



10/4 1 PURGE: ELECTION YEAR HORROR/THRILLER
\$79 MILL BO 2956 SCREENS R 105 MINUTES
DVD/COMBO 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX

Frank Grillo (CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR, BIG SKY, THE PURGE: ANARCHY, CAPTAIN AMERICA: THE WINTER SOLDIER)
Elizabeth Mitchell (TV---ONCE UPON A TIME, REVOLUTION, CROSSING LINES, LOST)

In the Washington, D.C.-set *Election Year*, Leo (Frank Grillo) is now a security head for Charlie Roan (Elizabeth Mitchell), a senator running on a presidential platform vowing to end Purge Night. Some of the pitiless social commentary that animated [Anarchy](#) survives, now that government workers are no longer exempt from being purged. Significantly, we finally get a glimpse of the cabal that sanctioned this night in the first place: the New Founding Fathers of America, a cult-like group so committed to their belief in the cleansing power of purging that they literally go to church to express them in a late-night mass, complete with human sacrifices. But the anti-Purge insurgents led by Dante Joseph (Edwin Hodge) aren't necessarily less ostentatious in their violent methods. Amid the carnage, deli owner Joe (Mykelti Williamson), his Mexican protégé, Marcos (Joseph Julian Soria), and paramedic Laney (Betty Gabriel)—all reformed criminals—try to live as virtuously as possible even in the upside-down world inspired by the purge.

Having witnessed the evils of the purge firsthand when her family was murdered 18 years ago, Senator Roan advocates for the nonviolent high road, even as she sees the bloodthirsty worst in her fellow politicians. Her pleas for civility, however, ring hollow in a film that itself seems as gleefully barbaric in its depiction of violence as those who participate in the purge itself.

In [Anarchy](#), there was resonance to a stockbroker's corpse dangling outside a corporate tower—a feeling of chickens coming home to roost for the one percent at the hands of the oppressed. Similar violent scenarios abound in *Election Year*, such as a beheading by guillotine and a scene depicting a beating at the hands of a group of bloodthirsty Russian tourists, but they feel unhinged from recognizable social or moral outrages. The filmmakers let their imaginations run wild only in coming up with the most exaggerated horrors they can think of, and without implicating us in said violence. Besides, Senator Roan's beliefs don't necessarily stop Leo himself from being less merciful and occasionally meting out righteous violence on her opponents.

The nadir of the film's have-its-cake-and-eat-it-too mentality is a cartoonish sequence revolving around a group of masked schoolgirls who threaten to break into Joe's deli just because he caught one of them stealing a candy bar earlier that day. With the camera luridly feasting in slow motion on the scantily clad girls prancing around in dangerously sexy motions, the scene plays as if DeMonaco is attempting to momentarily stage his own version of [Spring Breakers](#); worse, though, is the comeuppance these girls receive at the hands of Laney, who tops off her extravagantly gruesome rescue of everyone trapped in the deli with a cheesy one-liner intended only keep the audience's blood pumping. Such a sequence is indicative of *Election Year's* greater focus on disreputable genre thrills at the expense of making coherent points about class inequalities, political exploitation, or man's inhumanity.

This will rent as well as **THE HUNTSMAN: WINTER'S WAR, HARDCORE HENRY, CRIMINAL, THE FOREST, 10 CLOVERFIELD LANE** and **LONDON HAS FALLEN**.



10/4 3 SWISS ARMY MAN COMEDY
\$5 MILL BO 616 SCREENS R 97 MINUTES
DVD/BLU RAY

Paul Dano (LOVE & MERCY, YOUTH, 12 YEARS A SLAVE, RUBY SPARKS, COWBOYS & ALIENS)
Daniel Radcliffe (NOW YOU SEE ME 2, HARRY POTTER, HORNS, KILL YOUR DARLINGS, DECEMBER BOYS)

In *Swiss Army Man*, the life of a suicidal castaway, Hank (Paul Dano), is redeemed by his relationship with a farting corpse (Daniel Radcliffe). Imagine saying that line out loud to a friend without smirking, and then consider trying to explain the film beyond its willfully strange premise: This farting corpse movie is also a buddy comedy that's sort of a love story, but what it's really about is our bodies, language, the life cycle of relationships, and how the essential ingredients of human connection have been corroded in the wake of the smartphone. Even as it invites snarky ridicule, *Swiss Army Man* dares you to buy into its singular earnestness.

When the corpse, eventually dubbed Manny, elicits further signs of life (sprouting an active erection and uttering subverbal reactions), Hank offers him a sentimental education. Though Hank is never quite certain whether his reanimated friend is a miracle or a mirage, his attempts to explain words and feelings to Manny reawaken him to a world of emotion deadened by the isolation of modern life and loving. Even as it invites snarky ridicule, *Swiss Army Man* dares you to buy into its singular earnestness.

