

Bruce Lee trilogy in works

Bruce Lee's family will produce a trilogy about his life. The late martial arts actor will have his life turned into a three-part blockbuster series by loved-ones who want to pay tribute to the star. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Movies

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

The Hurt Locker a tight thriller

The Hurt Locker**Director:** Kathryn Bigelow**Stars:** Jeremy Renner**Classification:** STC**Rating:** ●●●●●

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada



REVIEW If "war is a drug," as states the on-screen quote at the beginning of *The Hurt Locker*, then its main character is clearly an addict.

In the latest movie to ponder the subject of war, *The Hurt Locker* takes a fresh approach to the recent glut of Iraq-themed films (*Stop-Loss*, *Redacted*, etc...) by pointing the camera specifically at troopers assigned to disable stray bombs.

Whereas previous Iraq-based films suffered through audience indifference, this Kathryn Bigelow-helmed thriller wins big by focusing more

on the nail-biting suspense of *Man versus Improvised Explosive Device*.

Don't get me wrong. It's not all about unseen enemies. There is still the added uneasiness of omnipresent locals who purvey the soldiers with suspicious, unknowing eyes. But it is just that apprehension that Bigelow (*Point Break*) captures throughout the film, giving it a thoroughly engaging heftiness.

Jeremy Renner (28 Weeks Later) stars as James, the leader of the bomb squad who constantly unnerves his fellow soldiers with his recklessness. Based on journalist Mark Boal's experience while embedded with such a squad, this film works more as a fascinating character study than an action-packed thriller.

Played coyly by its little-known stars, their anxiety is felt through strained performances as well as the film's desolate look.



Gerard Butler and Katherine Heigl get up close and very personal in the romantic comedy *The Ugly Truth*.

As Ugly as they come

The Ugly Truth**Director:** Robert Luketic**Stars:** Katherine Heigl, Gerard Butler**Classification:** STC**Rating:** ●●½

CHRIS ALEXANDER
for Metro Canada



If you're going to call your film *The Ugly Truth* then you better be sure it's a masterpiece because if it's not, every film critic who lays eyes upon it will simply stand back and let the title review itself.

And make no mistake, the skinny on this pedes-

trian rom-com migraine-maker ain't terribly pretty.

Grey's Anatomy sexpot Katherine Heigl stars as Abby, a TV morning show producer who gets her feathers ruffled by Mike, played by Gerard Butler, a knuckle dragging hunk who has been hired on as an on-air love advice columnist.

Mike's claim to fame is that he swears to tell "the ugly truth" about male/female relations; lurid from the hip wisdom with little care placed on who he might offend. But although Abby generally loathes her popular star's sexist ramblings, she decides to take a page out of *Cyrano De Bergerac* and use him to help

her get with her neighbour.

This being the sort of movie it is, guess who she really ends up with...

From tender roles in stuff like the underrated *Dear Frankie*, to the macho action hero antics of *300*, to pseudo-hip fluff like *RocknRolla*, Butler is a seriously strong screen presence and here he proves that he also has a great sense of comic timing.

Watching him spew out cheerfully rude vulgarities, smirking and smoldering is amusing and hints at the go for the throat picture screenwriters Nicole Eastman and Karen McCullah were trying for. The character (and the actor) be-

longs in a better film.

Director Robert Luketic (*Monster In-Law*) never finds the right tone to make any of the faux-screwball shenanigans anything more than an exercise in forced, fast talking (and filthy) foolishness. Even Heigl, so endearing in equally smut-lite comedies like *Knocked Up* can't save it and genuine laughs are few and far between (though an over the top scene featuring Heigl and a pair of electric panties is pretty funny... again, if only it were in a better, braver film).

Raunchy but safe and predictable, *The Ugly Truth* just ends up being unlikable. And *Ugly*. That's the truth.



A scene from the Iraq-themed *The Hurt Locker*.

Brothers Bloom skips formula

The Brothers Bloom**Director:** Rian Johnson**Stars:** Adrien Brody, Rachel Weisz**Classification:** PG**Rating:** ●●●●

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada



REVIEW Although his debut film, *Brick*, never blossomed into a blockbuster, filmmaker Rian Johnson has earned big expectations for his follow-up.

That's because the audacious director ably set the

unlikely genre of '50s film noir in a modern high school to create a fascinating slice of fiction. Now, Johnson aims even higher with *The Brothers Bloom*, a worldwide tale of intrigue and slapstick, underpinned in a fantastic magical realism.

Adrien Brody and Mark Ruffalo play the titular pair of lifelong grifters who are hoping to cash in on the perfect con — duping a clumsy, bored heiress named Penelope (Rachel Weisz) into financing a bogus plan to pilfer a rare book from a European museum.

The problem is, Brody's conflicted character (who desperately yearns for an "unwritten life") becomes even more conflicted when he finds himself falling for Penelope.

Like *Brick*, Bloom's greatest strength lies in Johnson's witty, quick-fire dialogue and original characters (while Penelope seems to surface a static exterior, she's secretly mastered martial arts, ping-pong and breakdancing). While this screwball nature to Bloom may appeal to some, others trying to pin down a genre may feel alienated.

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