eyes and dead inside presence are so much fun here, I just wish she had more scenes. The Hurricane Heist is big, dumb, campy fun, fans of b movie disaster flicks will appreciate this one.



This one will rent as well as **ONLY THE BRAVE, AMERICAN ASSASSIN, LOGAN LUCKY, BAYWATCH, and JOHN WICK 2.**



## 6/5 THOROUGHBREDS COMEDY

\$5 MILL BO 1283 SCREENS R

92 MINUTES DVD/COMBO DIGITAL COPY WITH THE COMBO 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX

### **Anya Taylor-Joy (THE SECRET OF MARROWBONE, SPLIT, BARRY)**

A blackly comic study of the sociopathy of the upper crust, writer-director Cory Finley's directorial debut, *Thoroughbreds*, centers on the intense friendship between two seriously messed up young women. Creepily expressionless and off-puttingly blunt, Amanda (Olivia Cooke) is, in her own words, "not a bad person," she simply has no internal emotion. That trait comes in handy when Amanda takes it upon herself to euthanize one of her ponies, a deed which she can describe in nauseatingly grisly detail without batting an eye. By comparison, tight-laced boarding-school girl Lily (Anya Taylor-Joy) may seem like the model of decency, but as she becomes more and more consumed by her resentment of her dickish stepfather, Mark (Paul Sparks), her prim and proper façade falls away to reveal the deep-seated dishonesty, narcissism, and ruthlessness lurking beneath the surface.

Estranged childhood friends who haven't seen each other in years, the girls reconnect over SAT tutoring sessions at Lily's palatial mansion. Amanda's brusque manner at first chafes against her erstwhile companion's civility, but Lily soon becomes fascinated by Amanda's incisiveness, as well as her knack for mimicking human emotions, including a well-rehearsed method for convincingly pretending to cry. So different in their manner, the girls share one particular trait—a dearth of empathy—that will eventually send their relationship down a dark path: namely, a plot to kill Mark.



Throughout, Finley cleverly alters our perceptions of Lily and Amanda, gradually shifting our allegiances from one girl to the other while never betraying the characters' distinctly peculiar personalities. The duo's increasingly malign behavior grows organically from their poisonous relationship, in which Lily's selfishness finds reinforcement in Amanda's cold rationality. Their odd-couple friendship feels natural—even inevitable—thanks to Cooke and Taylor-Joy's prickly chemistry. Cooke delivers Amanda's tart little truth bombs with unflappable deadpan finesse, while Taylor-Joy ably carries the emotional weight of the film, bringing an authenticity to Lily's escalating moral crisis that lends the plot's machinations a sense of poignancy.



Your customers who rented **ALL THE MONEY IN THE WORLD, DEN OF THIEVES, LBJ, SHAPE OF WATER, SNOWMAN, and LADY BIRD.**



**6/5 A WRINKLE IN TIME** FAMILY \$93 MILL BO  
 3564 SCREENS PG 109 MINUTES DVD/COMBO  
 DIGITAL COPY WITH COMBO

**Reese Witherspoon (TV—BIG LITTLE LIES—FILM—WALK THE LINE, INHERENT VICE, MUD, LEGALLY BLONDE, AMERICAN PSYCHO, LEGALLY BLONDE 2, JUST LIKE HEAVEN)**

**Oprah Winfrey (SELMA, LEE DANIELS' THE BUTLER, NATIVE SUN, THE COLOR PURPLE)**

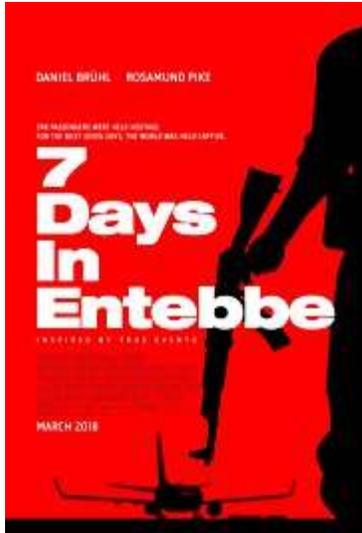
Ava DuVernay's adaptation of Madeleine L'Engle's 1962 sci-fi novel *A Wrinkle in Time* immediately establishes a wonky pace. The film sets up the strong bond between a NASA-employed theoretical physicist, Alex Murry (Chris Pine), and his inquisitive daughter, Meg (Storm Reid), before giving a cursory view of Alex's dreams of traveling light years using only the power of the mind's connection with the universe. Then, the story lurches ahead four years after Alex's sudden disappearance to find Meg floundering in hostility, and the film bogs itself down in repetitive scenes of teenage alienation.

Meg is only shaken out of her inertia by the arrival of three mysterious and powerful beings—Mrs. Which (Oprah Winfrey), Mrs. Whatsit (Reese Witherspoon), and Mrs. Who (Mindy Kaling)—who bring news of Alex's success at galactic travel and a plan to find and recruit him for a battle against an all-powerful evil entity known as It. Soon, the beings are guiding Meg, her preternaturally intelligent kid brother, Charles Wallace (Deric McCabe), and her friendly classmate, Calvin (Levi Miller), through space using a process called tesserer, flinging them across galaxies and worlds in search of Alex.



*A Wrinkle in Time* is fundamentally a story of youth overcoming the self-doubt that comes with inexperience, and its strongest moments are largely played out in the myriad complexities of Reid's performance as Meg. Where the film's plot stumbles and jerks along, Meg is laser-focused. DuVernay captures the irrepressible curiosity and hope buried beneath the many layers of Meg's anxiety and self-loathing from the moment the guides arrive in the girl's yard, and close-ups regularly push in on the conflict between doubt and conviction that plays out on Meg's face. The film may involve the instant movement among unfathomable distances and the shattered limits of space and time, but it's only Meg who feels multidimensional, her emotional journey more mesmerizing than any of the film's special effects.

