



5/3 2 THE CHOICE ROMANTIC COMEDY

\$19 MILL BO 2092 SCREENS PG-13 111 MINUTES DVD/COMBO

Benjamin Walker (IN THE HEART OF THE SEA, ABRAHAM LINCOLN: VAMPIRE HUNTER, FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS, KINSEY)

Teresa Palmer (KILL ME THREE TIMES, POINT BREAK, CUT BANK, THE EVER AFTER)

Veterinarian Travis Parker (Benjamin Walker, suggesting here a younger, sexier Joe Flaherty) is the cornpone rake next door to Teresa Palmer's uptight medical student, Gabby Holland. Even before you have time to speculate that she won't have to repurchase monogrammed bath towels, the film positions the pair as a case study in opposites attracting, so long as you ignore their both being beautiful, wealthy, white, dog-loving, outdoorsy young professionals in the medical industry who—given that trademark Sparkian flashback structure—were totally into vinyl before it was cool. And both keep friends who are prone to sharing, while on yacht excursions around their small coastal town, such observations as "I love boating."

To ramp up the romantic friction, Gabby is characterized as a silver-spooner along with her actual, and not recreational, boyfriend, Ryan (Tom Welling). Travis, on the other hand, is a dad bod waiting to emerge, a slothful, drawling representation of Sparks's blurred line between charm and harassment. That's the setup; the follow-through is love, and only love. Travis and Gabby being in love is, in terms of plot, the only element conveyed for the rest of the milquetoast drama, aside from the cagily hidden incident that's intended to justify the flashback, but even that episodic inevitability doesn't call into question the characters' painfully simplistic motivations.



This movie will rent as well as **BIG STONE GAP, GRANDMA, LOVE THE COOPERS, BURNT, and AMERICAN ULTRA.**



5/3 1 JOY COMEDY

\$57 MILL BO 2987 SCREENS PG-13 124 MINUTES DVD/BR

Jennifer Lawrence (THE HUNGER GAMES: CATCHING FIRE, AMERICAN HUSTLE, SERENA, HOUSE AT THE END OF THE STREET)

Robert DeNiro (FLAWLESS, ANALYZE THAT, RONIN, COP LAND, HEAT, A BRONX TALE)

"You are going to grow up," Mimi (Diane Ladd) tells her granddaughter. "You are going to build wonderful things that you do in your room." That granddaughter is Joy, titular hero in David O. Russell's newest collaboration with Jennifer Lawrence. At this moment, surrounded by white light and what she's been building—a white paper barn and horses and picket fences—Joy beams, in love with her future, wide open.

In an instant, *Joy* cuts ahead in time. The little girl Joy played by Isabella Crovetti-Cramp is replaced by the teenager Joy (Lawrence), now shadowed by the frame of her closet door. Again, Mimi stands near, speaking softly: "You don't exactly have your whole life ahead of you," she says, "but you do have a good portion of it."

This transition, funny and exquisite, lays out Joy's future in ways that are increasingly specific and also, increasingly wild. However, much of this future is difficult and stressful, what with her enduringly tangled relationships with her fractiously divorced parents Rudy (Robert DeNiro) and Terry (Virginia Madsen), an insidiously jealous half-sister named Peggy (Elisabeth Röhm), and an ex-lounge-singer ex-husband, Tony (Édgar Ramírez).

Even with all these complications—as well as a couple of adorable prop-like children—Joy forges a future that is at least partly wonderful. This is partly because she continues to build things in her room. Here the film draws on its inspiration, the story of Joy Mangano, inventor of the self-wringing Miracle Mop, turned into a gigantic profits machine when she took to the airwaves on QVC. At the time, the early '90s, the shopping network was an innovation, as was the use of Joy herself as pitch person.

Here again, the movie makes a series of smart visual choices, as Joy first arrives at QVC and meets Neil (Bradley Cooper), an executive who testifies to its astounding power. Bathed in fluorescence, arms in motion, Neil launches this bit of nonsense: "In America, the ordinary meets the extraordinary every single day." With this, he strides between the kitchen-ish sound stage and the cameras, his eyes bright and his faith palpable, all the while observed by Joy, her face a mirror for his persuasion, won over and in love, again, with her future. She heads home converted, sure that the Miracle Mop will prove her salvation, and in turn, she will be able to support her chaotic family.

Taking multiple forms, the family business is Joy's in the sense that she keeps it running and takes melodramatic heat when things go wrong. Her family members constitute a Russellian collection of eccentrics, conveniently assembled in Joy's Long Island home, complete with plastic wood on the walls, a basement haven for her ex, and plumbing in perpetual need of repair. Joy's gift for fixing things covers all realms, mechanical and emotional, as she assigns basement beds to Rudy and Tony, breaks up Terry's floor to get at leaks, balances her dad's business books (he owns a garage), and keeps Peggy employed.

Joy creates order as if out of air, apparently resisting and also lifting from a broadly drawn context of pop cultural jokes. As her mother stays in her bed and loses herself in her soap operas, a background TV offers images of Susan Lucci and Laura Wright, aging and adjusting in a long-running show. Joy is set against and within the formula, another woman caught up in histrionic set-pieces, but resilient, finding her way out of the bedroom where she's been "building wonderful things".

Is there a way out? That's the question. By the same token, when Rudy finds a wealthy girlfriend, Trudy (Isabella Rossellini), Joy welcomes her into the fold, soliciting her investment in the company (housed in dad's garage) that will be making Miracle Mops. Here she's required to participate in another sort of melodrama, one shaped by Rossellini's crafted, crafty flamboyance.

"You were born to be the unanxious presence in the room," Mimi reminds her granddaughter. That's one way to think about it. Another is that Joy embodies the outsized fantasy that Neil sells on QVC, that she's both extraordinary and ordinary, one of us and not even close. Utterly endearing (she's Jennifer Lawrence, after all), Joy is also something of a perfect embodiment of the puzzle posed by Captain Said way back in [Three Kings](#) (1999). In Russell's wholly entertaining meditation on corporate culture, Michael Jackson is at the swirling center of a brutally exploitative system, at once product, victim, and beneficiary.

