

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Movie Review:

Ocean's Twelve Lacks Sting of Original

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Contributor

Ocean's Twelve, the sequel to the 2001 hit *Ocean's Eleven* is a film a lot of people had been looking forward to all year and why not? All the original cast members are back including George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, Bernie Mac, Julia Roberts, while Steve Soderberg mans the helm in the director's chair once again. The previews of the film were funny and engaging and the preliminary reviews for the film seemed promising, so you would think the movie would hit the bulls-eye - unfortunately it doesn't. *Ocean's Twelve* is undone by a unbelievable ending that will leave the viewer saying "Ah... Okay. You lost me" (or maybe that's just me. I'm simple!). The movie picks up three years after Danny Ocean (Clooney) and his gang robbed Terry Benedict's three casinos in Las Vegas of one-hundred sixty million dollars. All of the con men have retired to a life of seclusion, including Ocean who has remarried his wife Tess (Julia Roberts). That seclusion is interrupted when Benedict (Andy Garcia) is tipped off to the whereabouts of Ocean's posse, and demands his money back with interest. Ocean et al have two weeks to pay back Benedict his money or face the repercussions. Having too much heat on them to commit a heist of epic proportions in America, Rusty (Pitt) suggests they hit Amsterdam, where nobody knows them; yet Rusty has ulterior motives as well, as he wants to check up on his ex girlfriend Isabel Lahiri (Catherine Zeta Jones), who just happens to be a police inspector. To make matters worse, another master thief, known as the "Night Fox" is playing a game of one-upmanship with Ocean's crew which is putting their heist

and lives in danger.

Ocean's Twelve lacks the action-packed ending of the original. In *Ocean's Eleven*, there seemed no way Ocean and his men could successfully infiltrate Benedict's casinos and walk out alive, but they did, and the way they did it was so slick and inventive, you couldn't help but smile. The heist in this one is slick too, but it is a little too slick and borders on unbelievability - so much so I kept thinking there was another forty-five minutes left in the movie, *because there was no way the director would end the film like that* (but you can judge the ending for yourself, if you go see the film.). While the script suffers, the cast's performance at least keep things interesting; Clooney and Pitt are laid back and filled with charm as in the first movie. Matt Damon is funny as the sensitive Linus, who wants a bigger role on 'the job' this time around, and Julia Roberts is likable as Danny's wife Tess, who is more willing to role with the punches of Ocean's gang than in the first movie. The problem, however is that with so many characters, there is less screen time for others: Bernie Mac, Elliot Gould, Don Cheadle, and Carl Reiner who played prominent roles in the original are kept in the background, and are almost absent for an hour of the movie.

Ocean's Twelve isn't a bad movie, but towards the end of the film it loses steam. But, if you liked *Ocean's Eleven* and really want to know what Ocean and his crew are up to, it wouldn't be a bad movie to see at a matinee price - you could do a lot worse.

The Ultra, Extra-Special, Limited, Hard-to-Find Edition

Steele Campbell
Contributor

As one peruses the shelves at Wal-Mart's (or any place that sells DVD videos) electronics section, one can't help notice just how many DVDs carry the moniker "Special Edition" or some other phrase denoting its exclusivity.

Independence Day for instance, proclaims that it is the "Limited Edition" version. And yet I look behind it and see quite a few copies. Now I know that these are not the only copies that Wal-Mart has since I purchased one (thus subtracting one from their stock) and yet I find another one took its place. And surely, based on the laws of probability, others have likewise purchased a copy and found that another one took its place on the shelves. One could further extrapolate that since there are roughly 1,346 Wal-Mart's in the world that at least forty or fifty thousand copies of this thing would have been sold. This is, of course, only in Wal-Mart. What about Blockbuster? Or Future Shop? Or Jumbo Video? Or Zellers? (I'm just joking, forget Zellers, everyone else does). Surely this amounts to many thousands of this so-called "Limited Edition" being sold. This fact seems to run counter to the definition of "Limited".

Other DVDs, such as my perennial favourite, *Meet Me in St. Louis*, assert that they are "Special Editions". These videos hold [slightly] more credence than "Limited Editions", if only because they usually have some extra content on a separate disc. Often times, as was the case with *Meet Me in St. Louis*, this is the only DVD copy that was released to the public. Wouldn't this then mean that it is the "Normal Edition"? At the very least, they would have to release two editions on DVD to make it "special".



Otherwise that bag of flour at the grocery store that reads *President's Choice* could be labeled "Special Edition", even with nothing special about it.

Perhaps the most curious is the "Collector's Edition". The name seems to imply that this edition will only appeal to true "collectors". As if that was such a prestigious title. And yet, again, it is often the only edition of the video released, often with only a smattering of things you didn't get to see in the theatre (usually for good reason too).

The one thing many of these DVDs have in common is access to what are known as "deleted scenes". Now granted, sometimes movies have scenes cut for a poor reason (a common one is that the film is simply too long). Then, the fans can see the movie as it was intended (such as with *The Matrix*, or *Lord of the Rings*). However, movies that are simply meant to pull in a few extra bucks for the studio (such as *Battlefield Earth*) hardly have enough content to fill the movie itself, let alone the "deleted scenes". In the case of the latter movie, if the scene was deleted, chances are that it wasn't even worth the cost of shooting.

Many will argue with me, saying that these are all valid sales tactics. I cannot refute that, but I can say that if one thinks about it, often times these "Special Editions" are nothing more than a living example of that old quotation: Same crap, different packaging.