This will easily rent as well as **THE GREATEST SHOWMAN, PADDINGTON 2, FERDINAND, COCO, and NUT JOB 2.**



**6/12 7 DAYS IN ENTEBBE ACTION**  
**\$5 MILL BO 1639 SCREENS PG-13 107 MINUTES**  
**DVD/COMBO 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX**  
**DIGITAL COPY WITH THE COMBO**

**Rosamund Pike (HOSTILES, RETURN TO SENDER, GONE GIRL, JACK REACHER, THE DEVIL YOU MAY KNOW, WRATH OF THE TITANS)**

The film immediately begins with German bookseller Wilfried Böse (Daniel Brühl) and fellow Revolutionary Cells member Brigitte Kuhn (Rosamund Pike) taking over a plane traveling from Tel Aviv to Paris (by way of Athens), alongside two Palestinian terrorists, with the intention of securing the release for over 50 Palestinian “freedom fighters” locked up in Israel and four other countries. The captors eventually find safe haven in

Entebbe, Uganda under the regime of His Excellency General Idi Amin Dada (Nonso Anozie, supplying more comic relief than menace). The terrorists make a point of separating the Israeli passengers from the gentiles—a condition of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (backers of the operation) that becomes an immediate problem for Böse, well aware of how it looks for Germans to be threatening Jews with summary execution.

The film jumps between the terrorist-hostage standoff and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin’s (Lior Ashkenazi) cabinet deliberations, and nearly every exchange of dialogue sounds like sparring blocks of Wikipedia-like information, with career Israeli politicians summarizing the past few years’ worth of events to each other for a presumptively ignorant audience. Despite these oversimplifications, the tit for tat between Rabin and his hardliner gadfly, Defense Minister Shimon Peres (Eddie Marsan), isn’t uninteresting, as it constantly racks focus back to the political expenditure of negotiating—or even *appearing* to negotiate—with terrorists in the eyes of the media.



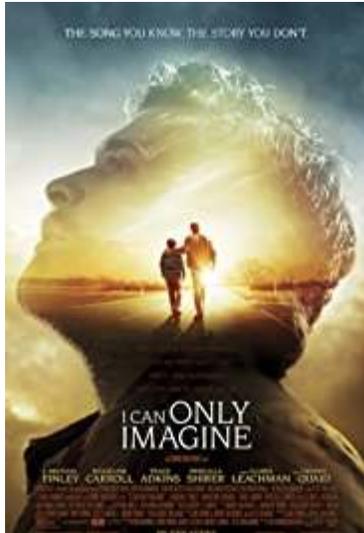
Playing the more devout anti-Israeli terrorist, Pike is convincing enough as Kuhn, and the case could be made that the Revolutionary Cells member—barking commands, popping amphetamines, slowly losing her grip on reality—is the sole tragic protagonist on the terrorists’ side, as Brühl is given little to do but furrow his brow and spew RAF-era Radical Theory for Dummies.

As the Israelis begin to decide on a course of action, a third plotline opens up concerning an Israel Defense Forces commander, Zeev Hirsch (Ben Schnetzer), and his bohemian girlfriend, Sarah (Zina Zinchenko), who’s upset that Zeev has to report to duty instead of seeing her dance recital (performed by the real-life Batsheva Dance Company). Sarah’s insistence that Zeev is in a position to choose between the mission and attending her concert makes for a particularly maddening through line, as this oversimplified disagreement is all the film will tell us about these two characters.



Finally, Rabin initiates Operation Thunderbolt, wherein a 29-man IDF unit, led by the current prime minister’s brother, Yonatan “Yoni” Netanyahu (Angel Bonnani), raided the Entebbe airport and saved the hostages. This high-stakes operation ought to at least provide a high-octane payoff (Netanyahu was the lone IDF soldier killed, and the film probably wouldn’t exist if the raid had ended in failure). Padilha instead ends up delivering what appears to be an operatic salute to the IDF, crosscutting the raid with Sarah’s performance back in Tel Aviv and aligning the troops’ efficiency with the choreography of limber bodies in tandem—and the widespread applause that follows.

This will rent as well as **WINCHESTER, RED SPARROW, 15:17 TO PARIS, ACT OF VIOLENCE, THE FOREIGNER, and THE HITMAN’S BODYGUARD.**



**6/12 I CAN ONLY IMAGINE DRAMA**  
\$82 MILL BO 2847 SCREENS PG 110 MINUTES  
DVD/COMBO WITH DIGITAL COPY

**Dennis Quaid (TV—AMERICAN CRIME STORY, VEGAS---  
FILM--- THE ROOKIE, A DOGS PURPOSE, SILVERADO,  
FREQUENCY, ANY GIVEN SUNDAY, SWITCHBACK,  
THE BIG EASY)**

The film tells the true life story of Bart Millard, lead singer of the band Mercy Me and author of the well known song I Can Only Imagine. The song which is the bestselling Christian song of all time, the song that brought hope to so many people and now the powerful story behind that song is told.

Bart Millard found faith at a young age, but with a troubled home life and an abusive dad life wasn't easy for him. In hopes of connected with his father, he turned American football but a career-ending injury set Bart on a musical pathway. Bart starts chasing a dream while running from his father and Shannon, his childhood sweetheart. Hitting the road in an old tour bus with his new band MercyMe, they embark on a journey none of them could ever have imagined.

