

Against the Odds, Smart Films Thrive at the Box Office

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Published: December 14, 2012

SEEN any good movies lately? How could you not? This has been a bumper year for movies big and small, imported and domestic, some made for hundreds of millions of dollars and others made for about the price of a grande soy latte. As has been the case in recent years, the top box office movies in America were mostly formulaic corporate entertainments, including the superhero comic-book fantasies like “Marvel’s The Avengers” that make some critics despair. Even amid the usual selection of big-screen cartoons and testosterone, though, it was nice to see female-driven stories like “The Hunger Games” — and all the female viewers its box office represents — muscling into the mix.

Look past the Top 20 on boxofficemojo.com, and things become more interesting. The 21st domestic top grosser of the year was the little male stripper movie that could and did, all while flashing its viewers: “**Magic Mike**,” directed by that cinematic chameleon Steven Soderbergh, was one of the unexpectedly enjoyable movies of the year and one of the most surprisingly profitable. Made on the cheap, the independently bankrolled production was bought by Warner Brothers for about \$7 million and scooped up \$113 million in the United States. It’s a shining, sweat-kissed example of how the studios could diversify their offerings and maybe their audiences by doing more than remaking the same movies over again, as Sony Pictures did with the perfectly adequate if misleadingly titled “Amazing Spider-Man.”

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The box office can be a ruthless place and flops aren't just reserved for bad films with poor reviews. In some cases, movies flop because they're flat out bad movies (here's looking at you, *Dark Phoenix* and *Men in Black: International*). In other cases, a film might just be too challenging or weird to connect with a wide audience. Whatever the case may be, the following 30 films are all worth your time despite tanking at the box office (box office numbers below provided by Box Office Mojo). Photo : Fox.

Ad Astra. Mike Flanagan's *Doctor Sleep* had insurmountable odds stacked against it the minute Warner Bros. greenlit it. Based on the Stephen King sequel novel to *The Shining*, Flanagan's film fights a losing battle in trying to juggle King and Stanley Kubrick at the same time. I like the 49, 50 "sequence" happening over the FIFTY on #50 coincidence. That's just too obvious! The other irony that occurs, which is done with complete purpose, is we see a film about an instrument that we never actually hear in the film. That seemed too obvious. Instead, I went to my friend, actor Jack River Base. Jack River Base. "He man woman haters club-no girls allowed" from "Our Gang". Jack River Base. Now thriving at home after spending six weeks in intensive care, little Roman, Rocco and Rohan had another surprise in store for Becki-Jo Allen, however. After being told how similar they looked by other mums, she sent off samples of DNA to be tested and she has now been told that against odds of up to an incredible 200 million to one, the naturally conceived trio are identical. Now thriving at home, their personalities are starting to show through, their mother said. "Rohan is the loud one, he's always shouting," she said. The odds against them occurring without fertility treatment have been put at between one in 60,000 and one in 200million. If twins or triplets shared one membrane in the womb, they must be identical (monozygotic).