Joy, you know before the movie begins, emerges rich at its end. Here, as she faces down fraud, sabotage, and abuse of her trust, she seems a resurgent, confident, and healthier opponent to that system. She cannot defeat or change it. She remains at its swirling center, at once its result and its emblem.





5/3 1 THE 5TH WAVE SCI/FI/HORROR

\$34 MILL BO 2156 SCREENS PG-13 112 MINUTES DVD/COMBO

Chloe Grace Moretz (THE EQUALIZER, IF I STAY, MUPPETS MOST WANTED, LAGGIES, KICK ASS 2)

Based on a series of young-adult novels, the film launches with an end-of-days scenario, gene-splicing elements from the disaster and alien subgenres to form a lumpen sort of *The Independence Day After Tomorrow*. Chloë Grace Moretz (increasingly demonstrating that conveying detached, *Kick-Ass* unflappability is her

long suit) plays Cassie, an unassuming suburban cheerleader, no different from anyone else—aside from, you know, interesting people. Then all her beer-ponging, quarterback-flirting plans get brusquely sidelined when a mothership too closely resembling the one that dwarfed Devils Tower straddles the stratosphere and starts getting all Moses on the world, unleashing plagues and snapping off Snapchat with a globe-wide electromagnetic pulse.

The few survivors in Cassie's Ohio locale gather at a refugee camp. It's there that the children are quickly loaded onto buses and taken to a military base, where they're instantaneously told they're going to help mankind's battle against the "Others" and slammed into basic training. Cassie manages to escape the compulsory recruitment, but her kid brother—whose teddy bear she was trying to retrieve when the buses pull away—doesn't, alongside a band of teens and tweens who're given M16s and helmets that allow them to see the aliens living inside their hosts' skulls. After she's saved by a strapping, wood-chopping slab of masculinity whose name—Evan (Alex Roe), for the record—is far less relevant than his pecs, Cassie sets out to reunite with her brother.

There's something plainly off about how quickly and casually children are broken down and fatigued up, and not just from the standpoint of plot functionality. The film's tipping point is voiced in a line of dialogue two-thirds of the way through when one child soldier ponders the global carnage wrought by the Others and considers his comrades lucky to have been saved by the army's buses. The other, a gothy spitfire, Ringer (Maika Monroe), who threatens to dick-punch any soldier who dares look at her tightly clad rear, scoffs, "We weren't saved. We were drafted."



Even if only accidentally, the exchange exposes the objectionable given that characterizes this film and those that inspired it: the sense that children's attitudes toward rampant militarization are being gradually normalized, just perhaps on a slower timetable than *The 5th Wave's* musket babies have to endure. The belligerent subtext is evident even in the trajectory of Cassie's *Twilight*-derived love triangle, as she drifts from her bashfully handsome high school boy-crush, Ben (Nick Robinson), to her scruffy-woofy all-man protector, who seals the deal with her when he shows her how to disarm an assailant. Cassie muses that her travails only serve to emphasize the importance of maintaining her sense of humanity, but at no point to the trigger-happy filmmakers offer any evidence that they agree.

Should rent as well as **SAN ANDREAS, THE 33, HITMAN: AGENT 47, THE TRANSPORTER REFUELED, and THE VISIT.**



5/10 1 THE BOY HORROR

\$36 MILL BO 2187 SCREENS PG-13 137 MINUTES DVD/BLU-RAY

**Lauren Cohan (TV---THE WALKING DEAD, ARCHER—FILM—REACH ME)
Rupert Evans (TV---THE VILLAGE, THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE)**

Leaving behind an unhealthy romantic life in Montana, Greta Evans (Lauren Cohan) takes a temporary nannying position at a stately manor in rural England. Her employers, the Heelshires (acting veterans Jim Norton and Diana Hardcastle), are older but have a son named Brahms, who looks like *Mad Magazine* cover boy Alfred E. Neuman in a family painting. The situation is quite unique: Brahms is really a boy-sized doll to whom Mr. and Mrs. Heelshire dote as if he actually had a pulse. According to charming grocery deliveryman Malcolm (Rupert Evans) who pays a visit to the Heelshire household once a week, Brahms died in a fire two decades ago on his 8th birthday and the doll has been the Heelshires' way of coping ever since. When the parents must be off on holiday, they give Greta a set of rules that she must abide by for Brahms each day (i.e. read to him, let him listen to his music, kiss him goodnight, etc.). Is Brahms an up-to-no-good doll or is something stranger afoot?

The setup is more old-fashioned and unhurriedly paced. The \$10-million production is slick—maybe too slick to capitalize on some gothic atmosphere—and cost-effective, being set in one location. Director Bell does get mileage out of the “is-the-doll-alive-or-not?” suspense before it doesn't seem to be going anywhere special. The most danger Greta gets into before the climactic chase is having articles of clothing stolen and then getting locked in the attic while wearing only a wet towel (she could have caught her death). Lauren Cohan (TV's “The Walking Dead”) has an identifiable presence and does all she can in carrying a feature film while acting with a doll most of the time. Beginning as one movie and ending as something else, “The Boy” toys with expectations a little, but it's too little, too late. The big revelation is unpredictable.