The film is well directed, produced and beautifully shot which complements the power of the story. This is a story of broken relationships, of hope, of forgiveness and redemption. The story is incredibly brought to life by the cast, who all seem

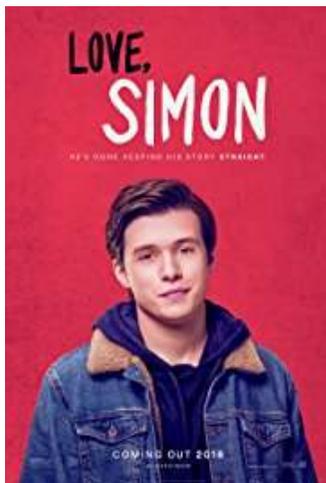


perfect for their roles, especially J. Michael Finley and Dennis Quaid who play Bart and his father, their solid performance really brings across the hurt, the pain and the raw emotion of their broken relationship, ultimate reconciliation and redemption, it is hard, it is emotional but it brings hope.

I Can Only Imagine is an extremely powerful movie of forgiveness. The story behind the song really brings across the real life changing message of forgiveness, hope and redemption that only Jesus can offer. This powerful testimony of the song that brought hope to millions, will bring again hope to millions in this movie.

This one will rent as well as **LADY BIRD, THE POST, SHAPE OF WATER, THE FLORIDA PROJECT, THE BIG SICK.**





## 6/12 LOVE SIMON DRAMA

\$41 MILL BO 2984 SCREENS PG-13 110 MINUTES  
DVD/COMBO 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX  
DIGITAL COPY WITH THE COMBO

**Nick Robinson (JURASSIC WORLD, KRYSTAL, THE 5<sup>TH</sup> WAVE, EVERYTHING EVERYTHING, BEING CHARLIE)**

Simon (Nick Robinson) is a high school senior with a great group of friends and a loving family. He also happens to be gay, and when an anonymous online post by one of his classmates reveals that the closet is at least big enough for two, he begins an increasingly intimate correspondence that leads to him falling in love with the other boy—known only as Blue—via email, without knowing if the two of them have ever actually met in real life. Until now, Simon's fear of change and the effort to keep everything just the same as it's always been has led him to deny himself available pleasures that seemingly everyone else takes for granted. But as he grows closer to Blue through their emails, Simon begins looking for signs of him in the real world based on clues from their exchanges, becoming open to the prospect that any cute boy he meets might be the object of his desire, making himself vulnerable to possibilities he hadn't previously allowed himself to imagine.

Community has always been a huge part of the queer experience, and it's telling that Simon only begins his coming-out journey after he discovers that someone else in his daily life is going through the same thing. The online romance and subsequent guessing game happily consume his thoughts until an opportunistic classmate, Martin (Logan Miller), discovers Simon's secret after he forgets to log out of Gmail on a public computer. Martin happens to be romantically interested in one of Simon's friends, Abby (Alexandra Shipp), and he threatens to release screenshots of Simon's correspondence with Blue if Simon doesn't help him get closer to her. What follows is a series of small betrayals on Simon's part as the struggle to remain in the closet wreaks havoc on his friendships. When the screenshots inevitably get leaked, Simon's various white lies and sloppily orchestrated diversions also come to the surface, and he must pick up the remaining pieces of the carefully constructed outward persona that he's been so desperate to maintain.



After Simon finally comes out to his parents, Jack (Josh Duhamel) and Emily (Jennifer Garner), his goofy and tearful father offers to help him set up a Grindr account, which he believes is the “Facebook for gay people.” The joke implies a basic knowledge of the existence of gay culture and its exclusive spaces—online or otherwise—but only in relationship to something recognizable, and thus the assumptions it's based on are wildly off the mark. But it also defines the conundrum of the closet. The idea that we must trade in Facebook for Grindr after announcing ourselves as gay is ludicrous, but it also comes close to defining the core of Simon's reluctance to come out. Unlike the only other out kid at school, Ethan (Clark Moore), who's flamboyantly queer and all too happy to take down his haters with hilariously scathing one-liners, Simon is “just like us,” as the opening voiceover heartbreakingly insists (before we learn that the words are actually his first missive to Blue). *Love, Simon's* protagonist doesn't define himself by his difference—quite the opposite, actually—and he mistakenly believes that becoming who he really is means giving up who he used to be.

Fully embracing the tropes of high school films—school dances, Friday-night football games, house parties where everyone drinks cheap beer out of red

Solo cups—*Love, Simon* is prepared to offer the conventional pleasures associated with its genre. But it's also more radical than just another teenage love story. It's become almost ubiquitous—especially in our immediately post-Adam Rippon moment—for queer people from older generations to reimagine our own younger closeted selves and achingly wonder how different our lives would have been if we had seen this particular film, heard that particular song, or watched that particular figure skater's sassy short program at just the right age, when the world seemed like it didn't have enough space for us to ever live happily inside it. And there's no doubt that *Love, Simon* is going to save someone's life. But to hear Simon come out—again and again, to various people, accidentally or not—is also to hear the familiar story told in a new way. You could say that characters like Simon and their urge to assimilate are straight-washing queer narratives, but his refusal to cop to the hallmarks of the coming-out story actually allows for a more nuanced exploration of what it means to declare an identity in today's world.