When Manny's expulsions propel a trip across the ocean, or after his squirrely erection becomes the compass that guides Hank home, the filmmakers insist on the primacy and nearly endless utility of the body. (This idea even motivates the film's ingenious a cappella soundtrack, which loops its character's utterances into Edward Sharpe-style folk songs that are amusing enough to overcome their insufferable tenor.) Throughout *Swiss Army Man*, Hank spews torrents of emotional diarrhea, but the filmmakers find endlessly dynamic ways to illustrate how difficult it is for him to distinguish cultural detritus from actual feelings. He twists Rednex's "Cotton Eyed Joe" and John Williams's theme from [Jurassic Park](#) into shared memories, and uses the orange dust from of a bag of cheese puffs as a stand-in for a mother's love. He builds a totem of romantic feeling out of Sarah Johnson (Mary Elizabeth Winstead), a woman he stalks on social media, but has never actually spoken to. These lonely sentiments have wounded Hank, but they literally get Manny's blood pumping. Seeing his isolation through new eyes, Hank realizes both the terror and the mundane wonders of having a body.



This should do as well as **HARDCORE HENRY, THE BROTHERS GRIMSBY, GOD'S NOT DEAD 2, and DIRTY GRANDPA.**



10/4 1 X-MEN: APOCALYPSE SCI FI/ACTION
\$160 MILL BO 2856 SCREENS **PG-13** 144 MINUTES
DVD/BLU RAY 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX

James McAvoy (VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN, MUPPETS MOST WANTED, FILTH, THE LAST STATION, WELCOME TO THE PUNCH)

Jennifer Lawrence (THE HUNGER GAMES SERIES, SERENA, JOY, WINTERS BONE, GARDEN PARTY)

Bryan Singer's *X-Men: Apocalypse* begins with a creative use of the 3D field—the layered image of a slide projector in close-up—and a callback to the most vital theme of this franchise's previous installment: the custodianship of historical record. The setting is a classroom, and a teacher lectures middle school students on the importance of a particular time, as it had been revised in the free-wheeling, time-traveling narrative of [X-Men: Days of Future Past](#). The year in discussion is 1973, when vigilante mutant Mystique (Jennifer Lawrence) accidentally exposed her kind to the rest of the world.

[Days of Future Past](#) found a comfortable resolution for both its sets of characters, those from the original *X-Men* films and the new class introduced in Matthew Vaughn's franchise reboot, [X-Men: First Class](#). In fact, [Days of Future Past](#) represents maybe the most canny management of any franchise this decade, for the way it navigates multiple, fraught timelines, bringing each to a satisfying conclusion. And maybe that's why *Apocalypse* seems to have such comparatively lower stakes. Here, Singer's X-Men are just young enough to pre-date the popular TV show of the '90s which introduced many of the current generation to Marvel's heroes. The film is set in the 1980s, about a decade after the events in the earlier timeline of [Days of Future Past](#), and it sets itself up as a consideration of enduring prejudices against mutant-kind.

The film is best when engaging its actors' strength, and the interpersonal dynamics that have been patiently developed over several installments of varying quality. Even the cast's new additions (namely Sophie Turner as telepath Jean Grey and Tye Sheridan as Scott Summers, a.k.a. Cyclops) seem equipped to give their roles a depth of feeling the genre hasn't been accounting for lately—despite a sometimes weak script. Singer also furthers the tonal balance he accomplished in [Days of Future Past](#), balancing coherently choreographed action set pieces with well-timed comedic beats, and one riotous use of slow-motion audio-visual montage that could've felt like an opportunistic recycling of the most talked-about scene from the last film, but in its execution seems just as successful in its own right.

The final battle sequence is a twentysomething-on-one battle royale that shows just how much the film has come down from its promising start. Instead of emphasizing the dynamics of the filmmaking, or the 3D image, Singer sets up wide shots of each X-Man, in fighting stance, launching their respective assaults. All the thematic interest and character dimension that's defined the best of this series falls away for a conventional action display. Somewhere in there, you'll swear you hear, "Avengers, assemble."

This one will be huge. It will rent like **BATMAN V SUPERMAN, THE AVENGERS, DEADPOOL, LONDON HAS FALLEN, SAN ANDREAS** and **SPECTRE**.





10/11 1 **GHOSTBUSTERS** COMEDY
\$106 MILL BO 4123 SCREENS PG-13 116 MINUTES
DVD/BLU RAY

Melissa McCarthy (THE BOSS, TAMMY, THE HEAT, IDENTITY THIEF, HANGOVER III, ST. VINCENT)

Kristen Wiig (ZOOLANDER 2, THE MARTIAN, THE DIARY OF A TEENAGE GIRL, ANCHORMAN 2, HER)

Like Ivan Reitman's [1984 original](#), Paul Feig's *Ghostbusters* is perhaps too high-concept for its own good. The remake's opening, of a guided tour through a haunted mansion that concludes after hours with the guide (Zach Woods) being assaulted by a true paranormal spirit, could pass as a sequence straight out of a horror film, despite the fact that the guide spends his day telling tourists about some of the house's amusing contemporary innovations, such as "an Irish-proof security fence." The scene effectively introduces the various tones of the entire film, but it also shows how sudden and disorienting the lurches between improv comedy and jump-scare horror can be.

Ghostbusters is at its best when it's attuned to micro-scale interactions. In the same amount of time it takes to build up to a spirit leaping out of something and coating unlucky mortals in ectoplasm, the film effectively delineates the clashing personalities of estranged friends Erin Gilbert (Kristen Wiig) and Abby Yates (Melissa McCarthy). From the start, it's easy to see why Erin, a tenure-bound professor who dresses conservatively and conducts herself with serious calm to impress colleagues, drifted apart from Abby, who still clings to her youthful fascination with ghosts and has the unkempt life of the obsessive to prove it. Even when the two finally confront a spirit, the scene's payoff is less their paranormal experience than the giddiness they feel over it, the shared relief that their entire lives have been vindicated.

