



11/4 2 A MOST WANTED MAN THRILLER
\$16 MILL BO 2135 SCREENS R 122 MINUTES

Philip Seymour Hoffman (PIRATE RADIO, PATCH, DOUBT, MONEYBALL, BEFORE THE DEVIL KNOWS YOU'RE DEAD)
Robin Wright (MONEYBALL, THE GIRL WITH THE GOLD TATTOO, UNBREAKABLE, THE PLEDGE)

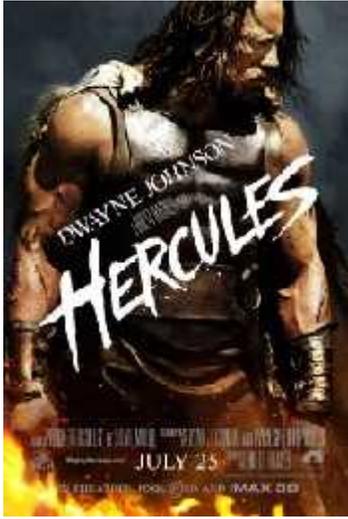
Set in modern Hamburg, the rollicking plot kicks off with the arrival of Issa Karpov, who slips off a cargo ship and into the Elbe, crawling up on shore like a soaked rat. Revealed as the illegitimate son of a powerful Russian general, Karpov has responded to his father's rape of his Chechen mother, and the broader exploitation of his homeland, by engaging in resistance fighting and radical Islam, resulting in torture by government officials and a stint in a Turkish prison. Despite initial fears

that the newly free Karpov is in Hamburg to commit some act of terrorism, the titular character seems mostly concerned with putting his past behind him, equally burdened by his violent history and his father's evil deeds, symbolized by millions of dollars held in a German bank account.

This makes him the perfect target for the film's clandestine, extralegal undercover agency, led by truculent spymaster Günther Bachmann (Hoffman). Even further off the grid than Le Carré's usual stable of British operators, Bachmann's unit works to transform the wanted Karpov into a useful pawn, all while feuding with other intelligence groups, ranging from mainline German authorities to visiting CIA agent Martha Sullivan (Wright), who may be a friend or a foe. Bachmann's struggle to pull off a sophisticated surreptitious scheme at times recalls the internal mechanics of *The Wire* (meticulous on-the-ground police work matched against flashy but ineffectual showpiece operations), with both alternatives feeding into a larger evocation of post-9/11 weariness. Using one incriminated character to flip another, Bachmann's plan details an unfolding continuum of shame, in which everyone seems guilty of something, with the all-seeing mechanics of the state intent on making them pay for those crimes, embroiling crooked bankers, naïve human rights lawyers, and complicated criminals in its wide web, aimed at achieving some hazy dream of security.



If you did well with **BRICK MANSIONS, THE AMERICAN, THE RAILWAY MAN, FADING GIGOLO, THE DEBT, THE MONUMENTS MEN, THE WOLF OF WALL STREET,** and **JACK REACHER** then this will be a good renter too.



11/4 1 HERCULES ACTION

\$72 MILL BO 3152 SCREENS PG-13 98 MINUTES

Dwayne Johnson (PAIN AND GAIN, FAST AND FURIOUS 6, EMPIRE STATE, FAST FIVE, RACE TO WITCH MOUNTAIN)

John Hurt (SNOWPIERCERS, THE CONFESSION, SIGHTSEERS, OUTLANDER, HARRY POTTER SORCERER'S STONE)

"I thought heroes fought for glory." Ah, but they don't, as Ergenia (Rebecca Ferguson) soon learns. The princess stands before Hercules (Dwayne Johnson) in one of those rough-looking establishments frequented by pre-Biblical manly men, her gauzy gown just a bit out of place. Her kingdom of Thrace is under threat by a bunch of marauders, she says, and she's asking for Hercules' help. He sets her straight: he's not a hero but a mercenary, he declares, and "Mercenaries fight for

gold."

Hercules and his crew roam over Greece, preceded by stories of his derring-do so they might be hired to do exactly what Ergenia asks, that is, battle villains, save the downtrodden, and preserve a semblance of order. Their workload is enhanced by Hercules' reputation as the son of Zeus and tales of the 12 labors (killing the Lernean Hydra, the Nemean lion, the Erymanthian Boar), aided by his mighty-man-mountain look—the chiseled jaw, the tanned-and-oiled musculature, the perfectly arranged scars.

It's after this performance—as Hercules is boasting, "Civilization has become too civilized for us!"—that Ergenia tracks them down. When she promises Hercules' (considerable) weight in gold as payment, the team agrees to take the job. Back at her kingdom, they endeavor to train an army for her dad, Lord Cotys (John Hurt) and his general, Sitacles (Peter Mullan), in order to fight off the upstart Rhesus (Tobias Santelmann). The two armies clash a few times, each battle an escalation of force, discipline, and choreography.

Just so, the saga of Hercules is offered up here as the entertainment it is and has always been, a set of legends told and retold to explain or reassure, to provide order amid chaos and offer hope in the face of dread. Hercules the con man gets this, makes money off it, and also, of course, will eventually come to deliver on the promise of order and hope, to be a hero in a movie with his name on it. He's moral in his own way, haunted by his own traumas (a bloody scene that pops up in fragments, producing nightmarish visions of the three-headed dog Cerberus, the 12th labor he hasn't yet completed in this rendering of his story), and reluctant to be anything other than the fiction he's become. Still, very entertaining and lots of fun.