This will rent as well as **CRIMSON PEAK, THE VISIT, MAZE RUNNER: SCORCH TRIALS, and INSIDIOUS 3.**



**5/10 1 DEADPOOL ACTION/COMEDY \$329 MILL BO
3894 SCREENS R 108 MINUTES DVD/COMBO**

Ryan Reynolds (SELF/LESS, WOMAN IN GOLD, TED, R.I.P.D., MEN: ORIGINS)

Deadpool (Ryan Reynolds) is an anti-hero superhero. This much you know already, before you might see the Marvel franchise movie named for him. He's a wise-ass and a bully, a romantic and a self-parody, crude and yet sensitive

Deadpool arrives on screens in a fit of streaming self-consciousness, the opening credits delivering to fans' expectations. Here's a movie that knows what it is and knows you know it, too. It sees its clichés and raises them (“Some douchebag's movie,” you read in a comic-booky crawl, with a “Hot Chick” and a “British Villain”). It's cynical and foul-mouthed, an R-rated ride that's just a little rowdier than [Guardians of the Galaxy](#), deploying the same fundamentals, the snappy retorts and the

clever visual jokes, the extra-textual references and plainly political jibes that are part earnest and part sarcastic. This movie is familiar but also not, the same but different.

As much as Deadpool in comics might rail against origin stories, the movie gives you one, via the usual flashbacks and featuring a costume development montage, no less. Deadpool, affectionately known as the Merc with the Mouth, used to be Wade Wilson, reportedly former Special Ops with killer experience in Mogadishu, Baghdad, and Jacksonville. When he's suddenly found to have cancer in pretty much every part of his body, he's in mid-love-story, with a stripper named Vanessa (Morena Baccarin).

Feeling he has lots to lose, Wade agrees to a preposterous proposal by an odious guy in a suit ("We can give you abilities most men only dream of, make you a superhero"), though with a condition that lets you know he knows the proposal is preposterous: "Just promise me you'll do right by me, so I can do right by someone else. And don't make the suit green. Or animated."

Subjected to a grotesque "gene therapy", Wade suffers mightily at the hands of the British Villain, named Francis but calling himself Ajax (Ed Skrein). Ajax explains that to beat the cancer Wade's genes—and every other aspect of his body—must be traumatized. Strapped down in a tube, Wade is tormented until his body mutates and his skin boils and burns, so that he's dreadfully scarred. Throughout this business, Wade belittles his tormenter Francis and his assistant, Angel Dust (played by the ever excellent Gina Carano, still consigned to sidekick parts following her terrific starring turn in [Haywire](#)), whom Wade calls "a less angry Rosie O'Donnell".

Of course this is a coincidence, but it's a coincidence that underlines how perfectly Deadpool aligns with the current pop-cultural-political moment. Repeatedly he and his movie have their cake and eat it too, calling out torpid formulas while deploying them, mocking a list of easy targets (Ikea, teenage girls, broccoli, the Hulk), Deadpool, once damaged, invites viewers to share his rage. Seeking revenge, he makes loud, lewd fun of anyone who gets in his way. Sure, his best friend can ridicule his new, post-burned look ("You are haunting, you look like an avocado had sex with an older avocado").

Deadpool can take aim at those whiney X-Men, too, cracking wise about Wolverine's nether region (a sort of reference to the fact that the comic book Deadpool has more expansive sexual tastes than the movie version), and also Professor X ("He's a creepy old bald Heaven's Gate-looking motherfucker"). Yet he also finds uses for a couple of X-Men, Colossus (Stefan Kapicic) and Negasonic Teenage Warhead (Brianna Hildebrand), providing kick-ass support during the big showdown.



That showdown doesn't clean up all loose ends, leaving room for the [sequel already in motion](#). He's still **got Vanessa, and he's got a black mother-ish figure, having moved in with Blind AI (Leslie Uggams)**. Since she's oblivious to his ugly face and the unpleasant process by which his dismembered body parts grow back, she's always good for a sight gag, as he makes fun of what she can't see and you can see what she doesn't see. Blind AI serves as the sign of Deadpool's lingering nice-guyness despite his efforts to seem so mean and bitter.

As predictable as its plotting may be, as much as it rehearses comic book movie conventions while acting like it's above that fray, too smart by half, *Deadpool* benefits from Ryan Reynolds' snarky comic performance.

Loud and vulgar, insufferable and pitiful, he may or may not be in control of his seeming out of control-ness. It's a symptom of what's wrong with comic book movies, but who cares? In this, he mirrors the politician who's not a politician, the schoolyard bully who claims not to call people names when he does. Contradictory and unapologetic, Deadpool doesn't have to do anything new, he only has to say he's doing something new.

This will rent as well as **STAR WARS VII, ANT-MAN, TRAINWRECK, SPECTRE, SISTERS, EVEREST, and STRAIGHT OUTTA COMPTON.**



5/10 3 WHERE TO INVADENEXT DOCUMENTARY
\$4 MILL BO 308 SCREENS R 120 MINUTES DVD/BLU-RAY

Michael Moore (SICKO, ROGER AND ME, TV NATION, BOWLING FOR COLUMBINE)

For his latest screed, *Where to Invade Next*, Michael Moore certainly couldn't have picked a more expected title, oozing as it does with the same level of snark as *Bowling for Columbine*, *Sicko*, and especially *Capitalism: A Love Story*. Sadly, the film itself turns out to be more or less business as usual for Moore, as he, with his showman's instincts and penchant for oversimplifications and grandstanding, continues to be his own worst enemy when it comes to the broader argument he's

actually trying to make.

This argument is a valuable one, as is often the case with Moore's films. Despite what its title may imply, *Where to Invade Next* isn't a diatribe about U.S. foreign policy, but an attack on American exceptionalism. By adopting the persona of an insular American traveling the world in order to find ways to improve his home country, Moore attempts to not just show how much better circumstances are overseas, but, more importantly, to demonstrate how some foreign nations are currently fulfilling such classic American ideals as freedom and equality far better than the United States is.

Some of what Moore uncovers is eye-opening. In Finland, he discovers an educational system that not only turned itself around from being one of the worst in the world to being quite possibly the best, but also one that includes such foreign-to-the-U.S. novelties as shorter school days, minimal homework, and no private schools, thus forcing rich and poor to inhabit the same spaces. In feminist Iceland, even more fascinating than the fact that the nation elected the world's first female president, Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, in 1980, is that the one bank that didn't fall during their recent financial crisis had three women as part of its board of directors, thus leading to a digression on how having more women in power has historically led to sturdier businesses.



