

S P Y

Director: Paul Feig
Writer: Paul Feig
Stars: Melissa McCarthy, Jason Statham, Rose Byrne, Jude Law
Strengths: Comedy, Acting
Weakness: Excessive Language
Runtime: 119 minutes
Rating: 4.5/5

PLOT: A desk-bound CIA analyst volunteers to go undercover to infiltrate the world of a deadly arms dealer, and prevent diabolical global disaster.
REVIEW: In "Spy," Melissa McCarthy is Susan Cooper, a CIA analyst who sits in a basement and acts as the eyes and ears of super-spy Bradley Fine (Jude Law). Susan is in love with Fine but feels out of his league in every way, and thanks to McCarthy's amazing timing and understated self-deprecation, it's always funny. Then something nasty happens to Fine, courtesy of international crime family heiress Rayna Boyanov (Rose Byrne), and the CIA must act quickly to find her and stop her plan to sell a nuclear device to terrorists. The prob-

lem is, the CIA's top agents have been compromised. Seeing her chance, Susan volunteers to go into the field to spy on Rayna and her crew.
"Spy" is the Melissa McCarthy movie that many have been waiting for. She's been solid, if not exceptional, in her previous collaborations with writer-director Paul Feig ("Bridesmaids," "The Heat") but for the first time, McCarthy's the star of the show, and she truly shines. Some of "Spy's" best humour arises from Susan's relationship with Jason Statham's Rick Ford, a super-macho spy who wants no part of the plan to send Susan to do what he believes is his job. He's a clever metaphor for every male braggart who's ever belittled a woman to overcompensate for his own ineptitude. A household name among action-movie fans, Statham here displays comedic timing as deadly as his martial arts skills. Rick's fond of rattling off the ridiculously dangerous, over-the-top things he's done on different missions and, in every instance, Statham's delivery is perfect.
What's most notable about "Spy," silly as some of its antics may be, is that



McCarthy's found the perfect vehicle for her style of comedy. She could well become the face of the first successful spy film franchise headed by a woman, and deservedly so. McCarthy isn't defying conventions here -- she's destroying them.

This is an absolute must watch, although it does contain a truckload of profanity and graphic violence so it might not be advisable for younger audiences.
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Reviewed by Intisab Shahriyar



KATTI BATTI

Director: Nikhil Advani
Writers: Nikhil Advani, Anshul Singhal
Stars: Imran Khan, Kangana Ranaut, Vivan Bhatena
Strength: Imran Khan's acting
Weakness: Haphazard plot
Runtime: 135 minutes
Rating: 2/5

PLOT: A romantic comedy that follows Maddy and Payal's live-in relationship until a sudden turn of events creates a distance between them.
REVIEW: The narrative of the protagonist Madhav Kabra (Maddy), played by Imran Khan, runs through the entire length of film. The plot begins with inexplicably-obtained footage which reveals that Maddy was once in a live-in relationship with Payal Malhotra, played by Kangana Ranaut. And suddenly we are taken to an emergency ward of a hospital where the doctors and Maddy's friends are trying to revive him after an alleged suicide attempt. After Maddy is successfully revived, we learn that he drank phenyl by accident. What follows is Maddy's pursuit to convince

his love to be friends with him once again.
As far as performances are concerned, the film is Imran Khan's canvas. His is the only character that is well-etched. Imran is honest, charming and expressively convincing. You like him when he woos his girlfriend, admire him when he sticks to his guns and hate him when he is boorish and callous. On the other hand, Kangana's Payal Malhotra comes from a broken family and is an extension of the various roles that we have seen the actress perform in her earlier films. She brings nothing new to the table, except for confidently carrying herself off with a plethora of outlandish wigs in the staid role.
Overall, Katti Batti is supposed to be a romantic comedy involving a die-hard romantic and a commitment-phobic girl, at least that's what the trailers promised. But what you get is an excess of emotional trajectories offered in a non-linear, confusing and obscure manner. Overall, the tragedy of Katti Batti lies in the fault of its director.

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Reviewed by Intisab Shahriyar

CLASSIC REVIEW

THE MATTEI AFFAIR (1972)

Director: Francesco Rosi
Writers: Tito Di Stefano, Tonino Guerra
Stars: Gian Maria Volonté, Luigi Squarzina, Gianfranco Ombuen
Runtime: 116 minutes

PLOT: Controversy surrounds the life and death of Italian administrator Enrico Mattei.

REVIEW: Francesco Rosi's documentary style film starts at the end of Mattei's life, taking in the scattered debris and eye witness accounts, before circling round to follow him on the last two days preceding his accident. Rosi flits between a number of time lines, going into the past, the present and the future looking back. The film suggests that he influenced far more than running the government owned Oil Company he oversaw and Mattei became renowned at

the time, for helping boost Italy's post-war economy by sourcing better deals away from the American oil giants dominating the market and keeping the profits within the country.
Gian Maria Volonté does immerse himself with vigour and gives off the air of a deeply passionate man fighting his corner. The other players involved aren't given meaning in this biography of sorts, so he appears in almost every scene, making his presence well known. The film shared the award with Elio Petri's "The Working Class Goes to Heaven" making it an all Italian year at Cannes. It may well struggle to hold its own against some of the competitions more renowned winners but it also deserves more recognition than it has over the past 40 years.

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Reviewed by Mohaiminul Islam

