

Film Review: Guy Pearce Delves Into Corruption in Riveting 'Animal Kingdom'

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on August 20, 2010 - 7:09am

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CHICAGO – The thin line between anarchy and social peace is shriveling into a microscopic blur as sentencing and incarceration become increasingly less effective as a deterrent. The human side of this perspective is explored with an artistic elegance, featuring Guy Pearce in writer/director David Mich  d’s “Animal Kingdom.”



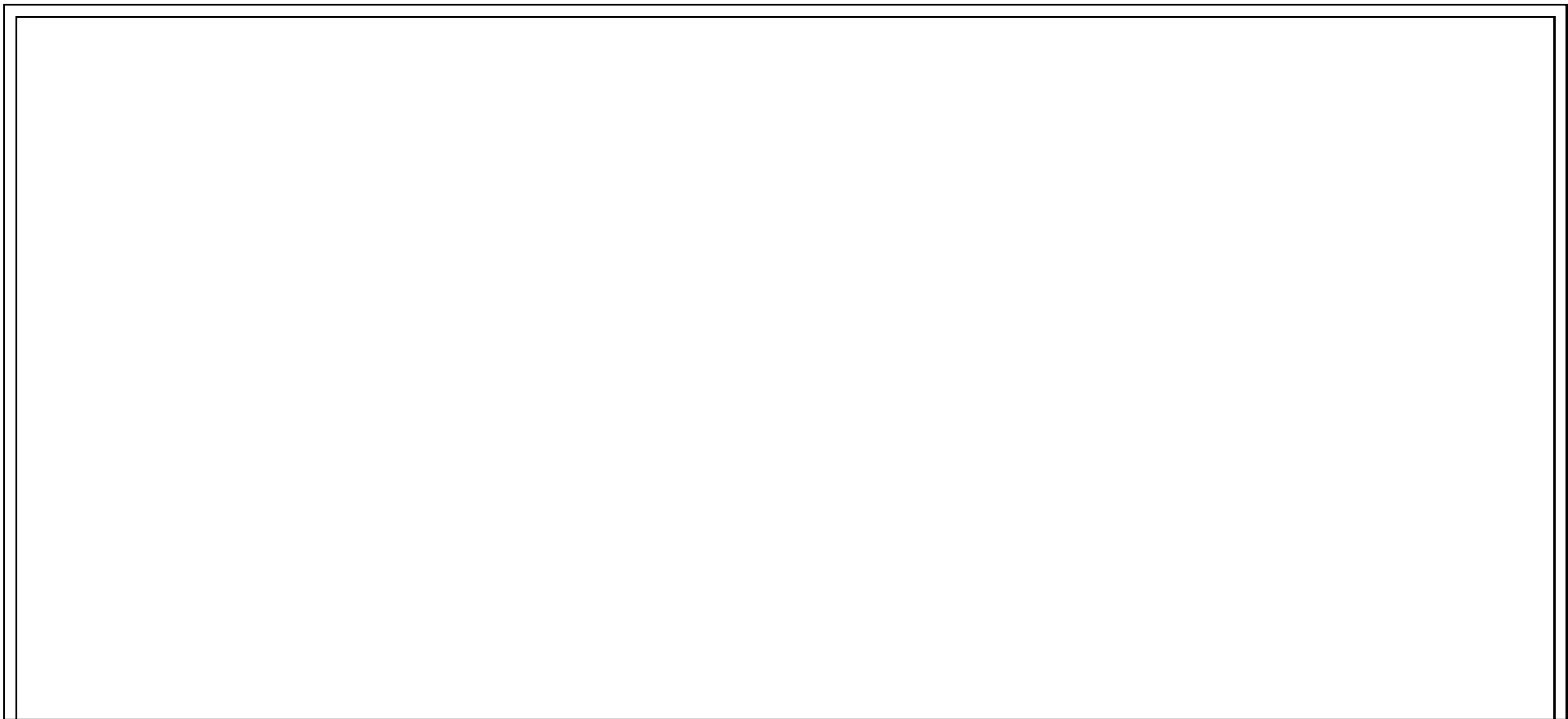
Set in the Melbourne (Australia) criminal underworld and the environments of the rival law enforcement, the Kingdom involves “Pope” Cody (Ben Mendelsohn), a armed robber in exile because of a betrayal involving corrupt cops. His gang is also in a downslide, as his main business partner Baz (Joel Edgerton) wants out, and his brothers Craig (Sullivan Stapleton) and Darren (Luke Ford) are muddling through with other pursuits.

To this coterie comes a 19 year old nephew, nicknamed “J” (James Frecheville), who comes to live with the family after his mother dies. He is immediately put under the wing of the family’s matriarch, Janine “Smurf” Cody (Jacki Weaver). Smurf is more than a “smother mother,” she literally holds the family together through sheer will and bizarre passive aggression.

To capture and prosecute the Pope, Melbourne Detective Nathan Leckie (Guy Pearce) infiltrates the family through J. The police officer offers the boy witness protection, after a caper goes wrong and other cops are killed. Pope begins to threaten family members, including J’s girlfriend (Laura Wheelwright). While Leckie tries to hold J on the law and order side of his world, his grandmother, uncles and their criminal ties seek to exploit him.

“Animal Kingdom” continues its limited release nationwide in Chicago on August 20th. Check local listings for show times and locations. Featuring Guy Pearce, Ben Mendelsohn, Joel Edgerton, Laura Wheelwright, Luke Ford, James Frecheville and Jacki Weaver. Written and Directed by David Mich  d.

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James Frecheville as 'J' Cody and Guy Pearce as Det. Leckie in 'Animal Kingdom'

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