MOVIE REVIEWS

The G Verdict

Chris G

Publisher & Film Critic — The G Verdict
thegverdict.com · Washington, DC area
Press contact: NotChrisG1@thegverdict.com
X: @NotChrisG1

Six of the author’s strongest reviews, drawn from 153 written reviews published as full articles at thegverdict.com. Comments are the author’s original reviews (Letterboxd — NotChrisG1).

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OPPENHEIMER (2023)

Sample movie reviews 1 of 6

GENRE	Biographical Drama / Thriller
YEAR	2023
SOURCE	Author’s Letterboxd diary (NotChrisG1)

LOGLINE

As World War II rages, brilliant and conflicted physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer is tapped to lead the secret Manhattan Project and build the atomic bomb before the Nazis do — then forced to live with what he has unleashed.

SYNOPSIS

The film traces J. Robert Oppenheimer from his early academic years through his appointment to lead Los Alamos, where he assembles the greatest scientific minds of the century under impossible pressure and secrecy. The Trinity test succeeds beyond expectation, and the bomb is dropped — first on Hiroshima, then Nagasaki. In the aftermath, Oppenheimer’s ambivalence about the hydrogen bomb and his opposition to further escalation make him enemies, chief among them Lewis Strauss, who orchestrates a security hearing that strips Oppenheimer of his clearance. The film closes on the chilling implication of the arms race Oppenheimer helped begin.

COMMENTS

Oppenheimer is a film that left me with mixed feelings. On one hand, it showcases Christopher Nolan’s exceptional talent and features commendable acting performances from a captivating cast. Despite its length, I found myself hooked throughout. However, there were moments when certain plot parts felt unnecessarily prolonged, leading to occasional frustration. Despite this, the film’s excellent narrative and fantastic music created an immersive experience, delving into gripping historical events. The third act, although it could have been shorter, still managed to offer unexpected twists and turns that held my attention. Cillian Murphy’s Oscar-worthy performance was truly remarkable, leaving a lasting impression. Additionally, the supporting cast delivered strong performances, and the surprising cameo added a delightful touch for fans of Nolan’s work. With Nolan’s exceptional direction and visually stunning scenes, Oppenheimer remains a film that is worth watching, despite its flaws. It’s a 7/10 for me, but I would

recommend watching it and not depending on my review.

GRADES

CONCEPT	**Excellent**
STORY	**Good**
CHARACTERS	**Excellent**
DIALOGUE	**Good**
VISUALS	**Excellent**
ORIGINALITY	**Good**

RECOMMENDATION: **RECOMMEND**

Prestige filmmaking with an awards-caliber lead; minor pacing indulgences.

THE LAST VOYAGE OF THE DEMETER (2023)

Sample movie reviews 2 of 6

GENRE	Horror
YEAR	2023
SOURCE	Author’s Letterboxd diary (NotChrisG1)

LOGLINE

In 1897, a merchant ship takes on mysterious cargo in Transylvania bound for London — and a stowaway predator begins picking off the crew one by one.

SYNOPSIS

The Demeter sets sail from Varna carrying unmarked wooden crates, with ship’s doctor Clemens aboard as the newest crew member. Night after night, sailors are found drained of blood. The crew discovers the truth too late: Dracula himself is sealed in the cargo, feeding as the ship crosses open water with nowhere to run. Paranoia and terror mount as the crew dwindles; by the time the Demeter runs aground at Whitby, only wreckage, a dead captain lashed to the wheel, and one survivor remain — and the vampire is now loose on English soil.

COMMENTS

The Last Voyage of the Demeter is really one of the best horror movies! It contains a suspenseful plot that really keeps you guessing till the end. It isn’t predictable at all because you never know the next move. It was exactly what you want from a vampire movie that takes place on a ship. The acting is really good, the visuals are great. Everything in the story plays out well. The ending leads up to a potential sequel that could be bigger and have more characters. You feel bad for most of the characters and you want most of them to live. There is one death that really shocked me and it pretty much defies all of the past horror movies. They do a great job at the makeup for the vampire. The movie does feel long but it is entertaining to the point where it keeps you guessing what’s going to happen next and some scenes will send chills down your spine. It’s definitely a 10/10 for me and I definitely recommend watching it in theaters!

GRADES

CONCEPT	**Excellent**
STORY	**Excellent**

CHARACTERS	**Good**
DIALOGUE	**Good**
VISUALS	**Excellent**
ORIGINALITY	**Good**

RECOMMENDATION: **STRONG RECOMMEND**

A standout of recent horror — disciplined, suspenseful, and fully committed.