This will rent as well as **GODZILLA, TRANSFORMERS: AGE OF EXTINCTION, PACIFIC RIM, NEED FOR SPEED, THE AMAZING SPIDERMAN 2,** and **ROBO COP.**



11/4 1 MALEFICENT FAMILY
\$239 MILL BO 4367 SCREENS PG

Angelina Jolie (MR. AND MRS. SMITH, THE TOURIST, SALT, WANTED, THE BONE COLLECTOR)

Elle Fanning (WE BOUGHT A ZOO, GINGER & ROSA, SUPER 8, THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON)

Gone are the days of helpless princesses and two dimensional villains who are ugly because they are evil and evil because they are ugly. So when the “ugly duckling” of the fairies Maleficent (Angelina Jolie) comes literally flying onto the screen we are presented with a new type of protagonist – a fairy with brown, bird-like wings and surly horns which are at odds with her trusting spirit and strong moral compass. Which begs the question that has been on everyone’s lips from the first moment they saw Jolie mutter the iconic “Well, well, well” in the trailer: what will Disney come up with to turn the good

Maleficent, bad?

The answer is of course, man, specifically a human boy called Stephan (Sharlto Copley), Maleficent’s childhood love who eventually commits the ultimate betrayal against her so that he can become king. Maleficent takes revenge by cursing his baby daughter Aurora in front of the entire court in a scene which (gleefully) is almost a word-for-word reproduction of 1959 original.

But from here the story differs and as the film unravels we see how it might be Aurora herself who unites, rather than divides the two kingdoms.

There are plenty of insightful references and reimaginings to excite fans of the original here, as with the thorned forest, Lana del Rey’s Once Upon a Dream theme-song and Maleficent’s anthropomorphic sidekick Diaval (Sam Riley) who becomes her wings after she loses her own. Imelda Staunton, Juno Temple and Lesley Manville as the three well-meaning but useless fairies tasked with bringing up the young Aurora are the most obvious vehicles for light-relief.

But the film’s biggest thrill is Maleficent’s biting wit. Jolie is staggering and steals the film as you would expect in the titular role with her ice-cool delivery, word-perfect accent and seemingly made for the role good looks.

Her metamorphosis into the character we all we love to hate and her battle against her slowly melting feelings towards Aurora result in the film’s best comic moments.

Check your rentals on **FROZEN, RIO 2, MUPPETS MOST WANTED, LEGENDS OF OZ, THE NUT JOB** and **DESPICABLE ME 2**. Those are the folks who will want this one too.





11/4 1 PLANES: FIRE AND RESCUE FAMILY
 \$59 MILL BO 3523 SCREENS PG 83 MINUTES

VOICED BY: Dane Cook, Ed Harris, Julie Bowen, Brad Garrett, Hal Holbrook.

That main character is Dusty Crophopper (Voiced by Dane Cook) a former dust cropper airplane who turned himself into a champion in high-speed races between a variety of other airplanes. However, due to a faulty gearbox that is no longer in production, Dusty finds he must give up the racing life, only to stumble into another line of work at a distant National Park when he seeks a certification in 'fire & rescue' in order to save his airport from being shut down for inadequate safety standards, which would severely hurt the industry of the nearby town.

The computer-generated animation, especially in its depiction of fires and the dropping of water and fire retardant to put said fires out, is pretty good this time out. The same goes for the celebrity voice work, with Julie Bowen (*Horrible Bosses*) as the particular standout in the role of the amorous air tanker, Lil' Dipper. Wes Studi's (*A Million Ways to Die in the West*) distinct presence might also propel his voice-acting career as the droll but wise Windlifter. There are a few visual and aural cues that makes for some interesting moments, including good use of the AC/DC track, "Thunderstruck", or a scene that harkens back to the 1970s TV show, "CHiPs" (including bringing show star Erik Estrada (*Loaded Weapon 1*) in for voice work), but those moments merely stand out because the main story feels so consummately routine in most other details.

Kids will like it, and it doesn't grossly overstay its welcome too much for restless adults at only 83 minutes, so it will likely be considered passable for most who might have an interest. Still, it's a bit of a tall order to expect families to shell out movie-theater dollars for such material barely a step above generic and forgettable, especially for a formula we're experiencing for the fourth time around, so without bringing more to the proceedings worth loading up the minivan for. Unless you just have to go to the movies for a night out with the kids, it's probably better to catch this one at the bargain theater, or better yet, wait for its initially intended release on home video.



This title will rent as well as **THE NUT JOB, THE LEGO MOVIE, LEGENDS OF OZ, FREEBIRDS, and DIARY OF A WIMPY KID.**



11/4 2 STEP UP ALL IN MUSICAL DRAMA
 \$16 MILL BO 1945 SCREENS PG-13 112 MINUTES

Ryan Guzman (TV—PRETTY LITTLE LIARS—FILM—STEP UP REVOLUTION, THERE'S ALWAYS WOODSTOCK)
Briana Evigan (PUNCTURE WOUNDS, RITES OF PASSAGE, SHE LOVES ME NOT, SORORITY ROW)

The dance routines still have plenty of zip. Having striven to refresh the franchise with trips to New York and Miami for the last two installments (Step Up 3 and Step Up 4: Miami Heat), the filmmakers' big wheeze this time is to round up characters from the first three sequels and pit them up against one another for a high-stakes reality TV

competition in Las Vegas.

This means that Miami street dancer Sean (Ryan Guzman, toned of ab, furrowed of brow, and totally free of charisma) must fall out with his pals in The Mob and instead recruit a new dance crew conveniently made up of figures from the previous movies, including new love interest Andie,(Evigan). Viewer interest flares whenever Izabella Miko's slinky TV contest host is on screen, her OTT outfits and mannered demeanor but things only truly heat up for the climactic dance-off at Caesars Palace, in which our heroes bust their frenetic popping/locking moves and burn up the dance floor. And that, for fans, will be more than enough.