Fleet character introduction dominates *Ghostbusters*'s first act, and it's remarkable how quickly the cast puts forward fully realized characters. Abby's engineer, Holtzmann (Kate McKinnon), looks at everything with a combination of disdain, sardonic dismissal, and genuine interest, a contradictory assortment of moods held together by her wry squints and wolfish smiles. Patty Tolan (Leslie Jones), an MTA worker, joins the scientific trio after spotting a ghost on her shift and immediately balances out her new co-workers' eggheaded behavior with much-needed everyday knowhow.



When it's good, director Paul Feig's *Ghostbusters* is funny, driven, sometimes even a bit scary. The only upshot of this development is that it gives the rest of the cast freer rein to shine. McKinnon has to field just as much techno-babble as the film's two marquee stars, but she puts a puckish spin on it that renders Holtzmann's meatiest dialogue as the feverishly obsessive rants of a particularly gifted problem child. Meanwhile, Jones redeems Ernie Hudson's role from the original [Ghostbusters](#), asserting her comic chops while also building a character who may lack graduate degrees, but has more than enough intelligence to hang with three experts. Not to be outdone, though, is Chris Hemsworth, who plays the Ghostbusters's dim-witted secretary, Kevin, a man too stupid and self-obsessed to even answer phones, but who's kept around as eye candy; the actor is a surprisingly deft comedian, both in his tripping physical movements and his self-effacing airheadedness.

This will be as huge a renter as **BATMAN V SUPERMAN, NEIGHBORS 2, CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE, ZOOTOPIA, THE BOSS, JOY** and **STAR WARS VII**.



10/11 2 THE INFILTRATOR THRILLER
\$16 MILL BO 1601 SCREENS R 127 MINUTES DVD/BLU RAY

**Bryan Cranston (TV—BREAKING BAD, HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER---
FILM—TRUMBO, GODZILLA, ARGO, TOTAL RECALL)**

The action starts in 1986. Bob and his colleagues, posing as a wealthy buyer, his front man, and his fiancée, are players in a scheme aimed at stemming the tide of coke pouring into Florida from Pablo Escobar's operation in Colombia. As the final title cards inform us, theirs was a highly successful operation, resulting in the arrest of many members of Escobar's operation and the takedown of a Panamanian bank that had been laundering his money. Yet the screenplay, which was written by the director's mother, Ellen Brown Furman, makes that victory feel hollow, failing to convey how difficult it must have been to burrow so far into the confidence of Escobar's camp.

Its clunky incidents of exposition leave us with no real understanding of what anyone is thinking or feeling.

Gaining access to Escobar's main distributor, Roberto Alcaino (Benjamin Bratt), for instance, seems surprisingly easy for Bob, and beginning to earn the man's trust involves little more than trotting out Bob's aunt, Vicky (Olympia Dukakis), to remind Roberto of his own earthy aunt. We hear none of the planning that leads to that encounter, and Vicky disappears from *The Infiltrator* after that scene, leaving unanswered any questions the viewer may have about why the team risked involving a civilian in such a delicate operation, or whether introducing Roberto to Bob's actual aunt might not make it easier for the cartel to discover Bob's real identity. Draining all the complexity and most of the tension from what were presumably carefully engineered and nerve-wracking encounters makes Bob and company's infiltration of Escobar's inner circle look about as easy as befriending a new set of neighbors.

Granted, as the on-screen executions and some speeches by nervous informants remind us, these are neighbors who might shoot you in the head at any moment. But *The Infiltrator* can't keep up the backbeat of adrenaline-fueled dread that makes true-crime movies like Martin Scorsese's [Goodfellas](#) thrum. Instead, it interjects clumsy scenes like the one in which Roberto lectures Bob ominously about the importance of trust in relationships like theirs while chopping vegetables with a very sharp knife.



The film's attempts to convey the sleazy glamour of the drug lords' world are just as flatfooted, its random shots of nearly naked female bodies and obtrusively cranked-up power rock succeeding only in drawing attention to themselves. Frequent cuts from Bob on the job at strip clubs or racetracks to Bob and his beatifically lit wife and children playing an after-dinner board game, or Bob and Evelyn at a parent-teacher conference, hammer home an obvious point about the emotional disconnect caused by undercover work without providing any insight into either Bob's work or his home life.

Bob and Kathy's growing friendship with Roberto and his wife, Gloria (Elena Anaya), is presented as a major source of psychological conflict, but just seeing the two at Roberto and Elena's house a few times falls far short of conveying the depth of their friendship. Instead of feeling their emotional bond, we hear about it, in undercooked scenes like the one in which Roberto toasts the other couple as being "like family." That speech is typical of *The Infiltrator*, a short burst of clunky exposition that leaves us with no real understanding of what anyone is thinking or feeling.

This will rent as well as **HARDCORE HENRY, 13 HOURS, EYE IN THE SKY, THE FINEST HOURS** and **TRIPLE 9**.