But other stops on Moore's globetrotting tour can't help but inspire skepticism as to just how much the filmmaker is squelching nuance in order to push his agenda. When, in Slovenia, the documentarian notes an incident in which students at the University of Ljubljana successfully rose up against the school for wanting to impose tuition rates, he doesn't ask why the school made such an attempt in the first place—as if afraid that admitting to some of the possible impracticalities of achieving the dream of no-debt higher education would severely weaken his argument.

A similar suspicion of evasiveness pops up in Norway, when Moore interviews a reformed prisoner about the nation's relatively paradisaical prison system and seems uninterested in digging more deeply into the reasons behind the murder that landed the man behind bars in the first place. The filmmaker is too busy extolling the virtues of a more humane approach to imprisonment to express much of an interest in the human beings themselves beyond how they fit into and flatter his larger ideological vision.



5/17 1 DIRTY GRANDPA COMEDY

\$36 MILL BO 2192 SCREENS R 112 MINUTES DVD/COMBO

Robert Deniro (STANLEY & IRIS, MEET THE FOCKERS, THE INTERNS, ANALYZE THIS, WAG THE DOG)

Zac Efron (NEIGHBORS, PARKLAND, NEW YEARS EVE, CHARLIE ST. CLOUD, 17 AGAIN)

As in Judd Apatow's films, crassness is boasted as shamelessness, and calculated sentimentality is dressed up as empathy. The doofus this go-round is Jason (Zac Efron), a straightlaced twentysomething who "looks like Abercrombie fucked Fitch"; he ditched his dreams of becoming a photographer to take a job at his father David's (Dermot Mulroney) law firm years ago and has been dutifully responding to the beck and call of his nagging fiancé, Meredith (Julianne Hough), ever since. The out from this suburban hell world is, of course, Grandpa Dick, whom Jason agrees to drive to his home in Florida, though the pair end up at Daytona Beach instead, where they run the gamut of blackout nights and numerous walks of shame.

But the premise is merely a pretext for an increasingly ugly series of confrontations that use a character's ethnicity, sexual orientation, or body type as a joke. After meeting a pair of women (Zoey Deutch's artsy, demure Shadia and Aubrey Plaza's playful, slutty Lenore), Dick sizes up their friend, Bradley (Jeffrey Bowyer-Chapman), for "being so gay." When Bradley responds with disdain, saying, "I'm also black," Dick replies: "Yeah, that's funny too."

Later, at a beachside surf shop, Jason and Dick are startled by gun-toting Tan Pam (Jason Mantzoukas), who unloads a clip into one of the store's walls as a joke. When Jason warns that he could have hurt someone outside, Tan Pam responds: "It's Florida; these people don't matter." The line's phrasing deliberately summons the Black Lives Matter movement and nearly challenges the viewer not to immediately think of Trayvon Martin and Jordan Davis; at least, were the film not merely gutless with its invocations, it would have such events more consciously, and thoughtfully, on its mind.



The film's pinnacle of boastful tastelessness involves a rumble outside a nightclub between Dick and a "crew" of black gang members, which ends with the old man torturing one of its members into an apology for his earlier taunting of Bradley. Turns out, Dick was just joshing Bradley; he actually doesn't tolerate discrimination, unless it's under his own auspice as a good-natured ribbing. Even worse, a subsequent sequence has Dick making amends with the gang and being licensed to say "niggaz" during karaoke.

The film's only inspired bit takes Dick to see an old pal, Stinky (Danny Glover), at a retirement home. There, Stinky is found sitting in front of a television shouting, "Yeah, fuck 'em up, Alf!" The scene playfully doubles as a self-knowing critique, since Stinky's obsessions lie with past generations of pop culture and, by extension, America itself, much like the entirety of *Dirty Grandpa*.

This will rent as well as **GET HARD, UNFINISHED BUSINESS, NEIGHBORS, JOE DIRT 2, TED 2, and PAUL BLART 2.**



5/17 3 THE PROGRAM DRAMA
\$3 MILL BO 689 SCREENS R 104 MINUTES DVD

Ben Foster (LONE SURVIVOR, KILL YOUR DARLINGS, 360, THE MESSENGER)

Tom O'Dowd (TV—PUFFIN ROCK, MOONE BOY, MONSTERS VS. ALIENS)

The film structures the story of disgraced Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong (Ben Foster) as a series of sharp, succinct beats that progress ever forward, mirroring Armstrong's own superhuman determination and relentlessness. Several major events in the cyclist's life—his battle with advanced testicular cancer, the first few of his several Tour de France wins—are dramatized within the opening 20 minutes of the film, in scenes so abbreviated as to suggest a montage that's paving the way for the inevitable, fully sketched downfall. Except *The Program* never slows down, ultimately suggesting a singular montage fusing fame, egomania, tyranny, collapse, and qualified comeuppance into one prolonged procedural set piece.

There's pointedly little in the film about Armstrong's personal life. One of his marriages is acknowledged in a 60-second scene that cuts from his first meeting of his future wife to their wedding day. Armstrong's children and relationship with singer Sheryl Crow are entirely elided. The incredibly vast reach of Armstrong's fame, as an American conqueror of a European event, as a cancer survivor no less (a fact that no one was ever allowed to forget), is suggested through collages of news footage, but not really shown. Corporate sponsorships are passingly alluded to, and with an ominousness that indicates the filmmakers' suspicion of the merging of corporate and athletic interests, but corporate influence on both the personal and professional textures of Armstrong's life is scarcely explored. Even the races are relatively underrepresented, reduced to shards of occasionally thrilling images.