This should do as well as **SINGLE MOM'S CLUB, VAMPIRE ACADEMY, DON JON, THE TO DO LIST, and SCARY MOVIE 5.**



11/4 3 WISH I WAS HERE COMEDY \$4 MILL BO 768
SCREENS R 106 MINUTES

Zach Braff (TV---SCRUBS, ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT---FILM—GARDEN STATE, OZ THE GREAT AND POWERFUL, BLUE MOON)

Joey King (THE CONJURING, THE DARK KNIGHT RISES, WHITE HOUSE DOWN, CRAZY STUPID LOVE)

Kate Hudson (TV---GLEE—FILM--MY BEST FRIEND'S GIRL, SKELETON KEY, SOMETHING BORROWED)

In its broad strokes and more than a few specific details, "Wish I Was Here" recalls Judd Apatow's recent "This Is 40," another au courant snapshot of L.A. entertainment-industry types trying to rekindle the spark in their marriage while coping with a sagging economy, aging parents and demanding children. But where nearly everything in Apatow's film felt messy and lived-in and true (no matter those who accused it of bourgeois hand-wringing), Braff's movie (co-written by the director and his brother, Adam) rarely seems more than a strained sitcom minus only the laugh track. A running gag about Aiden's inability to stop cursing in front of the kids (and an accompanying "swear jar" atop the kitchen fridge) feels about a decade past its sell-by date, while gag scenes involving YouTube-watching and Segway-riding rabbis are fourth-rate Woody Allen at best. All of which is still preferable to when Braff shifts into earnest, soul-searching philosophical mode.

At times, Braff's sophomore feature feels as though he were trying to compress everything people hate about L.A. into one single film. Everyone in the movie has some kind of self-absorbed, woe-is-me cross to bear, and you can bet that by the end of an overlong 113 minutes, they'll all manage to work things out, usually in the course of a slo-mo emo-rock montage sequence, or by standing in the backyard reciting Robert Frost, or by driving out into the desert and sitting on a rock in search of an "epiphany" . Aiden's layabout brother Noah (Josh Gad), who lives in one of those beachside trailer parks with million-dollar views that only exist in bad L.A. movies, has even bigger daddy issues than Aiden does. (But wait, he's also a genius!) Meanwhile, Grace finds herself torn between Judaism's teachings about female modesty and the strange adolescent feelings beginning to course through her body. Even relatively well-adjusted Sarah (the sadly underused Hudson) bemoans the fact that she has to work a dull office job instead of following her own dreams, though the movie never bothers to tell us what those dreams actually are.

If you did well with **LOCKE, BAD WORDS, PALO ALTO, JOE, GRAND PIANO,** and **STILL STILL,** this will see some action too.





11/11 1 HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON 2 FAMILY
\$175 MILL BO 4123 SCREENS PG 102 MINUTES

VOICES OF: Gerard Butler, Cate Blanchette, Jonah Hill, America Ferrara.

“You know that doesn’t wash out!” Again, Hiccup (Jay Baruchel) is slathered in dragon drool, his pet dragon Toothless playfully clambered up onto Hiccup’s chest and pinning him to the ground, his tongue wild and pink and dripping with saliva.

In this sequel, Hiccup and Toothless reaffirm their brilliant friendship, a boy and his dog-like dragon, as devoted to one another as they might possibly be—so devoted, in fact, that Hiccup is missing a foot, lost in the previous movie so that he now matches Toothless in missing a crucial appendage, replaced with a mechanical version. (For the dragon, you’ll recall, it’s a tail fin, replaced by Hiccup’s ingenious mechanical fin.) This physical likeness makes visible their emotional symbiosis, and the film makes visible, repeatedly and rather delightfully, their mutual devotion, in moments like the sloppy licking, the adoring gazes into one another’s eyes, the blissful soaring when Hiccup rides his flying dragon into a great gorgeous blue sky.

This relationship is the foundation of the franchise’s hopeful central theme, which is to say that everyone can get along, even species that seem so opposed as dragons and humans. In this second film, that theme is refined, sort of, in the sense that the potential oppositions are more complicated. Five years after the first film, all Vikings on the Isle of Berk are happily affiliated with dragons (including Hiccup’s best human friend-romantic interest Astrid [America Ferrera], with her dragon Stormfly).

But now they face humans from somewhere else, who want to steal and exploit the dragons for use in an army, led by the scar-faced villain Drago (Djimon Hounsou, the film’s only black man set against a white world). You might guess that Drago and his company have no chance to bring a loyal dragon like Toothless to their dark side, but the film deploys a trick, whereby Drago has access to a force that can more or less hypnotize all dragons into obedience to him.



The cavorting defines the dragons, who can, of course, redirect their attention to flying and fighting whenever they need or whenever instinct or devotion to a person calls them. This capacity makes them different from people, and also objects of people’s amusement and wonder and affection. The first film initiated a plot about a dragon-whispering sort of special person, Hiccup, able also to share his skills with other Vikings in Berk. As Hiccup sees it, he can work this same reconciliation magic with Drago’s dragons and also his troops, including the entertainingly lunkheaded Eret, Son of Eret (Kit Harington). If only he can reason with them, Hiccup asserts, he can thwart the war Drago has planned.

Stoick believes otherwise, no surprise (the differences between father and son drive the plot of the first film). The sequel provides an explanation for this difference, an answer that’s potentially refreshing: the boy is like his mother. This discovery is occasioned by Hiccup’s reunion with his mother, conspicuously absent (and thought dead) in the first film. Indeed, Valka (Cate Blanchett) is about as unlike Stoick as a life partner could be, devoted to world peace and quite fond of dragons. She’s also a useful model for Hiccup, setting up an unusual mother-son dynamic that occasionally recalls the glorious mother-daughter bond in *Brave*, by turns difficult, enchanting, and illuminating.