10/11 1 THE LEGEND OF TARZAN ADVENTURE
\$122 MILL BO 3509 SCREENS PG-13 110 MINUTES
DVD/COMBO and 3DISC 3D COMBO
28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX

Alexander Skarsgard (WAR ON EVERYONE, ZOOLANDER 2, HIDDEN, THE GIVER)

Opening with a text crawl that explicitly orients the film around Europe's colonization of Africa, David Yates's *The Legend of Tarzan* stakes out its thematic ambition within seconds. This narrative focus drags Edgar Rice Burroughs's century-old pulp into the social perspective of the present day, balancing the material's inherent exoticism with an examination of the racism that perpetuates it. In this respect, the film recalls Gore Verbinski's [The Lone Ranger](#), which also used the guise of an unnecessary adaptation of a dated work to directly comment on its source material.

Even Tarzan (Alexander Skarsgård) himself has been updated to reflect this changed context. The film provides flashbacks of the character's youth living among a group of apes, his tense interactions with human hunters, and his meeting future wife Jane Potter (Margot Robbie), yet we meet the man as the reclaimed John Clayton III, having left the Congo to reside in his parents' English home as the rightful Lord of Greystoke. Though he's acclimated to his ostensibly true self, Tarzan exists as a living legend, and when he receives a personal invitation from the King of Belgium to tour a restructured Congo, it's clearly Tarzan, not John, who the monarch wants. The unseen king, who wishes to exploit Tarzan's celebrity to lend positive press for his colonial endeavors in the nation, isn't the only person wishing to take advantage of the white man's connection to the territory. An American envoy, George Washington Williams (Samuel L. Jackson), wants Tarzan to see if the king is enslaving the Congolese populace and to use his reputation to call foul if so, while a tribal chief, Mbonga (Djimon Hounsou), simply wants to settle an old score.

Placing Tarzan at the center of the film's narrative and thematic threads strengthens the character's relationship to larger issues of the exploitation of Africa, but it also dilutes the impact of the critique of racism and slavery by filtering them through a white man's experience. This becomes especially evident when Léon Rom (Christoph Waltz), the Belgian king's envoy to the Congo, captures Jane along with a group of villagers. Jane is a strident character, and one who regularly points out the racism of her captors; when Rom laments that Tarzan was supposed to be the only casualty of his mission to deliver the man to Mbonga in exchange for diamonds, Jane immediately points out the thousands of indigenous people Belgium has already enslaved. Yet the film completely marginalizes the Congolese, who are limited to group shots where their chained hands and defeated faces elicit reflexive horror. These people are expendable, but Jane, who enjoys the protection of her kidnapers, hogs the screen time, and Tarzan's attention.

This will rent as well as **THE NICE GUYS, THE JUNGLE BOOK, THE HUNTSMAN: WINTER'S WAR, BATMAN V SUPERMAN, 13 HOURS, 10 CLOVERFIELD LANE** and **THE 5TH WAVE**.





10/18 1 ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

FANTASY

\$79 MILL BO 2946 SCREENS PG 113 MINUTES

DVD/COMBO

Johnny Depp (BLACK MASS, EDWARD SCISSOR HANDS, 21 JUMP STREET, PUBLIC ENEMIES, RANGO, DONNIE BRASCO)

Helena Bonham Carter (SUFFRAGETTE, THE LONE RANGER, THE KING'S SPEECH, FIGHT CLUB)

In the mid 1980s, producer Irwin Allen mounted a two-part miniseries based on Lewis Carroll's satirical Alice novels. In Allen's hands, Wonderland was tackily transformed into a plush extended episode of *Fantasy Island*, featuring such oddities as Ann Jillian running at the speed of light, John Stamos flipping his pageboy back and forth at a unicorn, Carol Channing turning into a goat after promising a little girl jam tomorrow or yesterday but never today, and Patrick Duffy in furrie-kabuki makeup eating a tin can.

Tim Burton's 2010 Disney-theme-park version of [Alice in Wonderland](#) made Allen's masquerade-ball soap opera look like veritable CliffsNotes.

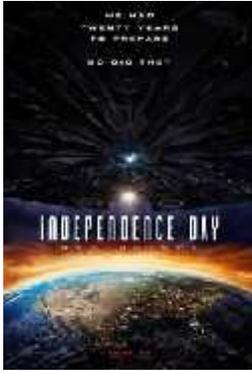
No such devil's-advocate arguments exist for the surprisingly long-delayed sequel *Alice Through the Looking Glass*. In place of the even halfheartedly episodic nature of the first installment, the new film does away with the format entirely for a noisome, time-traveling caper plot, which at the very least cuts down on the number of fresh annoyances, but sadly increases their amplitude. Carrying the torch for lip-service feminism, the film opens with Mia Wasikowska's Alice Kingsleigh captaining her cargo ship, *Wonder*, through treacherous reefs to avoid marauding pirates—and closing the spiritual loop of corporate synergy by referencing, ever so obliquely, the studio's *Pirates of the Caribbean* franchise. The film doesn't clear the CGI cobwebs or successfully anchor any of its new events with emotional heft.

With the starchy fiancé she left in the lurch now threatening to take over her beloved vessel and demote her to a clerical job more suited to a woman's position in 19th-century London, Alice stumbles *Narnia*-style through a bedroom mirror that takes her back to Wonderland. Alice is informed that Hatter, Wonderland's own pseudo-Ronald McDonald, is ailing. He's convinced that his family, who he believed to have perished at the breath of the Jabberwocky years ago, is still alive.

