

Written by Mike Schulz
Thursday, 05 July 2012 12:53

- [Download Lynda.com - Illustrator CC One-on-One: Mastery](#)
- [Buy Word 2010 For Dummies \(en\)](#)
- [Discount - Intuit TurboTax Home & Business 2012](#)
- [Download iExplorer 3 MAC](#)
- [Discount - Sony Vegas Pro 12](#)
- [Buy Adobe RoboHelp 10 \(en,de,fr,ja\)](#)
- [Buy Cheap Adobe Photoshop Elements 12](#)
- [Download Autodesk Alias Surface 2014 \(64-bit\)](#)
- [9.95\\$ Lynda.com - JavaScript Essential Training cheap oem](#)
- [Discount - Adobe Audition 3](#)
- [249.95\\$ Autodesk Navisworks Manage 2012 \(64-bit\) cheap oem](#)



THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

The Amazing Spider-Man is, without question, the absolute best superhero movie to be released this week. Of course, I say this not having seen *Katy Perry: Part of Me* yet, but I also say this because it's polite, whenever possible, to begin a review with words of high praise, and in this instance, I'm going to have a tough time coming up with others.

It's not that director Marc Webb's Marvel Comics reboot is bad. Bad, here, might have at least been *interesting*, and suggested some outside-the-box thinking. *The Amazing Spider-Man*, though, turns out to be the opposite of interesting – a perfectly acceptable, unadventurous, by-the-numbers endeavor that doesn't, in any significant way, improve on Sam Raimi's oh-so-ancient

Spider-Man

from 2002. I'll readily concede that the film is an upgrade from 2007's misbegotten *Spider-Man 3*

, that one in which Peter Parker strutted down the street like Tony Manero's dipstick nephew and socked Mary Jane Watson in the face. But then again, a blank screen would've accomplished much the same thing; Webb's movie is too accomplished to get in a dither about, yet it's too timid and obsequious to seem even the slightest bit necessary.

I'm presuming we can skip this origin tale's plot synopsis. (Watch out for that radioactive spider,

Written by Mike Schulz
Thursday, 05 July 2012 12:53

Pete! Watch out for that gun-wielding thief, Uncle Ben!) So why couldn't the *filmmakers* have skipped the plot synopsis? If audiences had simply been launched into a brand-new web-slinger saga with Andrew Garfield donning Tobey Maguire's old spandex, would anyone have bitched? Sadly, we'll never know, and are now stuck with a good-looking yet inconsequential comic-book escapade that, for nearly its entire length, feels like a \$200-million experiment in marking time. Despite the cosmetic changes – Emma Stone's Gwen replacing Kirsten Dunst's Mary Jane, Rhys Ifans' Lizard replacing Willem Dafoe's Green Goblin –

The Amazing Spider-Man

's narrative arc is all but indistinguishable from its 2002 forebear's, and that's a shame. Yet what's even more bothersome is that the movie is so rote that there's precious little joy to be found; it feels like Raimi's

Spider-Man

as scored to a downbeat, indie-folk soundtrack. [There's less visual wit on display here than in Webb's previous feature,

(500) Days of Summer

, but the film boasts the same melancholy vibe.]

Every once in a while, we're treated to flashes of legitimate exuberance, as when Peter first learns to harness his powers, or, in the movie's one truly imaginative sequence, he accidentally lays waste to a subway car full of stunned onlookers. And while their relationship doesn't (yet) exude the soulfulness of Maguire's and Dunst's tortured romance, the byplay between Garfield and Stone is relaxed and charming – at least until, like everyone else, they get engulfed in the effect-filled melee of the protracted action climax. (I was also bummed that Stone, one of our most radiant big-screen redheads, was forced to sport Gwen's traditional, platinum-blond tresses, as the look dulls her features and appears to rob the performer of some of her natural vitality.)

But from the blandness of Ifans' megalomania to the sitcom cuteness of Martin Sheen's Ben and Sally Field's Aunt May to composer James Horner's generically pummeling music cues, the movie simply refuses to swing, and true originality only pops up in the quickest of bursts. (Denis Leary, bless his rascally heart, brings welcome comic fire to a few of his readings.) Like *The Avengers*

, Webb's offering gives its Marvel-loving base exactly what they expect – including, I must admit, one of Stan Lee's more amusing cameos – yet almost nothing that might surprise or challenge them, and I left the auditorium (in what is,

again

, sure to be a distinct minority) feeling just as underwhelmed as I did leaving Joss Whedon's summer-blockbuster behemoth. With Christopher Nolan's

The Dark Knight Rises

on the immediate horizon, I'm not quite ready to break up with comic-book movies. After

The Amazing Spider-Man

, however, I'm thinking a trial separation might definitely be in order.

Written by Mike Schulz
Thursday, 05 July 2012 12:53



TYLER PERRY'S MADEA'S WITNESS PROTECTION

Beginning with its plot, which finds a privileged family of New Yorkers forced into Georgia seclusion following dad's unintentional involvement in a Ponzi scheme, *Tyler Perry's Madea's Witness Protection* is an indefensibly poor movie, meandering and awkwardly staged and lacking even a shred of narrative tension. Why oh why oh

why

did I have to laugh my head off at this thing? Not always, mind you, as Perry's latest opus features more than its share of sub-awful comedy, and when your female lead is played by Denise Richards, continuous merriment is clearly not in store. But damn it, I wound up cackling at just about everything Perry's housedress-clad alter ego said here; it turns out that the arrival of a put-upon clan of spoiled white city folk was just the shot in the arm this overly familiar figure needed. Staring at her clueless charges with withering incredulity, and spitting out insults and "sound advice" like bullets, Madea is more enjoyable in

Witness Protection

that she/he has been on-screen in years, and Eugene Levy's excitable mensch proves a worthy comic foil for Perry's belligerent harpy. The movie's an utter mess, but whenever Madea's around – which is about half the time – it's at least a mess that's

alive

, and it's unfortunate to hear that Perry is thinking about retiring the character once and for all. We need more bad fun at the movies, not more

Good Deeds



RESCUE 3D

Written by Mike Schulz
Thursday, 05 July 2012 12:53

The latest edu-tainment at the Putnam Museum is titled *Rescue 3D*, and it's a very strange little documentary, because unless one happened when I wasn't paying attention, I'm not sure there are any actual rescues *in it*.

That's not to say, though, that there isn't plenty of heroism on hand. Following four sets of American disaster-response teams as they lend assistance after 2010's catastrophic 7.0 earthquake in Haiti, director Stephen Low's 45-minute work is expectedly informative and can't help but be moving, and it features some heartbreaking, rather extraordinary visuals. (At one point, during a seemingly routine aerial helicopter shot, we watch as a centuries-old church tumbles to the ground.) But while I don't mean to be insensitive, there's nothing particularly *cinematic*

about watching rescue workers handing out food and bottled water and slowly digging through debris – the film shows neither survivors nor the less fortunate found beneath the rubble – and the few rescues presented here are merely

staged

rescues, witnessed as training-exercise footage early in the film.

Rescue 3D

is earnest and well-meaning, to be sure, but it also feels a bit empty, and I winced a bit at its denouement, which delivered voice-over news of a horrific earthquake in Japan right before the end credits rolled. I'm sure Low meant no disrespect whatsoever, but if you're a filmmaker, surely there are more tasteful ways to get your audiences jazzed for a sequel.

Follow Mike on Twitter at [Twitter.com/MikeSchulzNow](https://twitter.com/MikeSchulzNow).