Instead, Frears and screenwriter John Hodge focus on Armstrong's drug use, particularly of a performance-enhancing substance called Erythropoietin, or Epo, which is pivotal to increasing an athlete's red blood cell count, boosting the amount of oxygen a body can carry through its bloodstream, enhancing endurance. Early in the film, physician and cycling coach Michele Ferrari (Guillaume Canet) tells Armstrong that an athlete's natural talent, and even their will to train, can only go so far, as their fate is encoded within their blood. This information offers a key to the self-rationalizing logic that enables many athletes on drugs, as they'll be damned if they'll allow genetic code to trump their drive and desire. The more insidious, and ambiguous, side of this self-obsession is embodied by Armstrong's considerable work with cancer foundations, and with the gall he evinces by playing the role of a saint who says things like "We are the authors of our own life stories" while cheating, and suing anyone who attempts to reveal said cheating.

This should rent as well as **SOUTHPAW, GOOD KILL, MCFARLAND USA, and FOXCATCHER.**



5/17 2 THE WITCH HORROR

\$24 MILL BO 2104 SCREENS R 92 MINUTES DVD

**Anya Taylor-Joy (TV—ATLANTIS, VIKING QUEST, CINEMA 3)
Kate Dickie (TV---GAME OF THRONES, MIDWINTER OF THE
SPIRIT, THE ESCAPE ARTIST)**

Park City, Utah was founded about 165 years ago. Still, it's pretty easy to imagine the early Mormon settlers making their way up through the mountains from Salt Lake City, with their wagons, cattle, and dreams of self-sufficiency finally coming to this plateau, nestled amongst a spread of dizzying mountains on all sides. You can picture those settlers here, before anything was built, huddled together against that first winter, looking up into a dark sky brilliantly pockmarked with stars. Whether you see that as a terror or a comfort depends on your personal context.

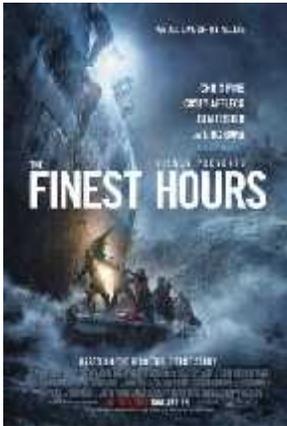
A couple of the movies in the early going of the Sundance Film Festival speak to this idea of extremity. Craig Zobel's *Z for Zachariah* concerns a lone young woman, Ann (Margot Robbie), still living on her parents' farm up in the mountains of West Virginia after some kind of nuclear catastrophe has apparently wiped out everyone else. She's content to stay there and tend to her crops with her dog, right up until she comes across John (Chiwetel Ejiofor), a former government engineer with a murky past. The two forge a bond as they work to build up the farm, eventually intending to have a family.

This slow courtship goes well enough, until a third person appears. Caleb (Chris Pine), a hunky coal miner, threatens the delicate tendrils of civilization John and Ann are trying to establish. He helps them build a large wooden turbine so they can have electricity again, but the longer he stays, the more it becomes clear that he and Ann have a chemistry together. The elephant in the room, of course, is that John is black, a fact brings it up one night, hissing to Ann that he wouldn't stand in their way if they wanted to "be white people together".



The tension escalates until it bleeds inevitably into violence, but it is indeed a supremely depressing notion—and this from the director of previously divisive Sundance drama *Compliance*, which is hardly uplifting—that even if there are only three people left on the planet, two of them will end up wanting to kill one another.

This will as well as **THE VISIT, SINISTER 2, INSIDIOUS 3, TOMORROWLAND, and THE GALLOWES.**



5/24 2 THE FINEST HOURS ACTION

\$24 MILL BO 3134 SCREENS PG-13 117 MINUTES DVD/BLU-RAY

Chris Pine (HORRIBLE BOSSES 2, INTO THE WOODS, JACK RYAN: SHADOW RECRUIT, RISE OF THE GUARDIANS)
Casey Affleck (INTERSTELLAR, OUT OF THE FURNACE, TOWER HEIST, I'M STILL HERE)

A square journey through choppy waters, *The Finest Hours* boasts a Greatest Generation nostalgia so thoroughgoing it might as well be called *Boys Becoming Men*. The film recreates the Coast Guard rescue of the sinking oil tanker *Pendleton*

off of the Massachusetts coast in the winter of 1952, but it begins the year before, with a lengthy prologue documenting the romantic and professional anxieties of Coast Guard sailor Bernie Webber (Chris Pine). He frets over whether his blind date will be a “dog” before becoming enchanted with Miriam (Holliday Grainger), a sharp and steely telephone operator. Their town, Wellfleet, is home to quaint rituals: Saturday-night church dances and late-night boat rides mark their courtship. After Miriam proposes to Bernie, disrupting his complacency and his sense of order, an impending winter storm offers him an opportunity to claim his manhood.

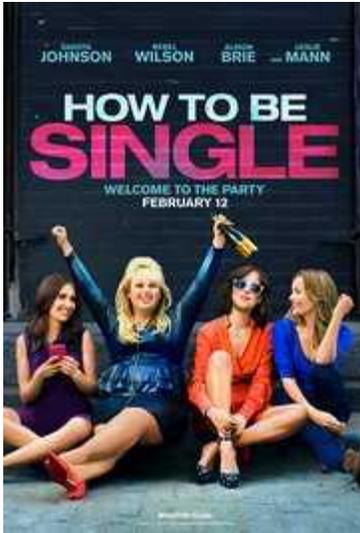
Even after the film splits off into a tripartite narrative structure, it’s roundly concerned with living up to hazy masculine ideals: follow the rules, but break them when you need to; be a team player, except when you need to be a leader. Once Webber is called to save the *Pendleton*, he must steer his tiny rescue ship over the roiling breaks that waylaid him on a previous, vaguely defined mission. Aboard the oil tanker, engineer Raymond Sebert (Casey Affleck) must defy the scorn of his peers and devise a few ingenious solutions in order to keep his torn ship afloat until help arrives. Back on Cape Cod, Miriam has to assert herself in traditionally male confines in order to confirm the safety of her fiancé. (Her efforts are diminished, with unintentional hilarity, after she crashes her car into a snowdrift.)