This will rent as well as **EPIC, THE LEGO MOVIE, FROZEN, THE NUT JOB, DESPICABLE ME 2, and PLANES.**



11/11 1 JERSEY BOYS MUSICAL DRAMA
\$48 MILL BO 3125 SCREENS R 134 MINUTES

Christopher Walken (WEDDING CRASHERS, CATCH ME IF YOU CAN, PULP FICTION, WAYNE'S WORLD 2)
Vincent Piazza (TV'S RESCUE ME, BOARDWALK EMPIRE, THE SOPRANOS)

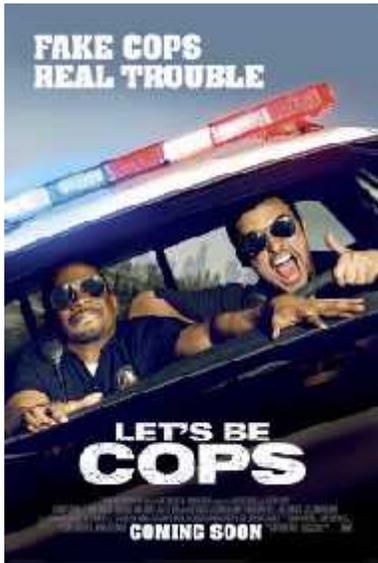
There's something distinctly old-fashioned about the Four Seasons, what you might even call square, but their songs are resilient, melodically thoughtful, and all but custom-tailored for the radio. Valli and his crew are survivors in a business that's never been comfortable with growing old, and it's this element of the band's success that Eastwood connects with from the outset, himself one of the last titans of a business that rarely invites anyone to stick around.

What the director eloquently conveys throughout the story is the sense of the work that goes into entertainment, the unglamorous and often not very fun concessions that are made in the name of having both a modicum of artistic freedom and a regular paycheck. The script and book exudes a fascination with how deals are made, both through lawyers and with a simple handshake, including the regular loans taken out by the Four Seasons' guitarist, Tommy DeVito (Piazza), from local hoods, represented by Christopher Walken's Gyp DeCarlo, to keep the band working. It's DeVito and Valli's worn-in familiarity with criminals that not only helps them secure funds to record with songwriter-producer Bob Crewe (Mike Doyle), but also leads to their meeting with Gaudio, an introduction set up by none other than Joe Pesci (Joseph Russo), just another hustler and would-be musician in the early 1960s.

Eastwood sees the music business as no different from any other American enterprise in its unlawful beginnings, but he insists on the eventual abandonment of this original sin. As in its source material, the film switches between the different band members' perspectives, starting with DeVito before moving on to Gaudio, bassist Nick Massi (Michael Lomenda), and Valli. From the start, DeVito recognizes the escape that fame affords from a go-nowhere existence, but when the Four Seasons are hitting it big, he refuses to cut ties with the gangsters he grew up with, accruing tremendous debts from loan sharks. The film paints this as an extension of a dependence on tradition, on how business is done in small towns and homes. *Jersey Boys* is never overtly political, yet Eastwood traces the pathology of fiscal irresponsibility in the otherwise rich, rooted in an obsession with clout, authenticity, and dubious entitlement.



It is a fun film covering a broad range and will rent as well as **THE FAULT IN OUR STARS, SAVING MR. BANKS, AMERICAN HUSTLE, GRAVITY, MUD, and SON OF GOD.**



11/11 1 LET'S BE COPS COMEDY
\$78 MILL BO 3356 SCREENS R 104 MINUTES

Jake Johnson (TV—NEW GIRLS, HIGH SCHOOL USA—FILM—NEIGHBORS, DRINKING BUDDIES, THE PRETTY ONE, 21 JUMP STREET)

Damon Wayans, Jr. (TV—NEW GIRLS, HAPPY ENDINGS, FILM—SOMEONE MARRY BARRY, SEX & MARRIAGE, THE OTHER GUYS, MARMADUKE)

The premise and a number of early scenes are funny. Girls kiss them and people will do whatever they say. The film was funny enough when the film was still "small time", it became even funnier when Ryan tries to turn this into a job (not being a real cop, but being a fake cop, full time). This is when Ryan and Justin

fool the local LAPD and work with them to bring down a big time mafia boss and his crime ring. I am a big fan of Jake Johnson and of Johnson and Wayans' TV comedy "New Girl," and while the duo share a decent comedic chemistry, this doesn't show all of what either are really capable of.

Except Wayans does have a number of very funny scenes; most notably one where he is "undercover" as a low-level druggie/crazy criminal and then becomes cranked out on crystal meth. The stand out of the cast is James D'Arcy as one of the top mafia guys. He makes a character who shouldn't even be in the movie both funny and interesting.

This will rent as well as **CHEF, NEIGHBORS, BLENDED, SABOTAGE, ANCHOR MAN 2, RIDE ALONG,** and **BAGGAGE CLAIM.**



11/11 1 TAMMY COMEDY
\$87 MILL BO 3256 SCREENS R 97 MINUTES

Melissa McCarthy (BRIDES MAIDS, THE HEAT, IDENTITY THIEF, THIS IS 40, THE BACK UP PLAN)

Susan Sarandon (ATLANTIC CITY, THELMA AND LOUISE, BULL DURHAM, CLOUD ATLAS, MOONLIGHT MILE)

Kathy Bates (THE BLIND SIDE, THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL, MISERY, FRIED GREEN TOMATOES)

Tammy is introduced like so many comedic protagonists before her, suffering a series of humiliating defeats (job lost, car totaled, husband caught cheating), and all in one morning. Once Tammy reaches rock-bottom, she's freed to embark on a foreseeably disastrous road trip with her alcoholic grandmother, Pearl (Susan Sarandon).

The movie's waywardness is the most interesting thing about it, and if McCarthy and Sarandon's antics aren't as uproarious as they would seem to promise on paper, it's not at the expense of watchability. There's a seductive casualness to the film's middle third, even as Tammy and Pearl drift from botched robberies to jail stints to an extravagant Fourth of July celebration at the estate of Pearl's cousin, Lenore (Kathy Bates), and her partner, Susanne (Sandra Oh). Each of these sequences feels stumbled-upon, surreally disconnected from the doddering film surrounding it, in a manner that better recalls the actual experience of a road trip than most on-the-road films. But this sense of amiable laxity sours with the inelegant mid-film introduction of semi-traumatic backstories for both Tammy and Pearl, a flagrant bid for sympathy that McCarthy and Sarandon have already won by nature of being inherently magnetic performers. The film comes to a screeching halt whenever it coarsely attempts to manufacture drama in this way. By insisting on having characters proclaim their pain, the filmmakers eliminate any element of surprise or uncertainty to Tammy and Pearl's relationship, or their individual emotional journeys—which resolve exactly as expected.