BLUE BEETLE (2023)

Sample movie reviews 3 of 6

GENRE	Superhero / Action-Adventure
YEAR	2023
SOURCE	Author’s Letterboxd diary (NotChrisG1)

LOGLINE

Recent college grad Jaime Reyes bonds with an ancient alien scarab that fuses to his spine, turning him into a living weapon — and putting his entire family in the crosshairs of a ruthless tech CEO.

SYNOPSIS

Jaime Reyes comes home to Palmera City to find his family on the verge of losing their house. Taking a job at Kord Industries, he ends up intercepting a mysterious scarab that CEO Victoria Kord will kill to recover. The scarab chooses Jaime as its host, encasing him in powerful bio-mechanical armor. As Kord’s forces close in, Jaime must master the suit — and accept what it asks of him — while his family refuses to stand on the sidelines of his fight.

COMMENTS

Blue Beetle provides pulse-pounding action sequences and an enthralling musical score. Blue Beetle takes viewers on an exhilarating ride. Xolo Maridueña delivers a magnetic performance that keeps audiences on the edge of their seats. However, Susan Sarandon’s portrayal of a disposable villain falls short, but the film truly shines when it explores the enchanting dynamics of the remarkable family at its core. Blue Beetle’s success is driven by its charm and personality, though some may yearn for a more contemporary approach. Nonetheless, the youthful and vibrant nature of the titular character demands a fresh and invigorating adaptation. This film takes audiences on a profound and emotionally charged journey, skillfully weaving together engaging family dynamics. While it adheres to customary superhero tropes, Blue Beetle’s charm and poignant depth merge seamlessly, creating a truly captivating theatrical experience. The meticulously crafted soundtrack adds another layer of suspense, elevating the film to new heights and immersing audiences even further into the story.

GRADES

CONCEPT	**Good**
STORY	**Good**
CHARACTERS	**Excellent**
DIALOGUE	**Good**
VISUALS	**Excellent**
ORIGINALITY	**Fair**

RECOMMENDATION: **STRONG RECOMMEND**

Charming and heartfelt with a standout family core; a captivating theatrical experience.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: MUTANT MAYHEM (2023)

Sample movie reviews 4 of 6

GENRE	Animated Action-Comedy
YEAR	2023
SOURCE	Author’s Letterboxd diary (NotChrisG1)

LOGLINE

Four mutant turtle brothers raised in the New York sewers yearn to be accepted as normal teenagers — and get their shot when a mutant crime wave gives them a chance to be heroes.

SYNOPSIS

Leonardo, Michelangelo, Donatello, and Raphael have spent fifteen years hidden underground by their protective father, Splinter. Desperate for a normal teenage life, they befriend aspiring journalist April O’Neil and take on a string of robberies — only to discover the perpetrator is Superfly, a fellow mutant building an army to wipe out humanity. To save the city that fears them, the brothers must choose between the acceptance they crave and the family they already have.

COMMENTS

This TMNT Movie was an exhilarating and a breathtaking movie with great animation that gives you a wonderful experience. The action scenes are on point with this cool animation style that provides great visuals and designs of the characters. The humor is hilarious and surprisingly a lot of the jokes make you laugh. All of the scenes are entertaining and none of them are boring. It’s hard not to compliment on how good the animation is; it really is stunning to look at. The acting is great. I think they did really well at portraying their characters. The action scenes are one of the best action scenes in an animation movie. I do think there are some flaws in the movie, but there are too many positives, which is why I give this TMNT Movie a solid 8/10! My favorite character is Leo because I really like blue and I feel like he resembles me if I were a mutant turtle. I really think that this is the best TMNT movie we have gotten and I hope that we get to see more of these characters, especially after that ending.

GRADES

CONCEPT	**Excellent**

STORY	**Good**
CHARACTERS	**Good**
DIALOGUE	**Good**
VISUALS	**Excellent**
ORIGINALITY	**Good**

RECOMMENDATION: **RECOMMEND**

A fresh, funny, and visually bold franchise reinvention.

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE – DEAD RECKONING (2023)

Sample movie reviews 5 of 6

GENRE	Action / Spy Thriller
YEAR	2023
SOURCE	Author’s Letterboxd diary (NotChrisG1)

LOGLINE

Ethan Hunt and the IMF race to track down a terrifying new AI weapon known as the Entity before it falls into the wrong hands — with every world power and a vengeful foe from Ethan’s past closing in.