Simon eventually posts his coming-out story in his own words even after everyone already knows the truth about his sexuality, which is partly a last-ditch effort to declare his love for Blue—whose own path out of the closet remains unpaved—but also becomes a rallying cry for anyone who fears that the secrets they keep about themselves are what must eventually define them. Many of us were ever so grateful to shed the skin of our former selves when we finally stepped into the light, but that's sometimes too simple of a way to say that we didn't love the version of ourselves who thought we deserved to live in the dark. Simon spends almost the entirety of Berlanti's film clinging to the skin that he's intuited will disappear once everyone knows his secret, but he ultimately learns that skin works in layers, each one building upon the next and adding depth to what was already there before. And the applause, when he finally gets the guy, is deafening.

This will easily rent as well as **MOLLY'S GAME, SHAPE OF WATER, CALL ME BY YOUR NAME, WONDER, and WIND RIVER.**



**6/12 SHERLOCK GNOMES FAMILY**  
**\$39 MILL BO 2763 SCREENS PG 88 MINUTES**  
**DVD/COMBO DIGITAL COPY WITH THE COMBO**

Gnomeo, Juliet, and all of their garden gnome friends have just been uprooted and moved to London, but their new garden isn't as glamorous as expected. The garden has fallen into disrepair and in need of some serious renovations, which Gnomeo and Juliet will be in charge of. This is because their parents have decided to retire and they've chosen the loving couple to take over as the garden's leaders. Juliet embraces her new position and dives in headfirst, though her dedication to the garden has left Gnomeo feeling a little neglected. When he ventures out to secure a beautiful orchid for the garden, she has to come rescue him and while they're gone, all of their fellow gnomes are kidnapped. As it turns out, this is a pattern all over London and Sherlock Gnomes is already on the case. He and Watson are joined by Gnomeo and Juliet, but can even this group solve such a head scratching mystery?

A sequel to Gnomeo and Juliet, Sherlock Gnomes was saddled with a horrible trailer, but turns out to be a solid animated feature. The movie keeps the same brisk, light tone as the original and features an impressive lineup of voice talent to bring the colorful gnomes to life. The narrative is good, with some nice detective story elements, as well as social lessons, but keeps the focus on entertainment, so it is never heavy handed. Most of the mysteries are cracked via Sherlock's imposing skills of deduction, but that's to be expected and plays into the story, when he is able to crack any case, but misses the obvious clues about his own behavior. The pace is brisk and the humor is consistent, so it never feels slow or drawn out in the least. The sense of humor is broad, with a lot of pratfalls and silly jokes, as well as some pop culture references and some veiled gags for the adults to appreciate. The mystery is the main thread, but a few smaller stories unfold as well, from a gnome trying to get the courage to confess his feelings to Mankini's constant needs to twerk, so there's enough going on to keep even younger viewers interested. I wouldn't rank Sherlock Gnomes with the top tier of animated features, but it is a solid, well crafted movie.



This will rent as well as **LEAP!**, **PADDINGTON 2**, **THE STAR**, **MY LITTLE PONY** and **THE LEGO NINJADO MOVIE**.



## 6/12 THE STRANGERS: PREY AT NIGHT

HORROR

\$27 MILL BO 2798 SCREENS R 95 MINUTES

DVD/COMBO 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX

DIGITAL COPY WITH COMBO

### Christina Hendricks (ZOO LANDER 2, CANDY JAR, BAD SANTA 2, FIST FIGHT)

Opening with the pulsing synth lines of Kim Wilde's "Kids in America," Johannes Roberts's *The Strangers: Prey at Night* announces itself as a looser, bouncier, more self-consciously frivolous effort than its now decade-old predecessor. The three masked psychopaths from *The Strangers* are once again torturing and killing a group of random white people in a secluded locale, but Roberts reconfigures the elements of Bryan Bertino's po-faced home-invasion thriller into a slick retro-style slasher: upping the body count, diversifying the methods of violence, and imbuing the whole thing with an aura of wry self-awareness. The result is a film with a fair bit of style but nothing much on its mind, content to deliver a few jumpy thrills before slinking away into the night like one of its murderous marauders.

Things get off to a start as Roberts spends time establishing bland characters who exist solely to be terrorized relentlessly for the rest of the film. Kinsey (Bailee Madison) is a sullen goth girl whose concerned parents, Cindy and Mike (Christina Hendricks and Martin Henderson), are shipping her off to boarding school. Kinsey's moodiness and unpredictability have put a strain on her family, including her jock brother, Luke (Lewis Pullman), who alternates between antagonizing her and being tasked by their parents with calming her down. On the long drive to Kinsey's new school, the family stops for the night at a mobile-home park owned by Kinsey's aunt and uncle, and where the girl continues to act glum and pouty until Dollface (Emma Bellomy), Pin-up Girl (Lea Enslin), and the Man in the Mask (Damian Maffei) show up to inflict a night of violence and terror that has a way of putting her adolescent angst into perspective.

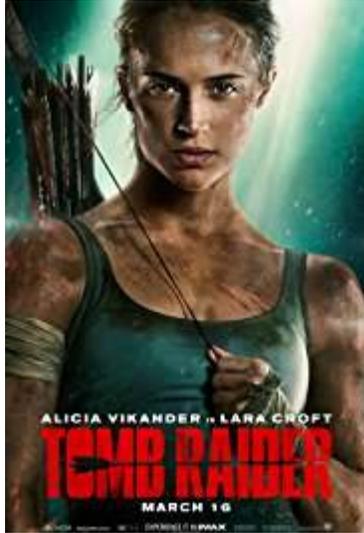
Featuring not one but two memorable set pieces scored to Jim Steinman-penned power ballads ("Total Eclipse of the Heart" and "Making Love Out of Nothing at All"), *Prey at Night* demonstrates a flair for epic, irony-tinged bloodshed. In one of the film's most striking scenes, the Man in the Mask walks over to a crashed vehicle in which one of the family members is trapped, casually plops down in the passenger seat, sits still interminably, fiddles around with the radio dial until he finds an acceptable '80s pop hit, and then, and only then, proceeds to get his brutality on. Drawing influence from the horror classics of the 1970s and '80s, Roberts's visual palette employs slow zooms and long, languorous tracking shots. The film's menacing vehicular action specifically echoes John Carpenter's *Christine*, while the Man in the Mask's inscrutability, dogged determination, and ill-fitting suit unmistakably recalls *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*'s Leatherface.