Reiterating the first film's assertion that no one else in the fantasy world matters half as much as Depp's Mad Hatter, Alice decides instantly to bend the rules of time and space to help him. She travels to a castle containing the universal clock, which is watched over by Time himself (Sacha Baron Cohen, getting an awful lot of mileage from what ultimately boils down to a feature-length Werner Herzog impersonation). And, of course, bending the rules of time and space invites consequences that could destroy the fabric of all matter. No matter: The important thing is that Alice gets Depp's sour puss to simperingly smile once again.



This will rent as well as **THE NICE GUYS, BATMAN V SUPERMAN, THE JUNGLE BOOK, ZOOTOPIA, EDDIE THE EAGLE,** and **THE MARTIAN.**



10/18 1 INDEPENDENCE DAY: RESURGENCE

SCIFI/ACTION

\$99 MILL BO 4123 SCREENS PG-13 120 MINUTES
DVD/BLU RAY 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX

Liam Hemsworth (THE HUNGER GAMES, CUT BANK, THE EXPENDABLES 2, EMPIRE STATE)

Jeff Goldblum (THE BIG CHILL, THE FLY, MAN OF THE YEAR, JURASSIC PARK)

Like many of Roland Emmerich's disaster epics, *Independence Day: Resurgence* assembles a variety of thin character sketches, pitting several pairs of unconnected stereotypes against an apocalypse, busily cross-cutting between them and fashioning an endless series of redundant starts and stops. In a characteristically reductive contrast, a white American nerd (Nicolas Wright) teams with a black tribesman (Deobia Oparei) who stands in for all of Central Africa because that part of the world is, per standard American blockbuster implication, a singular, undifferentiated mass of unfamiliar customs. Rounding out the 1990s-era blockbuster nostalgia package, there's also a plucky love interest, several imperiled children, a lovable dog, and Judd Hirsch doing his obnoxious "old Jewish man" routine, which reaches its nadir when his character says something along the lines of "What? It takes an alien invasion to get you to visit your father?"

After several scenes alternating between the various pairs, with a few *Independence Day* alums bandied about so as to espouse an illusion of continuity, Emmerich rewards our patience with an impersonally massive set piece involving the usual generic stew of mass CGI-imagined demolition.

This will be as big a renter as **BATMAN V SUPERMAN, THE NICE GUYS, WHISKEY FOXTROT TANGO, 10 CLEARFIELD LANE,** and **DEADPOOL.**





10/18 3 OUR KIND OF TRAITOR THRILLER
\$4 MILL BO 399 SCREENS R 108 MINUTES
DVD/BLU RAY

Stellan Skarsgård (AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON, THOR: THE DARK WORLD, THE RAILWAY MAN, MAMMA MIA!)

A pungent political melodrama about the infiltration of the Russian mafia into the highest echelons of British politics and finance, the film works as both a modern morality play for our globalized world and as an indictment of Europe's ethical bankruptcy. Dima (Stellan Skarsgård), a money launderer for the Russian mafia, befriends a British literature professor, Perry (Ewan McGregor), on holiday in Marrakech and convinces him to pass sensitive information to the MI6 in exchange for political asylum for Dima and his family, whose lives are threatened by the Prince (Grigoriy Dobrygin), Dima's psychotic new boss. Playing the unheralded MI6 foil to Perry's virtuous naïf is Hector (Damian Lewis), the woefully underfunded spymaster who goes behind his superiors' backs to bring Dima and his information, which would compromise some of the nation's most powerful men, to Britain.

It works as both a modern morality play for our globalized world and as an indictment of Europe's ethical bankruptcy.

Opening in the U.S. a week after the Brexit vote, the film addresses issues that the referendum raised about Britain's relationship with the European Union: the effect of the EU's problems on the U.K.; who should be allowed to enter the island nation; national economic and political sovereignty; and Russian interference in European affairs. Le Carré's Russian villains are far more nuanced than those in similar European-set thrillers, running the entire gamut of the moral spectrum. As in [A Most Wanted Man](#), *Our Kind of Traitor* exhibits the author's command of the contemporary European political landscape, making the recent 007 films and their knockoffs appear woefully cartoonish in comparison. The film, in the end, has more in common with classic crime dramas of conscience like [The Third Man](#) and *A Touch of Evil*, which are referenced in a kaleidoscopic action sequence in Bern's Einstein Museum that cleverly combines the climactic chase sequences of those films.



Himself a former MI6 agent, le Carré is interested in the way governments and individuals balance self-interest with the moral obligation to fight evil, which Hector (clearly a stand-in for the author) describes as an absolute human quality, independent of circumstance. No moral relativist, Hector indicts the moral and ethical failure of the British government to stem the tide of blood money and black profits into the nation in the film's show-stopping climactic speech. *Our Kind of Traitor* doubles down on this moral outrage in a coda showing Perry walking against the human tide crossing the London Bridge, an invocation of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, reminding us that evil might not flourish as long as there are good men willing to fight it.

This will rent as well as **HARDCORE HENRY, EYE IN THE SKY, TRUMBO, CRIMINAL, TRUE STORY, STAND OFF, HITMAN: AGENT 47** and **SOUTHPAW**.