This will rent as well as **BLENDED, GROWN UPS 2, DELIVERY MAN, ANCHOR MAN 2, MOM'S NIGHT OUT** and **LAST VEGAS**.



11/18 2 AND SO IT GOES COMEDY
 \$16 MILL BO 2341 SCREENS PG-13 94 MINUTES

Michael Douglas (FALLING DOWN, THE WAR OF THE ROSES, FATAL ATTRACTION, WALL STREET)
Diane Keaton (ANNIE HALL, SOMETHINGS GOTTA GIVE, FATHER OF THE BRIDE, THE GODFATHER)

Here's the deal: Douglas' character, Oren Little, is a class-A-hole movie jerkwad. He shoots dogs with paintball guns. He racially profiles his prospective real estate clients. He's curt, obnoxious, cranky, and above all, arrogant to a fault. So naturally he needs a kind of karmic

comeuppance. The first part of this cosmic re-jiggering arrives in the form of cute little "Little", Sarah (Sterling Jerins). She's the granddaughter he didn't know he had.

See, Oren's ex-junkie stockbroker son (Scott Shepherd) is headed off to jail, and he needs somewhere to park his offspring. Naturally, the Dad he hasn't seen in forever is the perfect substitute parent. Before you can say "plot contrivance", Oren is pawing the kid off on a likeable widow and wannabe lounge singer named Leah (enter Keaton). Interpersonal buffers are broken down, bad attitudes and actions softened, and a last act confrontation continues the process all the way back to Cliché-ville.



A good one for most and should rent as well as **BLENDED, ABOUT LAST NIGHT, LAST VEGAS, HANGOVER III, MEET THE FOCKERS** and **PARENTAL GUIDANCE**.



11/18 1 IF I STAY DRAMA

\$46 MILL BO 3246 SCREENS PG-13 107 MINUTES

Chloe Grace MorteZ (KICK ASS 2, THE MUPPETS MOST WANTED, CARRIE, HUGO, MOVIE 43)

Jamie Blackey (SNOW WHITE AND THE HUNTSMAN, VINYL, AND WHILE WE WERE HERE)

"I am the passenger." Mia (Chloë Grace Moretz) can withstand only a few beats of Iggy Pop's tune while she is, indeed, a passenger in her parents' minivan. As they've promised that she can select the music in order to get her to ride with them, she changes her little brother's choice to Beethoven. "I always wondered," Mia muses in voiceover, as you see her face in the passenger's window, "if mom and

dad were disappointed that I didn't turn out like them."

Yes, Mia sounds like many high schoolers here, though the story urges you to believe she's as special as anyone at the center of a YA saga, which is to say, so very special. In this iteration—R.J. Cutler's movie draws from Gayle Forman's source novel—the special girl is a cellist, gifted of course, but also feeling out of place, as she puts it, because her dad (Joshua Leonard) was a rock drummer and her mom (Mireille Enos) a riot grrl, at least until they gave up their music to become Good Parents (dad is now an English teacher, that is, the very embodiment of selflessness).

They've always encouraged her interest in the cello ("I love the order," she says, "It's like my heart is beating with the cello"), at times making sacrifices beyond her understanding. "Cellos are crazy expensive," she says, but somehow dad found a way to buy her one. Still, she lacks the confidence that might have made this movie less formulaic.

That doesn't mean she doesn't pursue her interest, or make it visible, even in the harrowing hallways of high school. Here she's spotted by beautiful young Adam (Jamie Blackley), who informs her that he's attracted by her passion. It might or might not help that he's a rock guitarist and singer with his own band, Willamette Stone: they can talk music, go vinyl-record shopping, have blurry sex to a cover of "Halo", and ride his skateboard together, but still, they're soooo different.



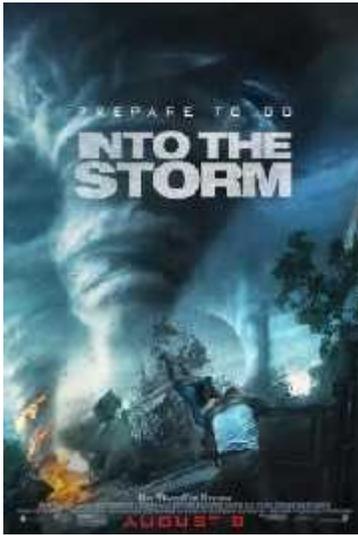
Where her support system pops up repeatedly, including an adorable little brother (Jakob Davies) and a best girlfriend (Liana Liberato), he only refers to his family in the past tense; where he's outgoing (despite whatever background he's not discussing) and prone to lyrics that leave no doubt about his feelings ("I want what you have!"), she's painfully shy (despite talking lots about how she feels), and the camera underlines how alienated she feels at his shows: she stands in the back of the room, she scowls when he stands close to his female bandmate on stage or signs girl fans' chests.

Even when the movie sets up a series of bumps in their road—he's on the road with the band, she's thinking about going to Juilliard—these appear so corny, predictable, and overcome-able that you're hard-pressed to worry. Except... well... this one really big bump.

Boom comes the car crash, occurring during that very scene where Mia's listening to Beethoven. The problem here (immediately, and again, predictably) is the movie's impulse to make her limbo state visible. Not only does she stand on the road and watch herself loaded onto a gurney and into an ambulance by the flipped-over car, but she goes on to watch herself in surgery (her view featuring bloody doctors' hands trying to fix her spleen and other organs) and hooked up to machines while she's in a coma. During these lengthy, presumably boring hours (days?), she not only flashes back, but also scampers from room in the hospital, seeking glimpses of her family members.

