

What's hot at the box office this February

By  Daniel Derksen

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February offers something for everyone at the cinema. Featuring Oscar-nominated contenders and winners, delicious dark comedies, inspiring dramheart-pounding thrillers and rousing romance.



Image supplied

3 February

Set on a remote island off the west coast of Ireland, the not to be missed *The Banshees Of Inisherin* well deserves its nine Oscar nominations and follows lifelong friends Pádraic (Colin Farrell) and Colm (Brendan Gleeson), who find themselves at an impasse when Colm unexpectedly puts an end to their friendship.

A stunned Pádraic, aided by his sister Siobhán (Kerry Condon) and troubled young islander Dominic (Barry Keoghan), endeavours to repair the relationship, refusing to take no for an answer. But Pádraic's repeated efforts only strengthen his former friend's resolve and when Colm delivers a desperate ultimatum, events swiftly escalate, with shocking consequences.

The film stars Colin Farrell and Brendan Gleeson, who reunite with director Martin McDonagh from *In Bruges*.

From visionary filmmaker M. Night Shyamalan comes *Knock At The Cabin*, a film that both shares a bloodline with his previous films but is also unlike any film he's made before. The film centers on a gay couple, Eric (Jonathan Groff) and Andrew (Ben Aldridge) and their adopted daughter Wen (Kristen Cui), who are vacationing at a remote cabin in the woods, when their house is surrounded by four armed strangers: Leonard (Dave Bautista), Sabrina (Nikki Amuka-Bird), Adrianne (Abby Quinn) and Redmond (Rupert Grint).

Taken hostage, the family is informed that these four strangers — who also do not know each other — have all been haunted and tormented by a shared prophecy. This mindbender is based on the national bestseller *The Cabin at the End of the World* by Paul Tremblay.

10 February

In celebration of its 25th anniversary, a remastered version of James Cameron's multi Academy award-winning *Titanic* will be re-released in local cinemas on 10 February. With a cast headed by Oscar winners Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet, the film is an epic, action-packed romance set against the ill-fated maiden voyage of the "unsinkable" Titanic, at the time, the largest moving object ever built.

Winning 11 Oscars, upon its initial release in 1997, the film became the #1 all-time global box office champ and is currently the third highest-grossing film worldwide.

Just in time for Valentine's Day, the third instalment of the blockbuster *Magic Mike* film franchise arrives with the musical comedy *Magic Mike's Last Dance*. Channing Tatum reprises his role as Mike Lane, who takes to the stage again after a lengthy hiatus, following a business deal that went bust, leaving him broke and taking bartender gigs in Florida. For what he hopes will be one last hurrah, Mike heads to London with a wealthy socialite (Hayek Pinault) who lures him with an offer he can't refuse...and an agenda all her own.

With everything on the line, once Mike discovers what she truly has in mind, will he — and the roster of hot new dancers he'll have to whip into shape — be able to pull it off? Director Steven Soderbergh returns to create the magic again.

From Darren Aronofsky comes *The Whale*, the story of a reclusive English teacher living with severe obesity who attempts to reconnect with his estranged teenage daughter for one last chance at redemption. Oscar-nominated Brendan Fraser gives a virtuosic performance of a man whose time is running out and confronts, with his full heart and fierce wit, long-buried traumas and unspoken love that have haunted him for decades. But *The Whale* offers much more than just darkness.

It's a soaring character study of a man wrestling with the enormity of his regret, the duty of fatherhood, and the feasibility of goodness itself. It is based on the acclaimed play by Samuel D. Hunter

17 February

In the sci-fi adventure *Ant-Man And The Wasp: Quantomania* super Heroes Scott Lang (Paul Rudd) and Hope Van Dyne (Evangeline Lilly) return to continue their adventures as Ant-Man and The Wasp and embark on an adventure in the Quantum Realm that will push them beyond the limits of what they thought possible.

