

New release reviews

We're The Millers



★★★★★

(TBA) USA, 2013. Jason Sudeikis, Jennifer Aniston, Emma Roberts

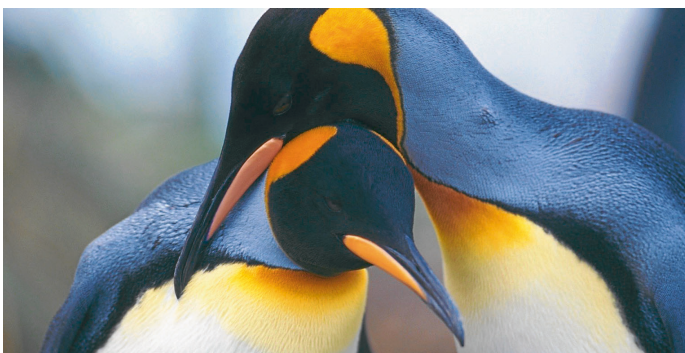
The problem with writing an accurate review of *We're The Millers* is not trying to interpret the subtle nuances of Jennifer Aniston's performance. Nor is it offering an informed critique of the film's thoroughly American brand of multiplex humour. It's simply finding a way to write about the movie that wouldn't make your grandmother balk with embarrassment, or your grandfather unleash a torrent against modern-day morality.

David (Sudeikis) is something of a failed entrepreneur, peddling a particular product to the same clients he has had since he was in college. His neighbour Rose (Aniston), well let's just say she works in a bar. When David is robbed by some teens, he's left owing the kingpin of his supply chain big-time – and is asked (okay, forced) to take a trip to Mexico in comeuppance. He decides his expedition will attract less heat if

he poses as a Middle American family going on their summer hols, and so grabs the neighbourhood teen dork (Will Poulter) and a homeless waif (Emma Roberts, yep, Julia's niece), and hits the road in a lumbering motor home that provides their cover.

This central conceit is pure silliness, and what follows comes comfortably from the school of farce. But there's enough brains to lift this above your typical post-*Hangover* road trip gross-out, and despite some misfires of taste, the script is littered with genuine laugh out loud moments. But what puts this a cut above the obvious is a great supporting cast – Nick Offerman and Kathryn Hahn make the movie as the fellow family of road-trippers they encounter – and the human beating heart at its core. There's something resembling chemistry between Aniston and Sudeikis, and when the journey ends inevitably with Hollywood idealism, it feels like the satisfying conclusion of a familiar homecoming, rather than another road trip down Hackneyed Avenue. *Rob Garratt*

3D Penguins



★★★★★

(G) UK, 2012. David Attenborough

All credit to the makers of this nature documentary for taking on the unenviable task of shooting with cumbersome 3D equipment on the harsh sub-Antarctic island of South Georgia. But do we really need another one about penguins? 2005's *March of the Penguins* covered much the same

ground, only in more extensive (and moving) detail. Anthony Geffen's film has two winning ingredients though: the reassuring tones of Sir David Attenborough, and ravishing footage of King penguins in their natural habitat. A shame, then, that the narration is too adolescent in tone and at odds with the harrowing footage of giant petrel birds picking off baby penguins. There's little we haven't seen before. *Derek Adams*

Kick-Ass 2



★★★★★

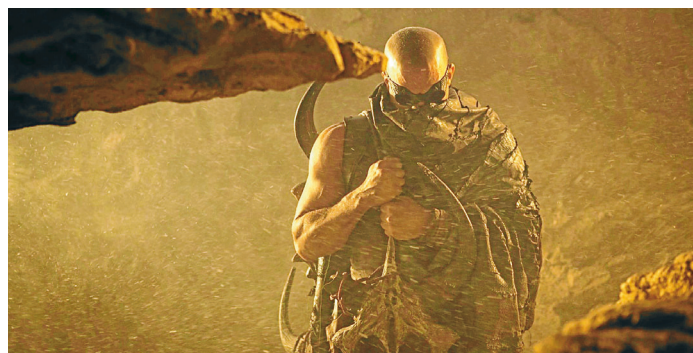
(18+) USA, 2013. Aaron Johnson, Garrett M. Brown, Clark Duke, Claudia Lee, Chloë Grace Moretz

It's been three years since Chloë Moretz's *Hit-Girl* first kapowed onto the screen, taking out a room of bad guys with a shiny new butterfly knife. Now 15 and starting high-school, she's promised to hang up the nunchucks for good. Her friend, Dave Lizewski (Aaron Taylor-Johnson), the high-school nerd whose only superpower is not dying of shame while wearing a green wet suit, still continues to 'fight' street crime as Kick-Ass and inspire folks like Justice Forever, a group of amateur do-gooders led by Colonel Stars and Stripes (Jim Carrey). But the pint-size, foul-mouthed heroine is coaxed out of retirement

by the reappearance of Red Mist (Christopher Mintz-Plasse). As with the 2010 original though, Moretz is, once again, the best thing about this giddy take on caped-crusader films, getting all the choice lines ('I'd rather be waterboarded than listen to Justin Bieber') and pulling the reality of teenage life into the comic-book fantasy. And while *Kick-Ass 2*'s critics will inevitably take issue with the cartoon splatter violence (as did star Carrey), it's the presence of a particularly offensive, pointless joke that makes the movie go from revelling in bad taste to leaving a bad taste. Even without that low point, however, this slightly disappointing sequel is less anarchic and tries harder overall than its predecessor. *Kick-Ass 2* simply slips into them. *Cath Clarke*

Previews

Riddick



(15+) USA, 2013. Vin Diesel, Karl Urban, Katee Sackhoff

A surprise hit on its release in 2000, *Pitch Black* was touted to kick-off an original sci-fi franchise, and launch Vin Diesel into the Hollywood stratosphere. Sequel *The Chronicles of Riddick* sputtered on arrival though, while Diesel struggled to establish himself just as the traditional macho

tough guys in Hollywood action films were starting to go out of fashion. With *Riddick*, Diesel – also acting as producer – is trying to inject new life into the series that made his name. The plot, with its inter-planetary combat between Necromongers and Furya, sounds more *Battlefield Earth* than *Star Wars* or *Blade Runner*, but this could provide some pared-back genre appeal à la *Dredd* last September. *TO*