



How to Be Single

★★★★★

OUT NOW / RATED M / 110 MINS.

DIRECTOR Christian Ditter

CAST Dakota Johnson, Leslie Mann, Rebel Wilson, Damon Wayans Jr., Anders Holm, Nicholas Braun

Newly single paralegal Alice (Johnson) hits the Manhattan bar scene with her broody gynaecologist sister (Mann) and wild party girl pal (Wilson). This zippy comedy based on *Sex And The City* writer and producer Liz Tuccillo's book of the same name is crowded with characters and conflicting messages about gender and relationship etiquette – it's easy to spot the influence of both male and female screenwriters. But it taps into a few realistic dating dilemmas and for every cliché there's a sharp, silly improvised aside from Wilson in a sexed-up version of her *Pitch Perfect* persona. With its themes and locations, cocktails and heels, this is giddy, glamorous catnip for *Sex And The City* fans. **ALS**



Ride Along 2

★★★★★

OUT NOW / RATED M / 102 MINS.

DIRECTOR Tim Story

CAST Ice Cube, Kevin Hart, Olivia Munn, Ken Jeong

Ice Cube and Kevin Hart reprise their roles of surly pitbull detective James Payton and yapping chihuahua trainee cop Ben Barber in this follow-up to the 2014 surprise hit *Ride Along*. The flashy but artless sequel pulls a bunch of worn moves from the buddy-cop playbook: relocate the action to somewhere bigger and brighter (the gaudy beach 'n' babes of Miami), pull out a bad guy with a dodgy accent (Benjamin Bratt doing his best Tony Montana-lite) and, in the most *Lethal Weapon 3*-esque way imaginable, adds both the goofy Joe Pesci comic sidekick (Ken Jeong doing maximum Ken Jeong) and Olivia Munn channelling Rene Russo's sexy-but-tough love interest cop. At times dumb fun, but for the majority of the ride, just plain dumb. **JJ**



The Daughter

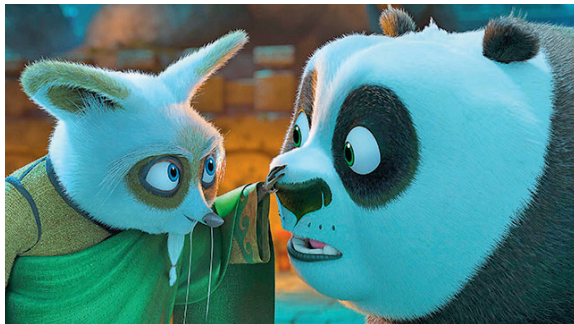
★★★★★

OUT MARCH 17 / RATED M / 95 MINS.

DIRECTOR Simon Stone

CAST Geoffrey Rush, Odessa Young, Ewen Leslie, Miranda Otto, Sam Neill, Paul Schneider, Anna Torv

Sydney-based actor and theatre director Simon Stone has taken his successful stage adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's 1884 play *The Wild Duck* and has adapted it yet again – this time as a morality tale played out in modern day Australia – for this, his feature directorial debut. The combination of Stone's assured eye and a murderer's row of largely local thespians (Rush, Neill, Otto, Leslie) ensures this sumptuously shot excavation of dark family secrets is a convincing showcase for the talents of those on both sides of the camera. Odessa Young is a revelation as the titular daughter in a performance to be relished; a shame, then, that the film's relentlessly dour tone will likely only attract modest art house audiences. **JAMES JENNINGS**



Kung Fu Panda 3

★★★★★

OUT MARCH 24 / RATED PG / 95 MINS.

DIRECTORS Jennifer Yuh Nelson, Alessandro Carloni

CAST Jack Black, Angelina Jolie, Bryan Cranston, J.K. Simmons, Dustin Hoffman, Jackie Chan

This megabucks trilogy ends winningly with an instalment that sticks with the overarching theme of being true to oneself, particularly when kicking ass. But it also finds enough ideas to differentiate it from the first two. Po (Jack Black) has been tracked down by his long-lost father (Bryan Cranston) – great news if it weren't for the god-like warrior who has come from the spirit realm to destroy every kung fu master around. Although there is now a huge number of characters, and expensive household names voicing them, everyone gets something to do. The production design is gorgeous and there's confidence in the cheerful storytelling which, lacking the darkness of the last film, allows for silly moments. Enjoyably wise and daft. **OLLY RICHARDS**

DID YOU KNOW?

The Daughter's Odessa Young is the niece of Australian character actor and *Rectify* star Aden Young.



DID YOU KNOW?

In addition to voicing the villainous Kai in *Kung Fu Panda 3*, J.K. Simmons also voiced the yellow M&M in a series of ads.