These rote thematic missions are complemented by episodic cross-cutting that’s largely task-oriented in nature. Director Craig Gillespie develops the action with steady pacing and minimal exposition. The film’s color palette is similarly reserved, all varying hues of slate (even Pine and Affleck’s gray eyes match the churning sea and their drab uniforms). And most of the scant hints of aesthetic flair are welcome and purposeful.

In one tracking shot, the camera moves from the dock of the *Pendleton* to its engine room, following a string of sailors as they relay steering coordinates to Sebert, who pilots the ship from its flooding bowels. Scraps of sunset tearing through storm clouds provide Webber’s four-man rescue crew with a sense of direction and some lovely lighting. CGI effects are largely employed to illustrate the mammoth scale of Webber’s mission, contrasting his 34-foot lifeboat with a hulking tanker that has split in half. The only overwrought notes in the film come courtesy of composer Carter Burwell, whose score oversells *The Finest Hours*’s determinedly small-town heroism.

This will rent as well as **THE LAST WITCH HUNTER, EVEREST, SAN ANDREAS, THE TRANSPORTER REFUELED, MAZE RUNNER: SCORCH TRIALS and HIT MAN: AGENT 47.**



5/24 1 HOW TO BE SINGLE COMEDY
\$44 MILL BO 2874 SCREENS R 110 MINUTES
DVD/BLU-RAY

Dakota Johnson (BLACK MASS, FIFTY SHADES OF GREY, NEED FOR SPEED, DATE AND SWITCH)
Rebel Wilson (PITCH PERFECT, PITCH PERFECT 2, NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM, PAIN & GAIN)

In a manifesto dropped very early into *How to Be Single*, playboy bartender Tom (Anders Holm) mansplains to wedding-magazine subscriber Lucy (Alison Brie) how he's able to string women along without any danger of commitment. "Women hear what they want to hear," Tom assures. To drive home his point, he turns to tell one of his hooked conquests that he really only wanted to bone

her, but that he also respects her too much to lie to her now. She thanks him and exits with hearts sparkling in her eyes.

It's a punchline at the expense of the woman in the moment, and the man in the long run when it's revealed that he secretly *does* seek companionship. But it also goes a long way toward explaining how a film that promises to celebrate independence can be so relentlessly and hypocritically relationship-obsessed. *How to Be Single* gives audiences, especially those seeking a LTR, the reassurance that their lonesome days can be filled with mirth, so long as the right mate swoops in soon enough. It's the cinematic equivalent of Grindr profiles that claim, "Not looking for hookups." (See? Heteronormative dating hasn't cornered the market on mendacious shields.)

How to Be Single centers around Alice (Dakota Johnson), a fresh graduate on her way to New York City who, on a whim, decides to initiate a "temporary" break from her college boyfriend, Josh (Nicholas Braun), in order to explore herself, moving to a Brooklyn studio with a convenient view of a three-story mural seemingly depicting *Small Wonder's* Harriet. More accurately, she wants to confirm that she's actually a real human being outside of being someone else's boyfriend, but doesn't put much of an effort into doing anything other than gushing and fawning over any man who pays her any attention.



If the accepted wisdom is that chronically single people don't know what they want, the film will stay alone for life.

Her mirror-image sister, Meg (Leslie Mann), is so stridently single and childless that it's really her only defining feature. Serving as guru for both, Robin (Rebel Wilson) tears through her scenes like a Tasmanian devil dispensing Fireball shots and real talk about how many collective drinks a guy and a girl can split between them before they'll wind up sleeping together. The aforementioned Lucy is technically neither related to nor interacts with any of those three characters, but still, for some reason, remains in the film.

If the poster art didn't already tip the hands of the filmmakers, *How to Be Single* seems suspiciously like an attempt to distill an entire season of *Girls* (plus one episode of *Broad City*) down into two wild, heartfelt, rowdy, sentimental, boogery, perceptive, feminist hours. And on a strictly moment-by-moment base, it succeeds at a higher hit rate than similar surface-dwelling ensemble efforts, or at least fights harder. One scene sees Meg left alone in her office with another woman's infant, so cherub-faced it makes the Gerber baby look like a trilobite. Rather than adhere to sitcom beats, the film takes its sweet time letting Meg's defense break down against the cooing infant, tipping off her decision to be artificially inseminated. Given the time to breathe and develop, Meg's resistance to a younger man startlingly ready to be a stay-at-home father ("Did I win the lottery?" is his unexpected reaction) could've been a very real temperature read on the state of family-building circa 2016. Instead, it's suffocated in between Wilson and Brie's fire and ice slapstick.

A fun movie that will rent as well as **SISTERS, TED 2, VACATION, HOT PURSUIT, and ALOHA.**



5/24 1 RISEN THRILLER

\$32 MILL BO 2134 SCREENS R 117 MINUTES DVD/BLU RAY

Joseph Fiennes (TV—AMERICAN HORROR STORY, FLASH FORWARD, CAMELOT)

A ropery, tawny Joseph Fiennes plays Clavius, a dedicated Roman Centurion tasked by Pontius Pilate (Peter Firth) to find the body of the once and future King of Kings. Pilate, concerned that Christ's zealous followers will remove his body from the tomb and lead everyone to conclude that predictions of his resurrection have come true, sends Clavius to verify its presence, and return it to the public's eye once the requisite three days have past. Clavius, a career soldier who, it seems, repeatedly turns down Pilate's offers of wine and women (but still wades his burly naked flesh into his commander's bath with the slowly extinguishing fire of aging trade), accepts his assignment less because he (like the Roman establishment) is intimidated and enraged by the threat of an order-disrupting messiah and more because he believes dutiful work will eventually bring him the reward of an idyllic life far away from it all. (Gee, think the Prince of Peace will convert the closet recluse?)

