

DVD Review: John Cusack Fans Should Steer Clear of ‘The Factory’

Submitted by [mattmovieman](#) [1] on March 1, 2013 - 3:51pm

- [DVD Review](#) [2]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [3]
- [Jennifer Carpenter](#) [4]
- [John Cusack](#) [5]
- [Mae Whitman](#) [6]
- [Matt Fagerholm](#) [7]
- [Morgan O’Neill](#) [8]
- [The Factory](#) [9]
- [The Raven](#) [10]
- [Warner Bros. Home Entertainment](#) [11]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [12]

CHICAGO – John Cusack is in a very bad mood. Not even a home-cooked Thanksgiving dinner can melt his icily grim disposition, as he speeds through traffic, shouts expletives at random extras and takes part in several terse phone conversations (hopefully with his agent). Of course, if I was an A-grade actor trapped in Z-grade dreck, I’d be peeved too.

Morgan O’Neill’s bargain basement thriller, “The Factory,” continues Cusack’s curious descent into grisly schlock destined for a direct-to-video release. As grossly miscast as the actor may have been in James McTeigue’s dreadful “The Raven,” the role at least allowed Cusack to exude some semblance of dry, deadpan wit. “The Factory” merely requires him to appear miserable, and suffice it to say that the actor’s misery is wholly convincing.



DVD Rating: **0.5/5.0**

For the vast majority of its running time, O’Neill’s picture resembles a by-the-numbers retread of countless “CSI” episodes where an obsessed cop and his photogenic sidekick track down a serial killer. Sadly, O’Neill clearly wasn’t satisfied with achieving mere badness. Once some ambiguous flashbacks start getting integrated into the action—which is awkward, considering no one appears to be flashing back—it becomes glaringly obvious that a big twist will be revealed in the final pages of O’Neill’s script (co-authored by soap star Paul Leyden). To say the twist is a doozy would be giving it far too much credit. It’s so outlandishly nonsensical that it inspires little more than incredulous laughter, especially when the film flips to the usual frenzied montage of previous scenes (a la “Usual Suspects”), as if they will somehow illustrate how the entire film has been leading up to this moment. They don’t. All they serve as is a reminder of the 104 minutes that the viewer spent wasting their precious time on Earth watching this insultingly asinine train wreck. Even M. Night Shyamalan would shake his head in embarrassment.



The Factory was released on DVD on February 19th, 2013.

Photo credit: Warner Bros. Home Entertainment

The unsalvageable nature of this turkey is even more frustrating considering the remarkable amount of talent involved. Cinematographer Kramer Morgenthau ("Game of Thrones") sprinkles a few startlingly beautiful images of drifting snow and windshields awash in reflected color amidst the blood-spattered grime. The lovely Mae Whitman (known to her "Arrested Development" co-stars as "...Her?") easily earns the audience's sympathy as the killer's youngest would-be victim, though the script makes her character maddeningly bone-headed with the sole intention of elongating her suffering (advice to all movie victims: if you intend on stabbing a killer, don't aim for the shoulder). As for Cusack, his agonized emoting is first-rate, but his efforts are entirely in vain. No veteran SAG member whose resumé includes "Say Anything," "The Grifters," "Bullets Over Broadway," "Grosse Pointe Blank," "Being John Malkovich," "High Fidelity" and "Hot Tub Time Machine" deserves to be trapped in a cinematic travesty the likes of "The Factory."

Apparently this film is so unpopular at Warner Bros. that the studio didn't even bother with a Blu-ray release. Instead, they decided to dump it on the most bare-bones DVD imaginable. A roadside burial of the original negative would've been a preferable sendoff.

'The Factory' is released by Warner Bros. Home Entertainment and stars John Cusack, Jennifer Carpenter, Mae Whitman, Dallas Roberts, Sonya Walger, Mageina Tovah, Katherine Waterston and Gary Anthony Williams. It was written by Morgan O'Neill and Paul Leyden and directed by Morgan O'Neill. It was released on February 19th, 2013. It is rated R.

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