In another (possibly unintentional) nod to the slashers of old, the characters here behave in exactly the sort of bumbling, nonsensical way that was called out by *Scream* over two decades ago: They amble slowly toward obvious danger, fail to kill a villain when they have a clear chance, and run down the middle of the street even though a car is chasing them. Is this self-conscious homage or simply bad writing? It's a testament to *Prey at Night*'s slickly enjoyable lack of seriousness that the answer scarcely seems to matter.

This will rent as well as **INSIDIOUS: THE LAST KEY, FRIEND REQUEST, IT, JIGSAW and MOTHER.**





**6/12 TOMB RAIDER** SCI FI/ACTION  
\$58 MILL BO 2976 SCREENS **PG-13** 118 MINUTES  
DVD/COMBO 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX  
DIGITAL COPY WITH COMBO

**Alicia Vikander (SUBMERGENCE, TULIP FLOWER, JASON BOURNE, THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS, BURNT)**

Lara Croft (Alicia Vikander), who was once an untested but nonetheless capable survivalist motivated by the desire to clear her explorer family's disgraced name and win back its fortune. Here, she's more of a noble-hearted trust-fund kid, unwilling to collect on her inheritance if it means accepting the death of her long-missing father, Richard (Dominic West). We meet her as a bike courier struggling to make ends meet, even though billions of dollars await her at the stroke of a pen—meaning that this budding action hero is pretty much the subject of Pulp's "Common People." Once she receives a puzzle pointing toward Richard's last known whereabouts, Lara morphs into a shockingly competent adventurer, getting herself to Hong Kong and commissioning a boat captain, Lu Ren (Daniel Wu), to take her to a mysterious and treacherous Japanese island using Richard's cryptic coordinates. Now, if only Richard didn't direly warn of cursed treasure.

Lara and Lu make it to the island under a hellacious storm, only to be captured by Matias (Walton Goggins), who leads a group of mercenaries hired by Trinity, a clandestine, ancient order that seeks supernatural artifacts. But Trinity's imposing power is instantly blunted by how swiftly Lara proves to be as capable a killer as she does a puzzle-solving explorer. The speed of her ascent into a casual, unemotional action star loses the game's best attribute: that of the character's moral descent from feeling trauma over necessary violence to battle-hardened calm. Even Lara's first kill, a brutal close-quarters fight that ends with her frantically drowning a man in mud, barely elicits an emotional response from her, and in no time she's firing arrows into well-trained combatants as if she'd been doing this her whole life.



This new *Tomb Raider* isn't an adaptation of a video game so much as an adaptation of a video game's tutorial level.

Above all, everything in *Tomb Raider* is conspicuously functional. The film is relentlessly focused on giving Lara a background for all of her actions, using the opening M.M.A. practice to set up a later escape from a sleeper hold and providing flashbacks of a child Lara taking archery to establish her deadly accuracy with a bow. Then there are moments that translate video-game mechanics so literally that we see Lara do menial game tasks like use exposed beams as makeshift monkey bars for crossing gaps. This isn't an adaptation of a video game so much as an adaptation of a video game's tutorial level, and one that's capped by a climax that's as much about Lara discovering the climbing axe she uses throughout the game as it is dealing with the Japanese island's deepest secret.

This will rent as well as **MAZE RUNNER: THE DEATH CURE, THOR: RAGNORAK, JUMANJI: WAITING FOR THE JUNGLE, AMERICAN MADE** and **BLADE RUNNER 2049**.



**6/19 MIDNIGHT SUN DRAMA \$11 MILL BO**  
**1934 SCREENS PG-13 98 MINUTES**  
**DVD/COMBO DIGITAL COPY WITH THE COMBO**  
**28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX**

**Patrick Schwarzenegger (GROWN UP 2, STUCK IN LOVE, THE BENCHWARMERS)**

The film's whole-hog embrace of melodrama stems from the 17-year-old Katie (Bella Thorne) suffering from xeroderma pigmentosum, a rare skin disease that makes ultraviolet light her kryptonite and forces her to stay indoors during the day, and to be home-schooled by her amusing but overly cautious father (Rob Riggle). But judging from the screenplay's series of absurd coincidences and contrived circumstances, Katie also appears to be dealing with another genetic predisposition, one that makes everyone fall instantly in love with her on the spot, and in spite of her lack of social graces.

At least her friendship with Morgan (Quinn Shephard), who as a child randomly showed up at the outcast Katie's doorstep and demanded to be her friend, feels more authentic than her burgeoning romance with Charlie (Patrick Schwarzenegger), their high school's star athlete. Charlie's immediate infatuation with Katie, who repeatedly stumbles over her words and trips over herself as she runs away from him, rings false at nearly every turn. But before the audience can even question why the popular and hunky Charlie would actively pursue Katie, or why she would continue to keep him in the dark about her very serious illness once they start dating, the two are head over heels in love, and just in time to make each other's personal dreams come true before things take an inevitable turn for the worse.

