

Film Review: 'The Amazing Spider-man' Lacks Personality Despite Best Efforts by Talented Stars

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on July 3, 2012 - 10:07am

- [Andrew Garfield](#) [2]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [3]
- [Denis Leary](#) [4]
- [Emma Stone](#) [5]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [6]
- [Marc Webb](#) [7]
- [Martin Sheen](#) [8]
- [Movie Review](#) [9]
- [Rhys Ifans](#) [10]
- [Sally Field](#) [11]
- [The Amazing Spider-Man](#) [12]

CHICAGO – They could have called it “The Meh Spider-man.” While Andrew Garfield, Emma Stone, Denis Leary, Sally Field, and Martin Sheen do their absolute best to elevate one of the most generic and uninspired superhero screenplays since men first put on spandex in front of the camera, they can’t save this wasted opportunity to reboot a franchise in a way that doesn’t feel generated by a committee of Marvel producers. Marc Webb’s “The Amazing Spider-man” isn’t awful enough to be truly memorable but it certainly doesn’t offer anything new, trudging through most of the same plot details that Sam Raimi covered with personality and style in his trilogy. There are glimpses of what could be in the eventual sequel when the cast is allowed to shake off the generic nature of its origin story but the likelihood of a better follow-up doesn’t excuse the mistakes made here.



Rating: **2.5/5.0**

A young Peter Parker watches as his father Richard (Campbell Scott) and mother Mary (Embeth Davidtz) flee into the night. Peter never sees his parents again and is raised by Uncle Ben (a fantastic Martin Sheen, offering the only emotional gravity to a piece desperately in need of more) and Aunt May (a solid-but-wasted Sally Field). A teenage Peter (now Andrew Garfield) finds a briefcase owned by his father and tracks a hidden file within it back to Oscorp, the biotech company at which his father worked and where his secret crush, Gwen Stacy (Emma Stone), is currently interning after school.



[Read Brian Tallerico's full review of "The Amazing Spider-man" in our reviews section.](#) [13]

At Oscorp, Parker not only crosses paths with his father’s former colleague, Dr. Curt Connors (Rhys Ifans), who is working on cross-species genetics, but the young man gets bit by a genetically-engineered spider. Before you know it, he’s kicking ass on the subway, dunking like Lebron, and visiting sweet Gwen in her 20th floor apartment by knocking on her window. With Uncle Ben’s death at the hands of a petty thief that Peter could have stopped still ringing in his moral ears, he sets out on a quest for vengeance.

At this point, “The Amazing Spider-man” needs a villain or two. The film goes 50 minutes without an action sequence (other than the subway beat-down) and longer without an actual villain. The lack of narrative thrust and incredible familiarity with every one of the story beats of the first hour makes for a film with no thrust for a surprisingly long time, almost as if it’s going through the required motions. Peter has to get bit. He has to have a love interest. Ben has to die. He has to experiment with his growing powers. Yadda yadda yadda. When writers James Vanderbilt and Alvin Sargent and Steve Kloves have the guts to try to actually rewrite the franchise (by reimagining Peter’s father/mother for example) then the piece has a bit of life but the first act is so bereft of risk-taking or personality that it’s depressing. It’s tracing over something that’s already been drawn.



[Continue reading for Brian Tallerico's full "The Amazing Spider-man" review.](#) [13]

“The Amazing Spider-man” stars Andrew Garfield, Emma Stone, Rhys Ifans, Denis Leary, Martin Sheen, and Sally Field. It was directed by Marc Webb. It opens on July 3, 2012.



The Amazing Spider-man
Photo credit: Sony Pictures

Source URL (retrieved on Apr 17 2024 - 2:31am):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/19160/film-review-the-amazing-spider-man-lacks-personality-despite-best-efforts-by-talented-sta>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/briantt>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/andrew-garfield>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/brian-tallerico>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/denis-leary>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/emma-stone>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/marc-webb>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/martin-sheen>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/movie-review>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/rhys-ifans>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/sally-field>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-amazing-spider-man>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/19156/the-amazing-spider-man-lacks-personality-despite-best-efforts-by-talented-stars>