Together, with Hope's parents Janet Van Dyne (Michelle Pfeiffer) and Hank Pym (Michael Douglas), and Scott's daughter Cassie Lang (Kathryn Newton), the family finds themselves exploring the Quantum Realm, interacting with strange new creatures, and embarking on an adventure that will push them beyond the limits of what they thought possible.

It is directed by Peyton Reed and also stars Jonathan Majors as Kang, David Dastmalchian as Veb, Katy O'Brian as Jentorra, William Jackson Harper as Quaz and Bill Murray as Lord Krylar.

Based on the #1 *New York Times* bestseller, *A Man Called Otto* tells the story of Otto Anderson (Tom Hanks), a grump who no longer sees purpose in his life following the loss of his wife. Otto is ready to end it all, but his plans are interrupted when a lively young family moves in next door, and he meets his match in quick-witted Marisol – she challenges him to see life differently, leading to an unlikely friendship that turns his world around.

A heartwarming and funny story about love, loss, and life. *A Man Called Otto* shows that family can sometimes be found in the most unexpected places. It is directed by Marc Forster and is based on the novel *En Man Som Heter Ove* by Fredrik

22 February

Die Hart the Movie will be screened in cinemas in South Africa from 22 February and will be to Prime Video members worldwide from 24 February. *Die Hart the Movie* features the original ten-episode series, reimagined into a feature film format. In this satirical action comedy, Hart playing a fictionalised version of himself sets out to pivot away from being pigeonholed as a comedy wingman to being taken seriously as an action movie star.

Kevin Hart attends 'action hero school' run by Ron Wilcox, played by John Travolta (*Paradise City*, *Eye for an Eye*), where he attempts to learn the ropes on how to become one of the industry's most coveted action stars.

The cast also includes Nathalie Emmanuel (*Game of Thrones*, *Fast & Furious* franchise), Josh Hartnett (*Wrath of Man*, *Paradise Lost*), and Jean Reno (*Call My Agent!*, *22 Bullets*). The movie is directed by Eric Appel (*Brooklyn Nine-Nine*) and written by Derek Kolstad (*John Wick: Chapter 1, 2 & 3*) and Tripper Clancy (*Stuber*, *I Am Not Okay With This*).

24 February

When her mother (Nia Long) disappears while on vacation in Colombia with her new boyfriend, June's (Storm Reid) search for answers is hindered by international red tape in the thriller *Missing*.

Stuck thousands of miles away in Los Angeles, June creatively uses all the latest technology at her fingertips to try and find her before it's too late. But as she digs deeper, her digital sleuthing raises more questions than answers... and when June unravels secrets about her mom, she discovers that she never really knew her at all.

Written and directed by Will Merrick and Nick Johnson, the film is a standalone sequel to *Searching*.

The wild dark comedy *Cocaine Bear* is inspired by the 1985 true story of a drug runner's plane crash, missing cocaine, and the black bear that ate it, and finds an oddball group of cops, criminals, tourists and teens converging in a Georgia forest where a 500-pound apex predator has ingested a staggering amount of cocaine and gone on a coke-fueled rampage for more blow ... and blood.

Directed by Elizabeth Banks, it stars Keri Russell (*The Americans*), O'Shea Jackson, Jr. (*Straight Outta Compton*), Christian Convery-Jennings (*Sweet Tooth*) and Alden Ehrenreich (*Solo: A Star Wars Story*).

With a star-studded ensemble cast, *Maybe I Do* stars Diane Keaton, Richard Gere, Susan Sarandon, Emma Roberts, Luke Bracey and William H. Macy in a multi-generational romantic comedy. Michelle (Roberts) and Allen (Bracey) have reached

the point in their relationship to take the next steps toward marriage.

Thinking it is a good idea to invite their parents to finally meet, they set a dinner and make it a family affair. To everyone's surprise, the affair takes on a whole new meaning as the parents already know each other all too well - they've been cheating on their spouses for months...with each other.

Trapped in this precarious predicament, they try to hide their dalliances from the kids while confronting their spouse's lovers head-on. Let the games begin! It is written and directed by Michael Jacobs.

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