Regardless of whether Reynolds and Fiennes are religious or not, they both approach the material, which inevitably tilts toward the devout, with the polite reticence of the latter. Fiennes keeps his performance in stoic first gear even after Clavius abandons his orders and helps the resurrected savior and his band of apostles escape Pilate's army. And for most of the film, Reynolds conspicuously avoids unseemly displays of divine prestidigitation; when he belatedly yields, he depicts Jesus healing a leper at a physical distance.

Which is to say that the disciples stand from afar, grinning with anticipation at Clavius—who obviously spent all of Christ's prime healing years thrusting his sword into the shoulders of warring enemies—like kids who've already seen this trick and can't wait to behold a newbie's reaction. The miracle itself is staged with both participants' backs to the camera, and only after the leper has walked even further away does he peer over his shoulder with his newly disinfected face. As sadly novel as it is to see a red-state film reign in its homicidal instincts, *Risen* preaches not to the choir, nor does it seem interested in converting the skeptics.

This movie will rent as well as **THE 33**, **SECRET IN THEIR EYES**, **TOMORROWLAND**, **UNBROKEN**, **THE WATER DIVINER**, and **TERMINATOR GENESIS**.





5/24 1 ZOOLANDER 2 COMEDY

**\$30 MILL BO 2689 SCREENS PG-13 102 MINUTES
DVD/COMBO**

Ben Stiller (THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY, TROPIC THUNDER, BLADES OF GLORY, DODGEBALL: A TRUE UNDERDOG)

Owen Wilson (INHERENT VICE, THE WEDDING CRASHERS, LITTLE FOCKERS, HALL PASS, MARLEY AND ME, YOU ME AND DUPREE)

This time around, our once fabulous and famous supermodel, Derek Zoolander (Ben Stiller) is in self-imposed exile after a pre-credits tragedy. Without warning, famous faces around the world—cue an extended, unnecessary, and pointless parade of cameos—are being killed off, all with his renowned “blue steel” pose frozen on their lips. An Interpol agent (Penelope Cruz) is assigned to the crimes, and she recruits Derek and his former rival/BFF Hansel (Owen Wilson) to fly to Rome and infiltrate the domain of fashion diva Alexanya Atoz (Kristin Wiig). Naturally, former nemesis Jacobim Mugatu (Will Ferrell) is somehow involved. Maybe.

Besides, fashion is its own treasure trove of surreal individuals and outlandish ideas. Ever seen one of those gallery rundowns of the goofy looks billed as “high fashion” from the New York or Paris catwalk? Those are far more entertaining and comical than this film. Stiller has the directing chops and he hasn't aged enough to make Derek a complete disaster, but a comedy is supposed to make you laugh. *Zoolander 2* just makes you sigh in disgruntled disbelief.

This is 2016. We have fashion infused in almost every aspect of life. Designers are making millions off of tweaking everyday objects, all with a goal of getting their latest line into retail outlets like Target and Bed, Bath and Beyond. Somewhere, on some cable TV channel, a high strung stylist is having a meltdown over the wrong fabric swatches. Looks change at the drop of a remote, and former icons are flailing away at trying to remain relevant in a global dynamic. Still with some funny cameos and jokes, there are laughs here.

This will do as well as **GET HARD, NEIGHBORS, JOE DIRT 2, TED 2, UNFINISHED BUSINESS** and **HORRIBLE BOSSES 2**.





5/31 2 PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES
HORROR/COMEDY \$11 MILL BO 2731 SCREENS PG-13
104 MINUTES DVD/BLU RAY

**Lilly James (TV---DOWNTON ABBEY, WAR AND PEACE,---FILM--
-BURNT, CINDERELLA, FAST GIRLS, BROKEN)**
**Sam Riley (MALEFICENT, DARK VALLEY, 13, WOMEN IN LOVE,
BRIGHTON ROCK)**

Burr Steers's *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* imagines a world in which the mannered romance of Jane Austen's oeuvre, specifically that of her 1813 novel *Pride and Prejudice*, has become inexplicably infected with a zombie virus, and what follows is an exercise in juxtaposition: Unexpected activities are performed in unexpected places, and the rewards of this unassuming film come in the invitation to recognize deviations from the familiar.

Audiences are introduced to the Bennett sisters in their drawing room not as they knit or sip tea, but as they polish their formidable gun collection while reserving their true passion for a discussion about their marriage prospects. These are Austen's corseted damsels transformed into zombie slayers of the highest order, but the familiar story's machinations—always rooted in conflicts about romance and marriage—are dutifully trotted out even in the midst of an impending zombie attack on London. We're to understand that violence is nonchalant; courtship, on the other hand, is war.

Elizabeth (Lily James), the heroine of Austen's novel of manners as well as this interpretation, proves particularly menacing. Her staunch aversion to traditional courtship—that is, courtship based more on contract than on love—allows her skill as a fighter to take on a more metaphorical aspect. Blanching at the suggestion that she would lay down her sword after becoming a wife, she announces that she would rather



become a spinster than give up her training as a warrior. The fiercest of the zombie-fighting Bennett sisters, she even proves to be a worthy match for Mr. Darcy (Sam Riley)—here written as a colonel in the zombie wars—during a scene in which his agonized proposal of marriage is met not with the acceptance he expected, but with a drawn-out melee in the kitchen.

Pride and Prejudice and Zombies says exactly what it means, and then says it again. However, the nature of a send-up is that it lampoons its source material rather than deepens it, so perhaps it's too much to ask from a film whose goals so pointedly lack ambition that it transcend stereotype in even the most minor of ways. Audiences will come for the zombies and stay for the heaving bosoms. In the end, everyone will get what they paid for.