Of course, the support she most seeks is that coming from Adam, with whom she's recently had another break-up fight, and so you have to wait a bit for that to emerge, which only means more expanding of story time, if not precisely tension.

This will rent as well as **THE FAULT IN OUR STARS, GOD'S NOT DEAD, THE FACE OF LOVE, HEAVEN IS FOR REAL, HER, ENDLESS LOVE, and THE SECRET LIFE OF WALTER MITTY.**



11/18 1 INTO THE STORM THRILLER
\$47 MILL BO 3456 SCREENS PG-13 89 MINUTES

Richard Armitage (TV—STRIKE BACK, MI5, THE IMPRESSIONISTS—FILM—CAPTAIN AMERICA, THE HOBBIT: THE DESOLATION OF SMAUG, THE HOBBIT: AN UNEXPECTED JOURNEY)

Sarah Wayne Callies (TV—PRISON BREAK, NUMBERS, TARZAN, LAW AND ORDER: SPECIAL VICTIMS UNIT)

Matt Walsh (TV—VEEP, BOB'S BURGERS, HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER, PARKS AND RECREATION)

Four anonymous teenagers die in the opening scene as one attempts to capture a cyclone on his *cellphone*. Soon after, a band of hicks dub themselves "Twista Hunterz" when the warning sirens begin to blare in the town of Silverton, merrily venturing into danger expecting viral fame and fortune. Pete (Walsh), the film's veteran storm documentarian and resident asshole, is convinced the "shot of the century"—video shot from inside the eye of a tornado—will bring him untold riches. Despite a cessation of funding from his illusory corporate sponsors, Pete offers a teenager \$3,000 for storm footage he could find on YouTube a few hours hence.

Pete's profit-driven self-righteousness is counterweighted by the film's homage to ordinary, but broken, middle-class families. His primary hired help, and the film's only major female character, is Allison (Sarah Wayne Callies), a single mother and meteorological scientist. As Allison video chats with the daughter she's left hundreds of miles away to earn a paycheck, Pete chides her lack of "instinct" as a storm-chaser. Meanwhile, brothers and Silverton high schoolers Donnie (Max Deacon) and Trey (Nathan Kress) are working on filming a time capsule for that day's graduation ceremony. They struggle with their taciturn father and vice principal, Gary (Richard Armitage), who's dedicated himself to his work since their mother died in a car accident. Every child guilt-trips their parent in the film's opening minutes—"Nothin's ever good enough for you, Dad," one earnestly says—as encroaching tornadoes suggest a recalibration of work-life balance, if not the restorative tonic of romance, is in the offing.

The action and tension will have this rent as well as **GODZILLA, TWISTER, BLENDED, DIVERGENT, RIDE ALONG, IRON MAN 3, RUSH and OBLIVION.**





11/18 2 SIN CITY: A DAME TO KILL FOR ACTION
\$13 MILL BO 2894 SCREENS R 102 MINUTES

Mickey Rourke (THE WRESTLER, 9 ½ WEEKS, DINER, JOHNNY HANDSOME, SIN CITY, YEAR OF THE DRAGON)
Jessica Alba (LITTLE FOCKERS, MACHETE KILLS, INTO THE BLUE, VALENTINE'S DAY)
Josh Brolin (TRUE GRIT, MEN IN BLACK 3, GANGSTER SQUAD, GRIND HOUSE, AMERICAN GANGSTER)
Bruce Willis (THE SIXTH SENSE, DIE HARD, NOBODY'S FOOL, PULP FICTION, RED, SIN CITY)

Intertwining three stories, we begin with Marv (a terrific Mickey Rourke) waking up along the side of the road. Surrounded by dead bodies and wondering how he got a bullet in his shoulder, the granite faced thug tries to piece together what happened. Of course it has something to do with Nancy (Alba), her haunted - and booze-induced memories of Jack Hartigan (Willis), and her desire to get revenge on Basin City's evil powerbroker, Senator Roark (Powers Booth). Vowing to always protect her, Marv agrees to help her plan an ambush.

In the meantime, Roark is also being menaced by a undeniably lucky card sharp (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) who never seems to lose. He's carrying a secret that could destroy the political despot, as well. We then go to events prior to the first film, when Dwight McCarthy (Brolin) looked different and was making a living as a private investigator. An old flame named Ava (Eva Green) rings him up, hoping he will help her escape from her abusive rich husband and his hulking, sadistic manservant Manute (Dennis Haysbert). Naturally, after agreeing, he finds himself set-up for a crime he didn't commit.

Like a Turner Classic Movies marathon played at maximum speed and volume, this film is violence, vice, and victimization trimmed of all necessary trifles. It's a pair of brass knuckles to the cranium, the incessant stink of bad liquor and bad men melded with cheap perfume and an aura of lust. It's pulp, familiar and yet still a bit fresh, a collection of cinematic clichés made new by technology and tenacity.

There's a lot more sex this time around, almost all of it revolving around a topless Eva Green. As she showed in *300: Rise of an Empire*, no one turns nudity into a nuclear weapon like this French babe. When she can't convince Brolin's Dwight to do her bidding via words and vows, she sneaks into his hovel of a home and waits for him, unclothed.

During another sequence involving seduction (of a different kind), those fleshy feminine wiles are, again, put to use. Honestly, Green's costuming is more birthday suit than hard boiled dame, and she uses it to empower her character. Oddly enough, no other main character is treated in such a fashion. Even Alba's "stripper" Nancy is never seen without some manner of major cover-up.