*Midnight Sun's* tone vacillates so jarringly between corny, broad humor and unrestrained treacle that it becomes nearly impossible to track any remotely realistic emotional arcs up on the screen. Rather than tug at the heartstrings, Speer yanks at them, and way before the film's climax, the bevy of Y.A. clichés have piled to a height that's as staggering as it is cringe-inducing. Although Riggle should be commended for bringing a tender humanity to an underwritten part, the other actors aren't so resourceful. But as the screenplay never provides their characters with depth or complexity, it's hardly surprising that these actors are left feeling stranded, half-heartedly going through alternately wooden and over-the-top motions.





**6/19 PACIFIC RIM: UPRISING** SCI/FI/ACTION  
\$61 MILL BO 2894 SCREENS **PG-13**  
DVD/COMBO 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX  
DIGITAL COPY WITH THE COMBO

**Scott Eastwood (SUICIDE SQUAD, THE FATE OF THE FURIOUS, SNOWDEN, THE LONGEST RIDE, FURY, TROUBLE WITH THE CURVE)**

Like *Pacific Rim*, the sequel reflects anime's long tradition of casting young people as heroes, but it goes further by putting teens as well as young adults inside the Jaegers. Even the instructors are young, with Jake Pentecost (John Boyega), son of Stacker from the first film, pressed into service to help a group of cadets learn how to operate a bunch of Jaegers that were kept active during peacetime. These characters exude a wide-eyed reverence for the Jaegers at their training facility and have an air of forced confidence about them, and like so many young people, they speak bluntly and often awkwardly. Perhaps intentionally, the actors' clunky but amusing line readings recall the offbeat and hurried cadences of English dubs of Japanese anime series, indirectly granting *Pacific Rim Uprising* another tie to its genre influences.

Despite del Toro's reputation for monster-making, the Kaiju of *Pacific Rim* were curiously indistinct figures that blended together in giant blots of gray with pulsing blue mouths. In *Pacific Rim Uprising*, a seemingly Kaiju-free world erupts into hell when genetically modified remnants of alien tissue are placed into drone Jaegers, resulting in massive, terrifying, and unclassifiable cross-breeds of metal and flesh. This scenario is right out of *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, and the sight of robots suddenly growing claws and gushing blood is the DeKnight film's most perverse and nightmarish delight.

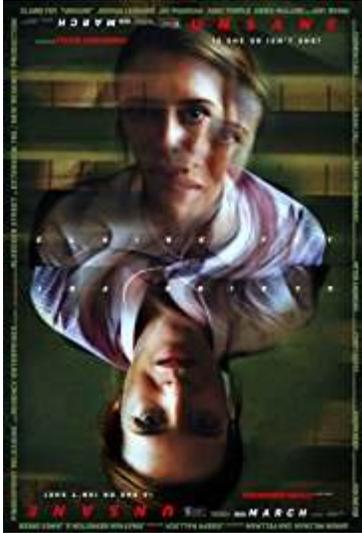


The compelling nuances of the creature designs, however, are frequently lost amid the cacophony of the action, and, in effect, *Pacific Rim Uprising* ends up perversely doubling down on the first film's issues, with the Kaijus seeming undistinguishable from one another at various points. But del Toro's original, whose tender affection for its heroes contrasted almost violently with the incalculable collateral damage caused by the film's Kaiju attacks, was tonally dissonant in ways that *Pacific Rim Uprising* is not. Here, the general level of indifference to characters beyond script function oddly works in the film's favor, allowing it to slip more easily into the casual horror of watching the protagonists wreck as much havoc as the Kaiju, as in our heroes' use of gravity weapons to yank entire skyscrapers down onto their foes.

The focus this time is very much on such skirmishes, sparing the actors from having to do more than fulfilling their basic duties. Boyega's irrepressible charisma ensures that Jake is the most compelling figure here, as the actor balances self-centered sarcasm and rallying oratory without contradiction. By comparison, Scott Eastwood is completely stilted as Jake's partner, Nate, unconvincingly aping his father Clint's trademark gruff demeanor to no particular end. The younger actors are largely interchangeable, the only standout being Cailee Spaeny, who brings a defensive vulnerability to Amara, a street urchin and mechanical whiz. The relative anonymity of the supporting cast compounds the characters' expendability, giving the film a bleak edge that's only occasionally counterbalanced by a few obligatory gestures toward hope. The film never truly explores this cynical subtext, but its presence makes *Pacific Rim Uprising* a more fascinating, unpredictable creation than its predecessor, and one that sticks longer in the mind.



This will rent as well as **INSIDIOUS, JUSTICE LEAGUE, MAZE RUNNER: THE DEATH CURE, AMERICAN MADE** and **BLADE RUNNER 2049**.



## 6/19 UNSANE HORROR

\$9 MILL BO 1749 SCREENS R 98 MINUTES  
DVD/COMBO DIGITAL COPY WITH THE COMBO 28  
DAYS BEFORE REDBOX

**Clair Foy (TV—THE CROWN, WOLF HALL—FILM—  
BREATHE, THE LADY IN THE VAN, ROSEWATER)**

Having been the victim of a stalker, a twentysomething financial analyst, Sawyer Valentini (Claire Foy), seeks counseling at a treatment center in suburban Pennsylvania. While meeting with a therapist, she mentions having had thoughts of self-harm in the past, then fills out what appears to be a battery of routine paperwork—and suddenly finds herself committed against her will. Earlier in the film, Sawyer is introduced walking to her office, where she confidently tells an irate client that “Taking your

frustration out on me will not alter the result”—a line that serves as foreshadowing, and a clue to the film’s fine-grained critique of contemporary American life.

