

‘Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story’ Taps Best of Must-See TV Kings of Comedy

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CHICAGO – The makers of “Scary Movie,” “Date Movie” and “Epic Movie” should be kicking themselves right now for never thinking to make “Musical Bio-Pic Movie”.



John C. Reilly in “Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story”.

Photo credit: IMDb

Writer and director Jake Kasdan and producer and writer Judd Apatow have beaten them to the punch with “Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story”.

The duo, who collaborated on some of the funniest TV shows network television has cancelled (“Freaks and Geeks,” “Undeclared”), lampoon the entire genre of the true-story biographical movies and fall nothing short of brilliant all the while.

The entire “Walk Hard” narrative is told as a flashback before late-in-life fictional music legend Dewey Cox (John C. Reilly) takes the stage. His band mate and frequent drug pusher, Sam (Tim Meadows), tells a stagehand: “Dewey Cox must rethink his entire life before he plays.”



Jenna Fischer and John C. Reilly in “Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story”.

Photo credit: IMDb

A direct send-up of “Ray,” Cox’s troubled past stems from the day as a youth he cut his music prodigy of a brother in half during a playful machete duel. The top half us his dying brother’s last request is for Dewey to be twice as great for both of them.

Dewey must spend his whole life never getting respect from his father who constantly returns to remind us that “the wrong kid died”.



John C. Reilly in “Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story”.

Photo credit: IMDb

At the age of 14, Dewey sets off on his musical career with his teenage bride, Edith, who is played by Kristen Wiig. On the road, he has a Johnny Cash/June Carter Cash romance with his backup singer, Darlene, who is played by Jenna Fischer.

Award-winning, Chicago-native actor John C. Reilly – who is best known for roles as a pathetic cuckold in movies like “The Hours,” “Chicago” and “The Good Girl” – redefined himself as a comedic actor in 2006’s “Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby”.



John C. Reilly in “Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story”.

Photo credit: IMDb

In “Walk Hard,” Reilly takes the lead and steers every scene with impeccable comedic instincts as if he’s channeling Will Farrell. Even when Reilly wasn’t hitting, the rest of the cast reads like the who’s hot in comedy 2007 edition.

Not only did Apatow run through his personal Rolodex, but he also tapped some of the Frat Pack and most of NBC’s Thursday must-see TV lineup. Moviegoers who are expecting comedy in the vein of “The 40 Year-Old-Virgin” or “Knocked Up” are in for a surprise.

The film plays more like “Airplane!” with quick one-liners and snappy puns. It even goes as far to call itself out by having Reilly verbalize his age throughout the film despite looking consistently the same.



John C. Reilly [performing in Chicago](#) [10] in Dewey Cox character on Dec. 6, 2007.

Photo credit: Joseph Mohan for Pitchfork

It slices through the formula built by biographical blockbusters (“Does Dewey seem a little down to you?” “Of course he is! This is middle-period Dewey where he’s dark and reflective.”) At times, it even feels like a VH-1 “Behind the Music”.

The year 2007 has been stellar for Apatow and comedies in general. “Walk Hard” is an excellent way to go out with a bang. Comedy “A”-listers and brilliant satire make for the perfect combination. “Walk Hard” is a spot-on spoof that sings at a hilarious pitch.

“Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story” opened on Dec. 21, 2007.

By [Dustin Levell](#) [11]

Senior Staff Writer

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[11] <mailto:dustin@hollywoodchicago.com>