10/25 3 ANTHROPOID THRILLER

\$3 MILL BO 452 SCREENS R 120 MINUTES DVD/BLU RAY

Jamie Dornan (TV---THE FALL, NEW WORLDS)

The film's opening scene reveals the invisible line that separates patriots from traitors, when Czechoslovakian resistance fighters are given refuge by a man that could just as easily be a partisan as an undercover Nazi informant. In developing complex characters that embody the ambiguity underlying the traitor-patriot binary, director Sean Ellis's film offers a potent examination of the moral rectitude of resistance. While ultimately validating its partisan heroes, *Anthropoid* never shies away from calculating the devastating human costs and disastrous consequences of their bravery.

This film about patriots fighting and dying for a nation that no longer exists elegizes a lost past, its poignant depiction of Czech and Slovak unity functioning as a subtle metaphor for the necessity of European cooperation in the face of contemporary totalitarian threats, both internal and external. In having the two principal resistance fighters, Jan (Jamie Dornan) and Josef (Cillian Murphy), be Czech and Slovak, respectively, the filmmakers reveal the story's timeliness in its call for unity and cooperation, rather than appeasement and collaboration, in the face of terror. Director Sean Ellis's film offers a potent examination of the moral rectitude of resistance.

While *Anthropoid* never mentions the creation of an independent Slovak Republic during the war as a Nazi puppet state, it provides an otherwise valuable overview of the political and historical background that led to the German occupation of Czechoslovakia. A brief but passionate prologue puts the blame squarely on the betrayal of Czechoslovakia by the Allied powers under the Munich Agreement, which ceded the nation to Hitler in 1938 without a fight in an effort to appease Germany and forestall the fascist takeover of Europe. The film thereby places the responsibility for the subsequent deaths of innocent Czechoslovakians on the European leaders that sacrificed them in a misguided effort to avoid further conflict, an experience whose lessons continue to be relevant in modern Europe.



Anthropoid captures the terror and paranoia of life under Reich-Protector Heydrich, a principal architect of the Final Solution that came to be known as the Butcher of Prague. The film's persistent use of extreme close-ups and narrow cropping captures in visceral terms the claustrophobia of resistance, with its endless duplicity and sense of being under constant surveillance. The drained lighting effectively mimics the drabness of WWII color documentary footage, with its almost surreal sense of faded glory and ethereal violence. When the heroes cross the Charles Bridge, obscured in the early morning twilight by dense winter mist, they look like ghosts crossing over from the land of the living to the realm of the dead, a perfect image for life under Nazi rule as a kind of living death. The film's ending, where death is portrayed as a kind of baptism through the purifying act of sacrifice, reaffirms the impossibility of life under a regime whose *raison d'être* is murder.

And yet, the film is wise enough to understand that theirs are also violent deeds—that the quixotic nature of their noble mission will have deadly consequences for those in whose name they fight. When the Nazis pull out the severed head of a female resistance fighter to intimidate another partisan, we're reminded that the fight against fascism continues, and the example of these courageous men and women continues to be disturbingly relevant.

This will do as well as **CRIMINAL, RACE, EYE IN THE SKY, THE FINEST HOURS, TRIPLE 9** and **13 HOURS**.



10/25 3 CAPTAIN FANTASTIC COMEDY

**\$4 MILL BO 599 SCREENS R 118 MINUTES DVD/COMBO
28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX**

Viggo Mortensen (THE TWO FACES OF JANUARY, A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE, LORD OF THE RINGS, CRIMSON TIDE)

Despite threats by his straight-laced father-in-law, Jack (Frank Langella), to have him arrested, the family piles into a big blue bus and makes its way to New Mexico for the funeral. The trip offers Ross ample opportunity to pit his band of wacky hippies against the vagaries of the modern world, leading to scene after scene of the family freaking out society's squares.

Throughout, their idiosyncrasies are played for punchlines, from Ben walking out of his bus fully nude for no apparent reason other than to shock a couple passing by, to his insistence that his kids drink wine with dinner.

Captain Fantastic is premised on a radical act that it dutifully trivializes at every turn. Ross makes little attempt to illuminate how and why people might choose to alter their lives so drastically, and basic questions (what exactly is Ben's endgame? Does he expect kids to get married at some point?) are never really answered. Instead, the family's exposure to society renders them increasingly absurd, to the point that, when they finally arrive at the funeral, they burst in mid-service wearing garish clothing (a red '70s suit, a gas mask, a dinosaur costume), with Ben hopping on the altar to deliver a screed against organized religion. This isn't the behavior of radicals bucking the system; it's the antics of characters contrived to hit the quirky, crowd-pleasing notes that made [Little Miss Sunshine](#) a hit with audiences.

The film is premised on a radical act that it buries beneath a grueling avalanche of quirk.

Ben is explicitly portrayed as a leftist, one who celebrates "Noam Chomsky Day" instead of Christmas and who has clearly indoctrinated his kids with an anti-capitalist ideology. At one point, he identifies his eldest son, Bo (George MacKay), as a "Trotskyite," to which Bo, offended, retorts that the proper term is "Trotskyist," and, anyway, he's now a Maoist. At various points, the kids deliver pithy little diatribes against consumer culture with the rehearsed precision of a sales pitch. Ross may be sympathetic to the family's politics, but by placing these messages in the mouths of these cartoonish characters, he allows the audience to dismiss them as just delightful quirks.