Fun film will rent as well as **CRIMSON PEAK, THE VISIT, ABRAHAM LINCOLN: VAMPIRE HUNTER, THE GALLOWS, FANTASTIC FOUR,** and **POLTERGEIST.**



5/31 2 RACE DRAMA

\$21 MILL BO 2387 SCREENS PG-13 134 MINUTES
DVD/BLU-RAY

Stephen James (ACROSS THE LINE, SELMA, WHEN THE GAME STANDS TALL, PERFECT SISTERS)

Jason Sudeikis (TUMBLEDOWN, SLEEPING WITH OTHER PEOPLE, HORRIBLE BOSSES 2, WE'RE THE MILLERS)

Stephen Hopkins's *Race* is a complication-smoothing take on Jesse Owens's elegant riposte to Hitler's racism at the 1936 Berlin Olympics, where the legendary track star won four gold medals. The film's hackneyed mode of storytelling is evident as soon as Owens (Stephan James) is seen heading off to college, with the expository dialogue suggesting bullet points accumulating on a PowerPoint presentation. In quick succession, the audience is informed that Owens is so poor that he has only one shirt, that his mother is sure he's destined for greatness, that he's the first in his family to go to college, and that he helps support not just his unemployed father, Henry (Andrew Moodie), but his young daughter, Gloria (Kayla Stewart), and her mother, Ruth (Shanice Banton), who he plans to marry as soon as he can afford to.

As Owens begins to set new records at Ohio State and train for the Olympics, the International Olympic Committee decides whether the U.S. should boycott a competition that Hitler intends as a showcase for Nazi ideology and technology. Throughout, *Race* spells out its drama in block letters, dialogue hitting every major theme and minor conflict, music swelling under each dramatic moment, and the camera lingering over a person's name in a newspaper headline. The characters all look about twice as glamorous as their real-life counterparts, and almost all—including Leni Riefenstahl (Carice van Houten), a Nazi propagandist portrayed as a gallant artist making an honest attempt to capture a golden moment—are defined by just one or two traits, which are established early and reinforced often.



As his Ohio State coach, Larry Snyder (Jason Sudeikis), makes clear, you don't become a great athlete without a lot of hard work and determination, but the Owens depicted in *Race* seems perplexingly passive, so dependent on Snyder that he frets about going to the Olympics without him. Snyder often gets outraged by the racial slurs aimed at Owens, but Owens himself simply absorbs them calmly and with no apparent emotional fallout. Even the decision at the center of the story—whether or not to boycott the Olympics—seems like something that happens to Owens more than something he has to resolve for himself.

This will rent as well as **MCFARLAND USA, SUFFRAGETTE, MY ALL AMERICAN, TRUMBO,** and **THE WALK.**



5/31 2 **TRIPLE 9** THRILLER
\$16 MILL BO R 145 MINUTES DVD/BLU-RAY

Casey Affleck (THE FINEST HOURS, GONE BABY GONE, INTERSTELLAR, PARANORMAL)
Woody Harrelson (WHITE MEN CAN'T JUMP, OUT OF THE FURNACE, NOW YOU SEE ME, THE HUNGER GAMES, FRIENDS WITH BENEFITS)
Kate Winslet (LABOR DAY, MOVIE 43, STEVE JOBS, INSURGENT, LITTLE CHILDREN)

The film undercuts the actual heist, in which the greed of ex-cop Gabe (Aaron Paul) disrupts the crew's precise snatch of a safety deposit box by grabbing some dummy cash filled with a dye pack that explodes in the getaway. Half-botching the job, the team incurs the wrath of the Russian mafiosos backing them, leading to the execution of Gabe's special ops-trained brother, Russel (Norman Reedus), and instructions to raid a local Department of Homeland Security facility to retrieve the files to unlock the contents of the stolen box.

The mere involvement of the Russian mob, which is headquartered in a kosher abattoir, should open the film to far-fetched humor, and at times the action suggests that a more interesting and open-ended influence might not have been Mann, but rather the Coen brothers, who might have taken the cops' plot to kill rookie cop Chris Allen (Casey Affleck) to the level of farce. Detective Marcus Atwood's (Anthony Mackie) deep reservations about killing another officer until he can barely be distinguished from Rodriguez (Clifton Collins Jr.), the most cold-hearted of their crew. Everything is shot in pallid gray, dull orange, and gunmetal blue, like some horrid approximation of the American flag. It's a color palette that stresses one-note despair at every turn.



Making the best of things is Woody Harrelson, who plays the local precinct sergeant (and Chris's uncle) with the gleeful indifference he brings to all his paycheck roles. Speaking with a mumbled good-ol'-boy accent that doesn't naturally occur within 40 miles of Atlanta's epicenter, Harrelson is a more benign form of Harvey Keitel's titular *Bad Lieutenant*: a pot-smoking vulgarian with a short fuse who nonetheless viciously defends the honor of his badge and the safety of those under his charge. No one told the actor to stop having fun, and as a result he cuts through the killjoy somberness his colleagues adopt, and with an abandon that consistently enlivens the film.

Director Hillcoat's methodical style does, though, benefit the action. The early heist resembles the majority of cinematic heist sequences, but the clarity of the cutting and the simple camera movements keep focus on the armed thieves' professionalism, and the images only become chaotic when Gabe's mistake sends his group into disarray. The finest sequence concerns a raid on a Latino gang lieutenant in a run-down project building, and as cops raid the man's apartment, they discover a series of knocked-out walls between units that turns the complex into a maze filled with potential hiding places. The camera tags along with the police, not cutting as they fan out in each room to check corners, but bobbing in and out of cover with them. It's a nerve-racking sequence that makes the most of its simplicity, and it suggests a more idiosyncratic, ambitious film that might have been.

This movie will rent as well as **TRUE STORY, SELF/LESS, THE LAST WITCH HUNTER, EVEREST, HIT MAN-AGENT 47, and THE MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E.**