*Unsane* proceeds from a real-life clause, commonly deployed, whereby you can be committed involuntarily if you’ve been identified as “a danger to yourself and others.” Hence, every attempt Sawyer makes to escape leads to stonewalling from the hospital staff, and defending herself against her genuinely crazy fellow inmates results in another strike on her record, extending the length of her custody.

One patient in treatment for opioid addiction, Nate (Jay Pharoah), recognizes Sawyer’s lucidity, and breaks down the commitment pipeline for her: “They got beds, you got insurance.” The last few decades’ mushrooming pool of part-time, easy-hire workers in the healthcare industry also doesn’t go unmissed by the filmmakers: Soon, Sawyer begins to suspect that her former stalker, David (Joshua Leonard), has infiltrated the facility posing as one of the staff under the name of “George Shaw” (as in the playwright of *Pygmalion*). But the film fudges the line between Sawyer’s constant anxiety, fueled by the pills she has to take and ignored by patients and aides alike, and the real possibility that David is closing in on her.



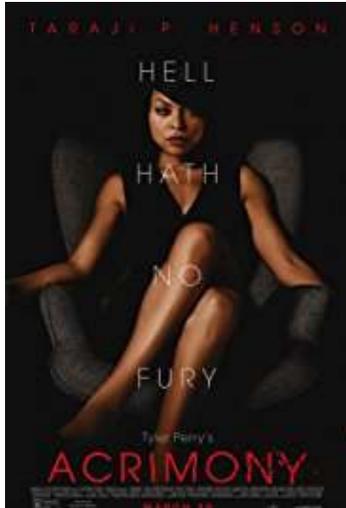
Beyond the aforementioned excoriation of legal loopholes and health care under neoliberalism—it’s not for nothing that Sawyer skips over the fine print of her intake forms—the story becomes a cat-and-mouse game within padded walls, closer to a 1970s giallo than an intimate psychodrama. Naturally, David’s unrequited obsession with Sawyer turns into something much darker. Just as Soderbergh detailed outbreaks of bad information across the internet in *Contagion* and the uncanny power of pharmaceutical lobbies in *Side Effects*, *Unsane* becomes a worst-case-scenario study in male possessiveness in our era of technological overkill. (“Think of your cellphone as the enemy,” says a detective to Sawyer in regard to how to streamline her life to avoid David.)



Throughout, Foy gamely inhabits all the freak-outs and breakdowns necessitated by a role like this. It’s revealed that Sawyer moved from Massachusetts to escape David, and while she must defend herself with balled fists and shrewd maneuvers, her actual damage from David’s obsession remains untreated—giving the story an undergirding, if underexplored, melancholy. A quick intervention from her bored, well-heeled boomer mom (Amy Irving) both materializes and is pacified in such a rush that it’s obviously plot stuffing for a third-act reveal that feels as entertaining

as it does rushed, plunging *Unsane* further into midnight-movie terrain.

This will rent as nicely as **ANNIHILATION, HAPPY DEATH DAY, JIGSAW, ANNABELLE: CREATION, and IT COMES AT NIGHT.**



**6/26 ACRIMONY DRAMA**  
\$43 MILL BO 2487 SCREENS **R** 120 MINUTES  
DVD/BLU RAY

**Taraji P. Henson (TV---EMPIRE—FILM—PROUD MARY, HIDDEN FIGURES, NO GOOD DEED, THINK LIKE A MAN TOO)**

While sitting in a courtroom, Melinda is staring daggers at Diana, her ex's new fiancée. After harassing them for months, the judge decides to strengthen their current restraining order and ordering her to go to anger management counseling. The judge hopes this will bring new light to Melinda's circumstance and calm the rage inside of her. As she sits in the counselor's office, she recounts meeting, loving, and hating her ex Robert. Through an affair, a car crash, and lost potential, she has stood by his side. She was there for every step up and every downfall. She feels she has sacrificed her body, money, and mind for this relationship. So when Robert reaps the rewards after years of struggle, she believes she is due. However, one decision leaves Melinda out in the cold and Diana by his side.



Acrimony is told in 6 chapters (Acrimony, Sunder, Revail, Bewail, Deranged, and Inexorable). So, get ready to talk to the screen because you are furious with every decision Melinda makes in each chapter. She states that her rage is slow and when she erupts, she is 100% dangerous. She makes this evident at the very beginning of their relationship, but Robert stays. Robert has a wandering eye with empty pockets and his hand out. However, he makes this know at the beginning of the relationship, but Melinda stays. Unlike most relationship movies, this is a movie where everyone is wrong. Even when they both try to get it right, it's at the wrong time. This is one to watch and discuss.



This will rent as well as **FIFTY SHADES FREE, I TONYA, ROMAN J. ESQUIRE, ESQ., MARSHALL, BABY DRIVER and GIRLS NIGHT.**



### 6/26 BLOCKERS COMEDY

**\$58 MILL BO 3418 SCREENS R 102 MINUTES DVD/COMBO 28 DAYS  
BEFORE REDBOX DIGITAL COPY WITH THE COMBO**

#### **John Cena (DADDY'S HOME2, THE WALL, SISTERS, TRAINWRECK, HOME AGAIN)**

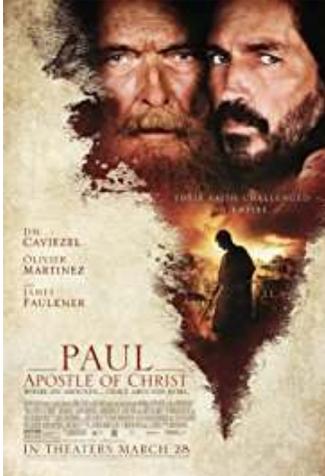
From Bob Clark's *Porky's* to Greg Mottola's *Superbad*, Hollywood has consistently privileged the spectacle of male teenage horniness. The archetypal high school sex comedy often sees a small group of likable, somewhat nerdy boys on an epic quest to get laid, with the female characters treated more as prizes to be won than as sexual beings in their own right. These films are one piece of a broader culture that relentlessly sexualizes young women while at the same time idealizing their purity and innocence.