This movie pushes the boundaries of what this material and this artistic approach can do to the point of self-parody. The action sequences are excellent. It will make this one rent as

well as **BRICK MANSIONS, DRAFT DAY, RUSH, NEIGHBORS, NON-STOP, SABOTAGE, ROBO COP, GANGSTER SQUAD, BROKEN CITY, and RIDE ALONG.**





11/18 1 22 JUMP STREET COMEDY
\$191 B0 3645 SCREENS R 112 MINUTES

Jonah Hill (MONEYBALL, THE SITTER, GET HIM TO THE GREEK, SUPER BAD, KNOCKED UP)
Channing Tatum (WHITE HOUSE DOWN, THIS IS THE END, 21 JUMP STREET, HAYWIRE, MAGIC MIKE)

The crime this time? Well, as angry boss Captain Dickson puts it, it's exactly the same as before. There's a new drug making the rounds called "WHYPHY" (pronounced WiFi) and the police want the source uncovered. Initially, it looks like local kingpin Ghost (Peter Stormare) is responsible. But once Jenko (Tatum) and Schmidt show up at MU College, that trail turns cold.

While hanging out with the undergrads, our partners soon shift into archetype mode. Schmidt gets in good with the art kids and attempts slam poetry. Jenko becomes a jock bro with the local frat and is soon starring on the football team. In between, they try and do some police work, but for most of the movie, they languish in the kind of contemporized *Animal House* ideals that have defined the dynamic among most post-high school teens.

With jokes aimed directly at their aged looks (especially from Jillian Bell, who is merciless in her treatment of Hill) and anti-sequel sentiments (the entire set-up with Deputy Chief Hardy (Nick Offerman) is a treatise against hit revisits), **22 JUMP STREET** makes its superfluousness clear. We laugh because we recognize ourselves in the viewership mocked by this movie.

There are also sequences that are stand-alone sensational even without all the self-referential business. When Capt. Dickson finds out who Schmidt has been bedding, both Ice Cube and Tatum's reaction are the height of hilarity. Just watching the latter strut around and high five the rest of the Jump Street staff is worth the price of admission alone.

Equally enjoyable is the sequence where a cost-wary duo try to keep a golf cart/Hummer chase from racking up reimbursement receipts. After taking out every expensive thing on campus (including an entire robot laboratory), you'll be rolling in the aisles with laughter. Perhaps the best bit comes at the end, when Schmidt takes on an unlikely foe. Their back and forth, including awkward sexual suggestions, is another bit of classic comedy.

This will easily rent as well as **CAPTAIN AMERICA, NEIGHBORS, DIVERGENT, BLENDED, HEAVEN IS FOR REAL, RIDE ALONG** and **ANCHOR MAN 2**.





11/25 1 **EXPENDABLES 3** ACTION
\$38 MILL BO 2956 SCREENS PG-13 124 MINUTES

Sylvester Stallone (LORDS OF FLATBUSH, ROCKY, VICTORY, COP LAND, EYE SEE YOU)
Jason Statham (HOMEFRONT, SAFE, KILLER ELITE, THE MECHANIC, TRANSPORTER 3)
Dolph Lundgren (AMBUSHED, PUNCTURE WOUNDS, THE PACKAGE, AGENT RED)
Harrison Ford (FRANTIC, WITNESS, 42, PRESUMED INNOCENT, AIR FORCE ONE, ENDER'S GAME)

The third installment in what is now the *Expendables* trilogy is, as one might expect, a globetrotting actioner on the surface, with Barney Ross (Sylvester Stallone) and his titular flock of freelance mercenaries going up against the thought-dead Stonebanks (Mel Gibson), a former Expendable turned arms dealer. And like its predecessors, *The Expendables 3*, as directed by Patrick Hughes, is also some sort of toothless, perhaps unknowing parody of the action genre, with each line of dialogue caught in an awkward pause between straight-faced and winking. Indeed, from the very beginning of this franchise, the central conflict has never been between our heroes and whatever foreign militants have stuck their stingers in their collective asses, but rather the tug of war between Stallone's dueling self-images: wanting to be both the wise, weary veteran and an ageless, front-lines combatant, both resolutely over it and the very best in the game.

The line would begin with Doc (Wesley Snipes), a knife-happy operative Barney has to bust out of train-jail, and Bonaparte (Kelsey Grammer), a seasoned talent scout for assassins, hackers, and bruisers of all feathers; as always, Arnold Schwarzenegger's implacable Trench is skulking around the edges of the narrative. It's with these fellow performers that producer, star, and co-writer Stallone most earnestly attempts to exude camaraderie to increasingly dismal effect, as he seems more caught up with driving home the next plot point (often ad nauseam) than he is with conveying genuine comfort, warmth, or anything that isn't a cock joke or money talk between these brothers in arms.

The entire film speaks to Stallone's view of filmmaking as a thankless full-time job. Early on, Jason Statham's Lee Christmas asks how much they're getting paid mid-chase, to which Barney answers, "Not enough." Part of Barney's basic "appeal" is his quasi-humble, just-doing-a-job philosophy of covert warfare, which certainly doesn't match with the heroic image that Stallone ultimately affords his character. For all the talk of the team, Stallone is unquestionably front and center in Hughes's strictly serviceable shooting. It's telling that, at one point, Stonebanks pays a few million for a celebrated painting despite seeing no compelling artistic value to the piece. This moment is meant to signal Stonebanks's cynical disposition, but his opinions mirror Stallone's no-frills style, a concept of filmmaking as chiefly the assembling of a market-approved product.

