

## DVD Review: Danny Boyle's Excellent '127 Hours' Retains Dramatic Power

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on March 16, 2011 - 7:16pm

- [127 Hours](#) [2]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [3]
- [Danny Boyle](#) [4]
- [DVD Review](#) [5]
- [FOX](#) [6]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [7]
- [James Franco](#) [8]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [9]

CHICAGO – Danny Boyle's "127 Hours" came to theaters, originally in the Windy City as a part of the Chicago International Film Festival, with such fanfare and controversy over its notorious arm-cutting scene that it had almost the force of nature when it first screened. It was a visceral punch to the gut. I wondered how it would play, months later, on the couch instead of in a theater seat. It still works. Boyle's film is still a dramatically powerful piece of work with a career-best performance from the great James Franco.

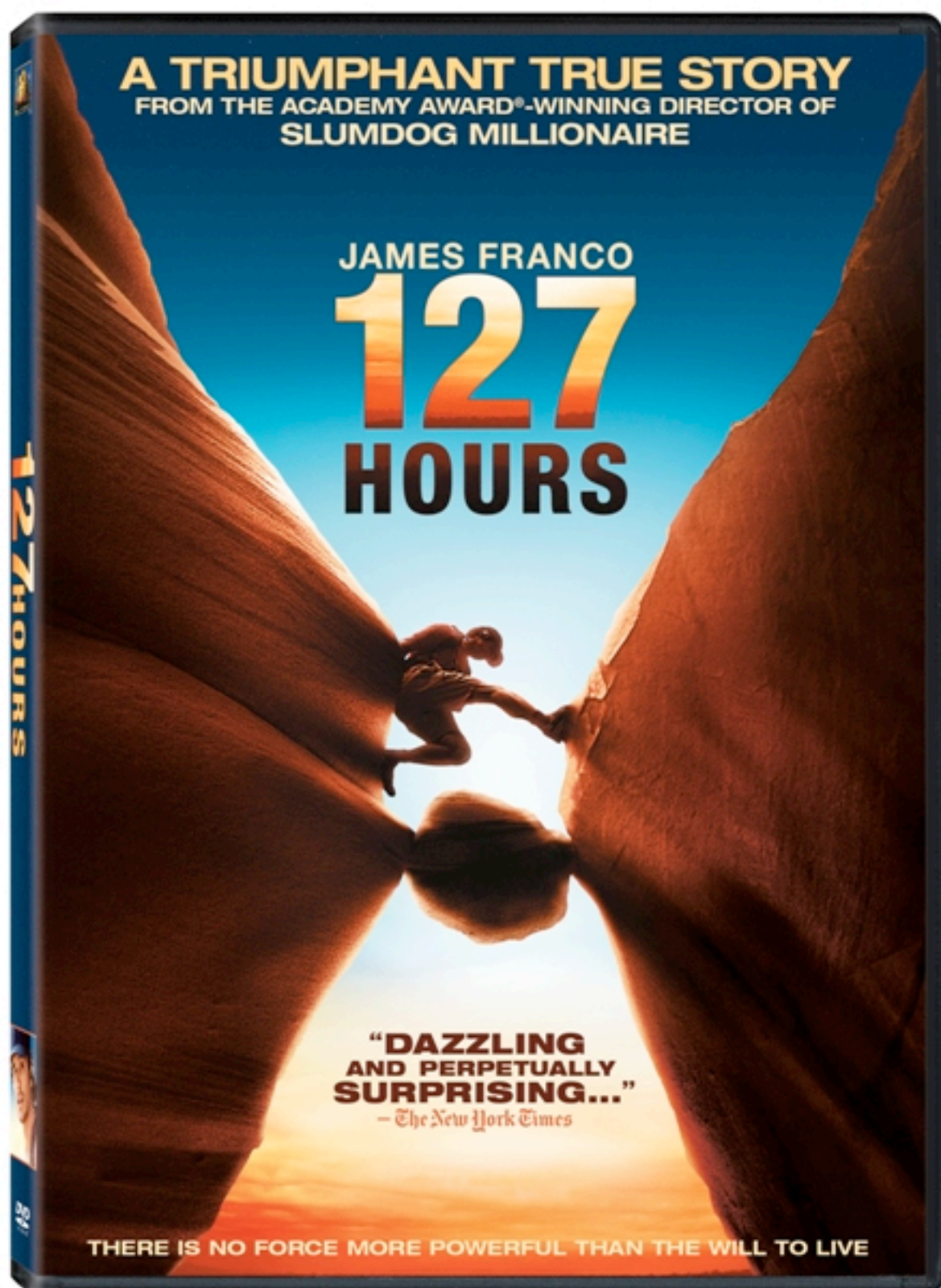


DVD Rating: **4.0/5.0**

"127 Hours" tells the amazing story of Aron Ralston, a man caught under a boulder for the titular amount of time who then realized that the only way he could survive would be to sever part of his own arm. Danny Boyle tells Ralston's story in a way that only he could, both transporting us to the nightmarish ordeal and illustrating something deeper about the human will to survive and the need for hope and companionship. Boyle and Franco (with a lot of help from the most effective score of 2010 from A.R. Rahman) perfectly convey the emotions and internal drama that led to a devastating external decision.

The plot recap of "127 Hours" doesn't really capture the experience of viewing it: One day, Aron Ralston (James Franco) went out for climbing and hiking. He slipped on a boulder into a chasm and his arm was pinned underneath an immovable rock. He made a decision that would make most of us dizzy to even consider.

Instead of turning Ralston's saga into a tragedy, Boyle and writer Simon Beaufoy focus on what drove the young man to want to live. And the lesson he learned was one of community. We need other people. Sometimes we need help. We can't all be that lone adventurer that Aron clearly envisioned himself to occasionally be. The final act, in which Ralston learns that it's not just the people he knows but those he hasn't met yet that give him a reason to live, is powerfully moving, even the second time. Only the hardened soul won't be moved by Aron's premonition.



127 Hours was released on Blu-Ray and DVD on March 1st, 2011

Photo credit: Fox

Watching the film a second time on DVD, one appreciates the technical accomplishments more than the first, when the incredible work by Franco takes center stage. The film is remarkably technically-accomplished when one considers that most of it takes place in one location with one actor. Because of that, the other elements of the work — the score, cinematography, editing, visual effects — become almost something of a supporting cast for Franco.

To be fair, there are still a few too many stylistic flourishes in “127 Hours”; one too many quick cuts or clever musical choices. I think if Boyle had held back just a bit more it could have been a true masterpiece. It’s still one of the best films of 2010 and has held up remarkably well on its trip from Toronto to Chicago to theatres nationwide to now DVD and Blu-ray.

The DVD is a bit of a disappointment as the one man who I would most love to hear from regarding this incredible journey, Aron Ralston, is nowhere to be found. Maybe he didn’t have time for a commentary, but not even an interview?

#### Special Features:

- o Feature Commentary by Director/Co-Screenwriter Danny Boyle, Producer Christian Colson, and Co-Screenwriter Simon Beaufoy
- o Deleted Scenes

*‘127 Hours’ stars James Franco, Amber Tamblyn, and Kate Mara. It was written by Danny Boyle & Simon Beaufoy and directed by Boyle. It was released on Blu-ray and DVD on March 1st, 2011. It is rated R.*



[10]

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