It's to the credit of Kay Cannon's *Blockers* that it does neither, instead confronting these hypocritical narratives head-on. The film essentially dramatizes the conflict between feminine sexual urges and puritanical social disapproval by pitting three high school seniors—Julie (Kathryn Newton), Kayla (Geraldine Viswanathan), and Sam (Gideon Adlon)—determined to get laid on their prom night against their parents. The idea of these girls losing their virginity drives Kayla's uptight father, Mitchell (John Cena), and Julie's over-protective mother, Lisa (Leslie Mann), so crazy that they are, among other things, pushed to commit a break-in and engage in "butt-chugging."

Cannon approaches the randiness of her female characters with unvarnished frankness: These girls drink hard, take drugs, and speak with unapologetically foul-mouthed candor, regularly saying stuff like, "I'd rather eat 10 dicks than one Mound." But they're also diverse in their attitudes toward sex. Julie wants it to be perfect—a tender, meaningful encounter with a guy she really cares for—while Kayla just wants it to happen and happen soon. Sam, on the other hand, is increasingly unsure if she wants to do it with a guy at all, as she finds herself far more infatuated with a nerdy-cute lesbian girl, Angelica (Ramona Young), than with her oafish prom date, Chad (Jimmy Bellinger).

With its raunchy, rapid-fire dialogue and one-crazy-night narrative, *Blockers* clearly owes a debt to *Superbad*, and it's no surprise to see that film's screenwriters, Seth Rogen and Evan Goldberg, credited as producers here. But comparisons to Mottola's coarsely funny yet emotionally resonant sex comedy tend to highlight both what's admirable and ultimately disappointing about this film. Cannon's inclusive, sex-positive vision of the fluidity and nonspecificity of female sexual desire offers a welcome contrast to *Superbad*'s male-centric and relentlessly heteronormative point of view, but *Blockers* lacks the lived-in feel of Mottola's film, the sense it gave of watching true friends wrestling with their transition into adulthood. Viswanathan, Newton, and Adlon generate a bit of chemistry throughout, but it's undermined by the fundamentally mechanistic nature of Brian and Jim Kehoe's screenplay, which ultimately forces these girls' experiences into neat little scenarios that are constructed every bit as didactically as a workplace training video, but much funnier..

This will rent as well as **FIFTY SHADES FREE, MOLLY'S GAME, A BAD MOM'S CHRISTMAS, ROUGH NIGHT, GIRLS TRIP and HOUSE.**



**6/26 PAUL APOSTLE OF CHRIST DRAMA**  
\$18 MILL BO 1947 SCREENS **PG-13** 108 MINUTES  
DVD/COMBO BOTH DVD AND COMBO HAVE DIGITAL COPIES

**Jim Caviezel (WHEN THE GAME STANDS TALL, OUTLANDER, PAY IT FORWARD, FREQUENCY, THETHIN RED LINE)**

Andrew Hyatt's *Paul, Apostle of Christ*, an account of the last days of Saint Paul (James Faulkner), begins with his fellow evangelist, Luke (Jim Caviezel), sneaking into Nero's Rome in the cover of night. The soundtrack thuds and, on cue, Luke strikes a pose for the camera. And as he skirts down a hallway, he brings to mind less an apostle than a member of the Assassin Brotherhood. Mercifully, much of the film isn't pumped with that sort of brash action-movie sense of showmanship, though flashbacks to a young Paul's violent opposition to Jesus's sacrilegious followers are presented in the sort of slow motion that suggests an act of overcompensation. Otherwise, the film's simple, redundant, but valuable moral lesson to its audience finds comfortable enough expression in an aesthetic that's banal but impressively consistent.

Much of Hyatt's film sees Luke darting back and forth between Rome's Christian community and Mamertine Prison, where Paul is being held in an underground cell. Given the public's general unfamiliarity with how scripture was confected, the film would have certainly benefited from, say, a Bressonian attention to the nuts and bolts of the transcription from oral tradition to written text. Certainly there's a sense that a more intimate and philosophically reflective look at the fraught summits between Paul and Luke was sacrificed in order to make room for a needlessly prolonged subplot involving the prison's prefect, Mauritius (Olivier Martinez), and the man's sick daughter.



The unseen Nero casts a large shadow over the film's Rome, where Christians are immolated and forced to live in the shadows. And yet Hyatt doesn't exactly make us feel the horror of this oppression in the pit of our stomachs, and not because his camera literally turns away from the film's most graphic depictions of violence. *Paul, Apostle of Christ's* narrative takes place across conspicuously clean sets that, like the garden where Mauritius holds court and gives good face like Oleanna Tyrell, felt as if they were built yesterday. Which is to say, the perfect setting for a Sunday school lesson about rejecting violence. Luke tending to Mauritius's daughter is an inevitability that weighs on the film almost as cumbersomely as Martinez's accent. No less of a burden but far more purposeful is Paul's oft-repeated "love is the only way," a message that feels as necessary today as it was in A.D. 67.

This will rent as well as **PHANTOM THREAD, LADY BIRD, THE DISASTER ARTIST, DARKEST HOUR, and LET THERE BE LIGHT.**