

Despite Some Superfluous Story, 'Iron Man 2' Delivers Hollywood Oomph

Submitted by [HollywoodChicago.com](http://www.hollywoodchicago.com) [1] on May 7, 2010 - 1:15pm

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CHICAGO – “Iron Man 2” with returner Robert Downey Jr. and newcomer Scarlett Johansson does what it can within the confines of what it has to do. The Hollywood machine has trained us to have certain expectations for blockbuster sequels and “Iron Man 2” neither deviates nor blazes new territory.

The first “Iron Man” film, which was released almost exactly two years ago on May 2, 2008, has profitably generated \$585 million in worldwide box-office receipts on a production budget of \$140 million. That Jon Favreau-directed film earned \$98 million in its opening weekend.



While Favreau (“Elf”) returns to direct the sequel, Justin Theroux (“Tropic Thunder”) interestingly nabs the solo screenplay credit in “Iron Man 2”. The first film was inked by a foursome including Mark Fergus (“Children of Men”), Hawk Ostby (“Children of Men”), Art Marcum (“Punisher: War Zone”) and Matt Holloway (“Punisher: War Zone”).

“Iron Man 2” again stars Robert Downey Jr. as the title Iron Man character, but Favreau and Paramount Pictures know the No. 1 requirement of follow-up blockbuster film is kicking things up lots of notches on the bedpost.



[Read Adam Fendelman's full review of "Iron Man 2".](#) [18]

That's the sole reason behind the casting decision of Hollywood starlet Scarlett Johansson. Beauty and brains aside, “Iron Man 2” decides to primarily flaunt her brawn. Despite that respectable choice, the problem is they forget to actually write her into the story.

Despite a climactic, “The Matrix”-style fight scene where the character Natalie Rushman (who is doubly known as Natasha Romanoff) kicks some serious ass and takes countless names (while Jon Favreau comically dilly dallies around with a single thug), the entire Johansson sequence is pointless to the central theme of the story. It doesn't even have a subtheme.

“Iron Man 2” stars Robert Downey Jr., Scarlett Johansson, Gwyneth Paltrow, Don Cheadle, Sam Rockwell, Mickey Rourke, Samuel L. Jackson, Clark Gregg, John Slattery, Jon Favreau, Paul Bettany, Leslie Bibb and Garry Shandling from director Jon Favreau and writer Justin Theroux. The film, which was a running time of 124 minutes, opened everyone on May 7, 2010. “Iron Man 2” is rated “PG-13” for sequences of intense sci-fi action and violence and some language.



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Natalie Rushman or Black Widow (Scarlett Johansson) in “Iron Man 2”.
Image credit: Francois Duhamel

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