Action galore will have this film rent as well as **BRICK MANSIONS, NEED FOR SPEED, NON-STOP, FAST & FURIOUS 6, 3 DAYS TO KILL, SABOTAGE, and JACK RYAN: SHADOW RECRUIT.**





11/25 1 THE GIVER DRAMA
 \$42 MILL BO 3003 SCREENS PG-13 97 MINUTES

Meryl Streep (THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA, THE BRIDGES OF MADISON COUNTY, MUSIC OF THE HEART, THE FRENCH LIEUTENANT’S WOMAN, THE RIVER WILD)
Jeff Bridges (THE LAST PICTURE SHOW, FAT CITY, THE FABULOUS BAKER BOYS, THE BIG LEBOWSKI)
Brenton Thwaites (OCULUS, SAVE YOUR LEGS)

This is a handsome product, presenting the story’s utopian-like Communities in panoramic black and white (here, as in the book, the Communities’ emotionless residents cannot see color), with Le Corbusier-esque dwellings arranged in crop-circle formations atop a flat, remote aerie in an unknown corner of the globe. The movie employs a digestible Chosen One trope in its protagonist, Jonas (Thwaites), whose mild-mannered disposition is shaken when he’s selected as the Communities’ next Receiver of Memory. His apprenticeship with the former Receiver, now self-proclaimed as the Giver (a leonine Jeff Bridges), consists merely of the transmission of memories, but with these memories come an awareness of the experiences—joy, suffering, color, sex, war, love—now eradicated from human life. The arc is one of a utopia crumbling into a dystopia, and this painful transition is felt most powerfully during the sessions themselves, in which Jonas’s wavering commitment to his position as recipient of all beauty-horror evolves, aided and abetted by his remorseful mentor, into moral outrage.

What makes **THE GIVER** as a text so powerful is the reader’s simpatico journey with Jonas in realizing the banalities and horrors of his community; when he wavers, and rues his loss of normalcy, the reader sympathizes with his self-preserving instincts. In Noyce’s film, however, sterility and evil are sterility and evil from the very beginning, and the internal crisis of its protagonist amounts to the flicking of an on/off switch rather than the ebb and flow of a consciousness being born.

This will do as well as **GOD’S NOT DEAD, THE FAULT IN OUR STARS, HEAVEN IS FOR REAL, PHILOMENA, NEBRASKA, BLUE JASMINE,** and **12 YEARS A SLAVE.**

11/25 1 A MADEA CHRISTMAS COMEDY
 \$53 MILL BO 2162 SCREENS PG-13 100 MINUTES



Tyler Perry (MEET THE BROWNS, FOR COLORED GIRLS, GOOD DEEDS, TEMPTATION)

Last night, my mother and I decided to go to the premiere of the newest Tyler Perry film, “A When Madea’s niece tells her mother that she cannot make it home for Christmas this year, the mother begs Madea to drive her down South to see her daughter for the holiday. Once again, we have a hilarious caper of twists and turns.

Tyler Perry’s writing is all-in-all brilliant, in my opinion. He knows how to craft characters as well as craft hilarious scenes. Sometimes Perry even drops one-liners that either make us laugh, drop our jaws, and sometimes he makes us do both. The man has a heart, and I love that about him. Tyler’s films typically get low ratings



for no reason whatsoever. They continually kill me with laughter, and this one shocks me the most. I found it to be the funniest out of all five films, but it is definitely not my favorite. It marches in order after “Diary of a Mad Black Woman” and then “Madea’s Big Happy Family”.

The film is absolutely hilarious, yet heartfelt. I laughed, I teared-up, and I cheered in awe at the ending song. My audience was so into the film that no one happened to be texting, or anything! What a wonderful experience! I gave Tyler Perry's "A Madea Christmas" an eight-out-of-ten stars. It isn't the best movie of the year, but I'm happy to see Mr. Perry get his footing right this time around. I will continue to watch these fun-filled movies.

Fans of **BAGGAGE CLAIM**, **BEST MAN'S WEDDING**, **MADEA'S WITNESS PROTECTION**, **GROWN UPS 2**, **THIS IS THE END**, and **THE BIG WEDDING** will like this one too.



11/25 3 WHAT IF COMEDY
\$4 MILL 562 SCREENS PG-13 98 MINUTES

Daniel Radcliffe (KILLYOUR DARLINGS, THE WOMAN IN BLACK, the HARRY POTTER Series)
Zoe Kazan (IT'S COMPLICATED, RUBY SPARKS, IN THE VALLEY OF ELAH, FRACTURED)

In the opening scene of this smart-alecky rom-com for the cardigan set, heartbroken med-school dropout Wallace (Daniel Radcliffe) spells out "love is stupid" using fridge magnets at a friend's party. His hopeless romanticism is exposed further when his eyes light up at being introduced to the charming Chandry (Zoe Kazan), an animator whose pronunciation of "forte" he feels the need to flirtatiously correct. And after spending the whole party meeting cute, Wallace walks Chandry home and gets her number, only to find out that she has a boyfriend. From this moment on, *What If* takes a page—or, rather, the whole book—from *When Harry Met Sally...*, repetitiously posing the question about whether men and women can be friends without benefits. And right up to its simplistic ending, the film is pleased to regurgitate the contrived tropes of the genre—foreign-bound job offers, a thankless boyfriend, dressing-room shenanigans, a night of communal skinny-dipping—without ever honestly addressing the ethics of romantic boundaries.

The film incongruously mixes vulgar, fast-paced witticisms with cloying indie-pop musical montages, setting itself up as a naughty and brutally honest take on friendship and romance, only to shy away from the ugliest of truth-telling. There's promise in its crude framing of the story's key issue (chatter about feces and references to philandering lovers abound), but for all its moralizing about cheating and its self-awareness about rom-coms, *What If* chastises the very conventions and boorish clichés of the genre that it ultimately relies on. From the misguided advice Wallace and Chandry receive from their sounding-board friends to the story's multiple misunderstandings and pratfalls, the film eventually leads to a squeaky-clean denouement that's meant to feel fateful, but is a cheap cop-out to all its rambling will-they-or-won't-they scenarios.



This should rent as well as **MOM'S NIGHT OUT**, **THAT AWKWARD MOMENT**, **LABOR DAY**, **SAVING MR. BANKS**, **ENOUGH SAID**, and **THIS IS 40**.