



PIXELS

Director: Chris Columbus
Writers: Tim Herlihy, Timothy Dowling
Stars: Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Michelle Monaghan
Strengths: Acting, Comedy
Weakness: Story
Runtime: 106 minutes
Rating: 3/5

PLOT: When aliens misinterpret video feeds of classic arcade games as a declaration of war, they attack the Earth in the form of the video games.

REVIEW: For those who have watched previous Sandler movies, the basic formula of rags to riches would be instantly recognizable. Here we see a younger version of Sandler's character and his

compadres competing in a world arcade gaming championship and his plans afterwards. However things don't pan out as planned as the reigning champ manages to clinch the title and their gameplay recorded and placed onboard a NASA deep space probe. The movie then fast forwards to the present where Sandler's best friend from the arcade is now somehow a president, albeit a bit of a buffoon whereas Sandler is a glorified cable installer. Suddenly there are attacks around the world from an unknown force. After close inspection, it is discovered to be old arcade games brought to life by an alien race who have discovered the probe and misinterprets it as a decla-

ration of war. Suddenly all the skills and weapons of the military are deemed useless and the fate of the world now hangs on the best arcade gamers in the world.

Adam Sandler is known to work with only close friends and family, so naturally the cast includes Sandler movie regulars Kevin James, his wife Jackie Sandler and his children, and others. Some notable new members of the cast include Sean Bean and Peter Dinklage out of Game of Thrones, Brian Cox, and guest appearances by Serena Williams and Martha Stewart. The acting from the entire cast has been superb and no complains can be made here.

The problem unfortunately lies with the repetition of the same formula that we

see in most Sandler movies. Sure it's dressed up as an epic adventure movie where you save the world through the skills of a gamer but if you've watched many Sandler movies, the pattern is too obvious to miss and you would end up muttering subconsciously "Not Again". If this doesn't bother you, then the movie isn't all that bad, although the humour seems to be much scarcer, possibly lost between all the scientific jargons thrown around here and there. Despite these problems, it's still a good watch and if you are a fan of Adam Sandler, then this movie should be a no-brainer.

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Reviewed by Intisab Shahriyar

CALENDAR GIRLS



Director: Madhur Bhandarkar
Writers: Madhur Bhandarkar, Abhiruchi Chand
Stars: Akanksha Puri, Avani Modi, Kyra Dutt
Strength: Debuts perform admirably
Weakness: Poor Story, Dialogues
Runtime: 132 minutes
Rating: 2.5/5

PLOT: Five women with big dreams become Calendar Girls - but how does time treat them?

REVIEW: Small-town schemer Mayuri (Ruhi), rebellious Paroma (Satarupa), free-spirited Sharon (Kyra), naive Nandita (Akansha) and Pakistani Bollywood aspirant Nazneen (Avani) are 'calendar girls' for industrialist Kumar (Suhel), whose glamorous almanac, with itsy-bitsy bikinis and sprawling white sands, is 'India's symbol of success'. Shot by ace photographer Timmy (Rohit), the ladies wear lip-gloss, attitude and little else, dreaming of fame, love and success.

Calendar Girls has a surreal, slightly dated quality. Characters resembling

other characters - Neha Dhupia, Akshaye Khanna, Mamta Kulkarni, even a cop like Shatrughan Sinha - float in and out. The story resembles other Madhur Bhandarkar stories - a note from Page Three, a stroke of Fashion, far too much from Heroine. Despite this layered story of ambition, manipulation and desperation, where betting, bedding, broads and broadcasting meet, not much changes on the Calendar Girls' faces.

It's a pity because this story could have broken new ground. With glimpses of his original flair, Bhandarkar puts cricket enthusiasts, prostitutes, philanderers, builders and bewildered middle-class together. He has his trademark touches of glamour, pathos and personalities but lacks power-packed acting to hold this together. Instead, between scintillating skin, syrupy sympathy and sheer sloppiness, the film loses grip, bite - and plot.

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Reviewed by Intisab Shahriyar

CLASSIC REVIEW

THE HIRELING (1973)

Director: Alan Bridges
Writers: Tito L.P. Hartley, Wolf Mankowitz
Stars: Robert Shaw, Sarah Miles, Peter Egan
Runtime: 95 minutes

PLOT: A young British woman suffering from depression over the loss of her husband develops an unusual relationship with her chauffeur.

REVIEW: "The Hireling," Alan Bridges's film version of the L. P. Hartley novel, is about England in the nineteen-twenties, about county aristocracy, about the cruelties of a class system that Hartley remembers with an outrage so tempered that it often seems a kind of fondness. Lady Franklin (Sarah Miles) is recovering from a mild breakdown she suffered following the loss of her husband, a young Tory Member of Parliament for whose death she feels vaguely responsible. In a hired limousine, a magnificent old Rolls-Royce, which takes her from the clinic to her mother's house in Bath, Lady Franklin engages the chauffeur in small talk. She talks to the back of his head, to one eye seen in a mirror. But after they arrive, the chauffeur, Ledbetter, is not just the back of a head, an eye and a uniform. He is a singular man, youngish, handsome, polite and, above all, calculating. Lady Franklin has been so invigorated by the depth of their communication that she engages Ledbetter to take her on a series of afternoon drives.

"The Hireling" is very good in

individual scenes, in the look of its landscapes, in its observation of manners and especially in its refusal to over explain narrative details. However, by effectively reducing the conflicts within the English social order to a misunderstanding, it becomes not only silly but grossly misleading. The excellent supporting cast includes Peter Egan, as an ambitious young Liberal politician, who succeeds with Lady Franklin without half trying; Elizabeth Sellars, as Lady Franklin's mother, who is as self-absorbed as Lady Franklin will one day be, and Caroline Mortimer, as Egan's cast-off mistress.

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Reviewed by Mohaiminul Islam