SYNOPSIS

A sentient AI called the Entity has seized control of global intelligence networks, and the race is on to find the two halves of a cruciform key that can control it. Ethan Hunt goes rogue from the IMF to keep the key out of the hands of governments and arms dealers alike, reuniting with Ilsa Faust, Benji Dunn, and Luther Stickell — and crossing paths with the mysterious thief Grace and the ruthless Gabriel, a figure tied to Ethan’s past. From a desert chase to a runaway train, the hunt builds to a cliffhanger that leaves the Entity’s fate undecided.

COMMENTS

Mission Impossible 7 is an absolute gem that manages to seamlessly blend humor and heart-pounding action, making it a true joyride for audiences! From start to finish, this film captures your attention and keeps you on the edge of your seat, earning its well-deserved 10/10 rating.

One of the standout performances in Mission Impossible 7 is none other than Tom Cruise himself, who once again proves why he is a force to be reckoned with in the action genre. His portrayal of Ethan Hunt is nothing short of phenomenal, as he effortlessly embodies the character’s determination, wit, and sheer athleticism. Cruise’s dedication to performing his own stunts adds an extra layer of authenticity and excitement to the film, leaving viewers in awe of his daredevil feats.

What sets this movie apart and solidifies its position as one of the best entries in the franchise is its ability to deliver an abundance of thrilling action sequences that are laced with suspense. As a fan of spy movies, I have been longing for a truly captivating espionage experience for quite some time, and Mission

Impossible 7 delivered just that. It’s a nostalgic throwback to the spy films of my childhood, evoking a sense of excitement and wonder that I haven’t felt in years.

Throughout the movie, there are certain scenes that are intentionally drawn out, allowing the tension to build and intensify in unexpected ways. One such standout is the mesmerizing car chase sequence, where the expertly choreographed stunts and breathtaking cinematography create an adrenaline-fueled spectacle that had me gripping the edge of my seat. Another memorable moment is the heart-pounding train scene, which expertly blends high-speed action with clever twists and turns, leaving you breathless.

While I don’t want to delve into too much detail to avoid spoiling the experience for potential viewers, I can assure you that Mission Impossible 7 is filled with intricate plot developments that will keep you guessing throughout. The middle and end of the film are particularly engrossing, as the plot thickens and the stakes skyrocket. Each character, including the villains, is well-developed and brings their own unique contribution to the storyline, adding depth and complexity to the narrative.

As a fan eagerly awaiting the next installment, I can’t help but be excited about what Mission Impossible 7 has set up for the future. The film leaves you yearning for more, craving further exploration of the characters and their exhilarating adventures. It’s a testament to the success of the franchise and a testament to the creative vision of the filmmakers.

In conclusion, Mission Impossible 7 is a must-see movie that combines humor, action, and suspense in a truly exceptional way. Tom Cruise’s outstanding performance, coupled with the gripping storyline and jaw-dropping action sequences, make it a standout entry in the series. Whether you’re a longtime fan of the franchise or simply someone who enjoys a thrilling spy film, this movie is bound to leave you thoroughly entertained and eagerly anticipating the next installment.

GRADES

CONCEPT	**Excellent**
STORY	**Excellent**
CHARACTERS	**Excellent**
DIALOGUE	**Good**
VISUALS	**Excellent**
ORIGINALITY	**Good**

RECOMMENDATION: **STRONG RECOMMEND**

A franchise-best blend of humor, heart, and jaw-dropping practical action.

MADAME WEB (2024)

Sample movie reviews 6 of 6

GENRE	Superhero / Action-Adventure
YEAR	2024
SOURCE	Author’s Letterboxd diary (NotChrisG1)

LOGLINE

A Manhattan paramedic develops clairvoyant powers after a near-death accident — and must protect three young women from a spider-powered killer connected to her own past.

SYNOPSIS

Cassandra Webb survives a traumatic accident in Peru and returns to New York with the ability to see seconds into the future. When her visions show three teenage girls being murdered by Ezekiel Sims — a man with spider-like powers tied to her late mother’s research — Cassie is forced on the run with them. To keep them alive, she must stop running from her gift and learn to use it, uncovering the truth about her mother’s death along the way.

COMMENTS

So Madame Web was well... actually better than I thought it would be. The action is very good and it isn’t slow. The plot kept me entertained. The acting was great. The things I disliked about the film were that it left questions unanswered. It wasn’t close to the comics. The trailers were misleading in certain parts.

GRADES

CONCEPT	**Fair**
STORY	**Fair**
CHARACTERS	**Good**
DIALOGUE	**Fair**
VISUALS	**Good**
ORIGINALITY	**Fair**

RECOMMENDATION: **CONSIDER**

Better than expected with real entertainment value; held back by unanswered questions.