Once Jack's been carted off screen, Ross piles on about five different feel-good endings, the most egregious of which sees the family performing an exultant cover of "Sweet Child O' Mine" as they cremate their matriarch's corpse on a bonfire, ostensibly giving her the funeral she would have wanted. The moment is calculated for maximum emotional punch, but the family's choice to sing a popular rock song rings hollow in light of the high-brow tastes and ignorance of popular culture they demonstrate throughout the film. *Captain Fantastic* ends on a quieter note than this boisterous funeral scene, a tranquil shot of the family eating breakfast in their new home that lingers several beats longer than audiences might expect, inviting us to study Ben's expression, a subtle and poignant mixture of serenity, anxiety, and perhaps even resignation. It's an unusually reflective moment in a film that more often prefers broad whimsy to rigorous

This will rent as well as **THE LOBSTER, GOD'S NOT DEAD 2, BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING 2, ZOOLANDER 2** and **GRANDMA**.



10/25 1 LIGHTS OUT HORROR

**\$63 MILL BO 2987 SCREENS PG-13 81 MINUTES
DVD/BLU RAY 28 DAYS BEFORE REDBOX**

**Teresa Palmer (TRIPLE 9, POINT BREAK, WISH YOU WERE HERE, WARM BODIES)
Maria Bello (THE 5TH WAVE, MCFARLAND USA, PRISONERS, GROWN UPS 2, THE COMPANY MEN)**

Twentysomething goth Rebecca (Teresa Palmer) lives alone in downtown L.A., where she resists committing to her rocker boyfriend, Bret (Alexander DiPersia), in the red glow of a tattoo parlor's ominously blinking sign. She's drawn back into her dysfunctional family to come to the aid of her young brother, Martin (Gabriel Bateman), who's suffering in school due to lack of sleep. Like all children in producer James Wan's cinematic universe, the sunset turns Martin's home into a hothouse of eerie scratching, manic behavior, and doors left forebodingly ajar. Though neither child seems to even briefly doubt the existence of a monster in the family home, both know who's to blame: their mother, Sophie (Maria Bello), who's clinically depressed and likely off her meds once again. "Remember to take your vitamins, Mommy," Martin says before he leaves the family home to stay with Rebecca.

There's a lengthy digression about the role of Child Protective Services, and Rebecca does enough crate-digging to determine that the monster haunting her family is Diana (Alicia Vela-Bailey), an old friend of Sophie's from her days in a psychiatric institution who, even in undead form, still has dangerous attachment issues. After early scenes that dwell on her hard-earned fear of commitment and responsibility, Rebecca assumes the role of matriarch, attempting to obtain guardianship of Martin as a harried Sophie becomes increasingly determined to make Diana a member of the family. The film manages to hit the notes of boilerplate family-in-peril horror while steering well clear of any suggestion that a shred of empathy might help resolve Sophie's mental illness or Martin's ongoing trauma.



In the midst of the film's bewildering emotional logic, Sandberg makes a few smart decisions. He uses otherwise rote haunting scenes in order to visually explain the quirks of Diana's wrath, allowing us to understand the rules of the game before his characters do. The finer points of those rules are never entirely clear (Diana attacks from dark corners of otherwise bright rooms, and at one point her screechings can be heard originating from a well-lit hallway), but Sandberg is a shrewd student of audience engagement, saving the deployment of one glaringly obvious light source for a hugely effective mid-film chase scene. Without missing a beat, he busts out another that caused the crowd I saw the film with to burst into a spontaneous ovation.

This will rent as well as **THE FOREST, 10 CLOVERFIELD LANE, THE HUNTSMAN: WINTER'S WAR, THE 5TH WAVE, HARDCORE HENRY, THE BOY and THE REVENANT.**



10/25 3 PAPA: HEMINGWAY IN CUBA DRAMA
\$2 MILL BO 357 SCREENS R 110 MINUTES DVD/BLU RAY

Giovanni Ribisi (TED 2, SELMA, CONTRABAND, GANGSTER SQUAD, PUBLIC ENEMIES)

Joely Richardson (MAGGIE, THE MESSENGER, THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO, THE PATRIOT)

In the imagination of the general American public, Cuba exists as a sort of time capsule, cut off from the world since we started our embargo half a century ago. Fitting, then, that the first American film made in Cuba since relaxing the embargo is a period piece. It's also not surprising that, though set in the middle of the Cuban Revolution, the movie is essentially about Americans, including one of the most mythologized Americans of the twentieth century, who just happened to have spent a fair chunk of his life in Havana.

Papa: Hemingway in Cuba is framed through the eyes of Ed Myers (Giovanni Ribisi), who is actually screenwriter Denne Bart Petitclerc, though I cannot for the life of me figure out why they changed his name. From the one grainy, black-and-white picture that turns up -- the one that ran with his 2006 obituary -- it doesn't even seem to have been a case of whitewashing. Myers is, as Petitclerc was, born in Washington, taught himself to write by retyping Hemingway's novels, and got a job as a war correspondent in Korea before taking his position at the Miami GloBe. It was there that he wrote a fan letter to Hemingway (Adrian Sparks), then living at Finca Vigía on the outskirts of Havana, which the author liked enough to write back and invite the young journalist fishing. At first, Ed is awestruck by his idol, and then embarrassed at the habit he and his fourth wife, Mary (Joely Richardson), shared of swimming in the all-together. But soon enough he's part of the inner circle, calling him Papa, staying at the plantation, making tourist-friendly appearances at El Floridita, and downing copious daiquirís, all while Batista's Cuba crumbles in the background.

There isn't much evidence in the real world that indicates how Hemingway felt about the revolution while it was going on. As practically a tourist industry to himself, he could easily have had an impact just by making a statement one way or the other; that he didn't suggests at least an ambivalence towards the rise of Castroism.

Early on, after loyalist soldiers brutally put down an attack on the presidential palace, Hemingway curses the folly of war, which is a nice, safely ambiguous sentiment to put in his mouth. Later, though, he seems more unambiguously in support of the rebellion. It seems oddly dissonant with the character from the earlier scene, but seems a Hollywood-natural conclusion to the suspicions raised when an FBI agent (Anthony Molinari) and a mob boss (James Remar) both approach Myers to get a line on what Hemingway is up to. This will rent as well as **THE LOBSTER, FATHERS AND DAUGHTERS, CRIMINAL, MIDNIGHT SPECIAL, RACE, and LADY IN THE VAN.**



10/25 1 STAR TREK BEYOND SCI FI ADVENTURE
\$148 MILL BO 3982 SCREENS **PG-13** 122 MINUTES
DVD/COMBO/3 DISC 3 D COMBO

Chris Pine (THE FINEST HOURS, HORRIBLE BOSSES 2, INTO THE WOODS, JACK RYAN: SHADOW RECRUIT, UNSTOPPABLE, STAR TREK)
Karl Urban (THE LOFT, RIDDICK, DREDD, RED, THE BOURNE SUPREMACY)

The first lines of dialogue from *Star Trek Beyond* offer a caustic auto-critique: Captain James T. Kirk (Chris Pine) of the *USS Enterprise* uses the franchise-familiar Captain's Log device to muse about not knowing “where one day ends and the next begins,” and about missions that feel “episodic.” Were this a J.J. Abrams film, this self-aware setup might lead to a string of winking meta commentaries on the series's progression up to this point. But instead, this particular script direction plays right to new director Justin Lin's established strengths: Like the *Fast and the Furious* films, *Star Trek Beyond* emphasizes the inter-personal dynamics of the *Enterprise*'s crew, and functions best as an extended team-building exercise.

A new mission from the Federation necessitates that the *Enterprise* travel to “deep space,” an uncharted territory wherein an ambush awaits that tears the vessel to pieces. Scattered across an alien planet in neatly organized pairs, the spacecraft's crew has to utilize their own smarts and some vastly outdated Starfleet technology in order to regroup and counter-attack their enemy. This is a rudimentary premise, but it provides Lin with ample genre frameworks to exploit—a “corporate retreat”-style plot, brought on by Kirk's initial apathy toward his role as captain, that turns into a wilderness-survival film, and the “one last job” template the director uses to set up the characters' coordinated prison-break effort. More importantly, the divided nature of this conflict gives Lin a fractured team that he can actively work to unify.

An important contrast in *Star Trek Beyond* is established between the soulless, CGI-rendered enemy aircrafts, piloted en masse by the lone mind of a radical extremist orchestrating synchronized assaults, and the strengths of the *Enterprise* crew, a team that can think in multiple directions at once, and whose collaborative creativity allows them to find potential in antiquated technologies. An unearthed, centuries-old Starfleet ship is this film's classic car—and its outmoded anachronisms (a boombox playing “Fight the Power,” for instance) a representation of human resiliency.

Lin largely delivers *Star Trek* back to the agency of its characters, after Abrams used the franchise as practice for remaking *Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope* (2009's [Star Trek](#)) and as a soapbox-political *Wrath of Kahn* retread (2013's [Star Trek Into Darkness](#)). Which makes it a real shame that Lin's cardinal weakness as an action director has yet to be remedied—namely, that he's just not very good at directing action. As in the majority of his *Fast and Furious* films, Lin shoots kineticism in close-up, resulting in a disorientation of space that, ironically, distances us from the characters whose dynamics he's otherwise so good at developing. This is particularly a problem aboard the besieged *Enterprise*, as the director's quick-cut edits, cramped framing, and wild camera movements render an early set piece incoherent, and disengage us from the vast mortal toll of the battle taking place.

Much stronger are the scenes between the film's action beats—the boisterous banter, coy romantic gestures, and maybe most vital of all, the communal drinking. The latter kind of scenes have become something of a calling card for Lin, who locates within them both a feeling of jocular celebration and catharsis—a tone that falls somewhere along the spectrum of the drinking scenes in Howard Hawks and Terence Davies movies. In *Star Trek Beyond*, Lin ends on one of these scenes, and it's a modestly powerful tribute not only to the late Leonard Nimoy and Anton Yelchin (actors to whom the film is dedicated), but to the very idea of socialization as a source of comfort and strength in the aftermath of loss.

This will be as huge a renter as **BATMAN V SUPERMAN, CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR, NOW YOU SEE ME 2, NEIGHBORS 2, THE NICE GUYS, CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE** and **ZOOTOPIA**.

