

## Film Review: Despite Sci-Fi Intrigue, ‘The Host’ Favors Teen Romance

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on March 29, 2013 - 8:05am

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CHICAGO – Author Stephenie Meyer can’t help herself. Despite breaking out from the “Twilight” saga and creating science fiction in her latest novel, it still features angst-ridden teen romance, which becomes less important versus the bizarre other worldly infiltration in the film adaptation of “The Host.”



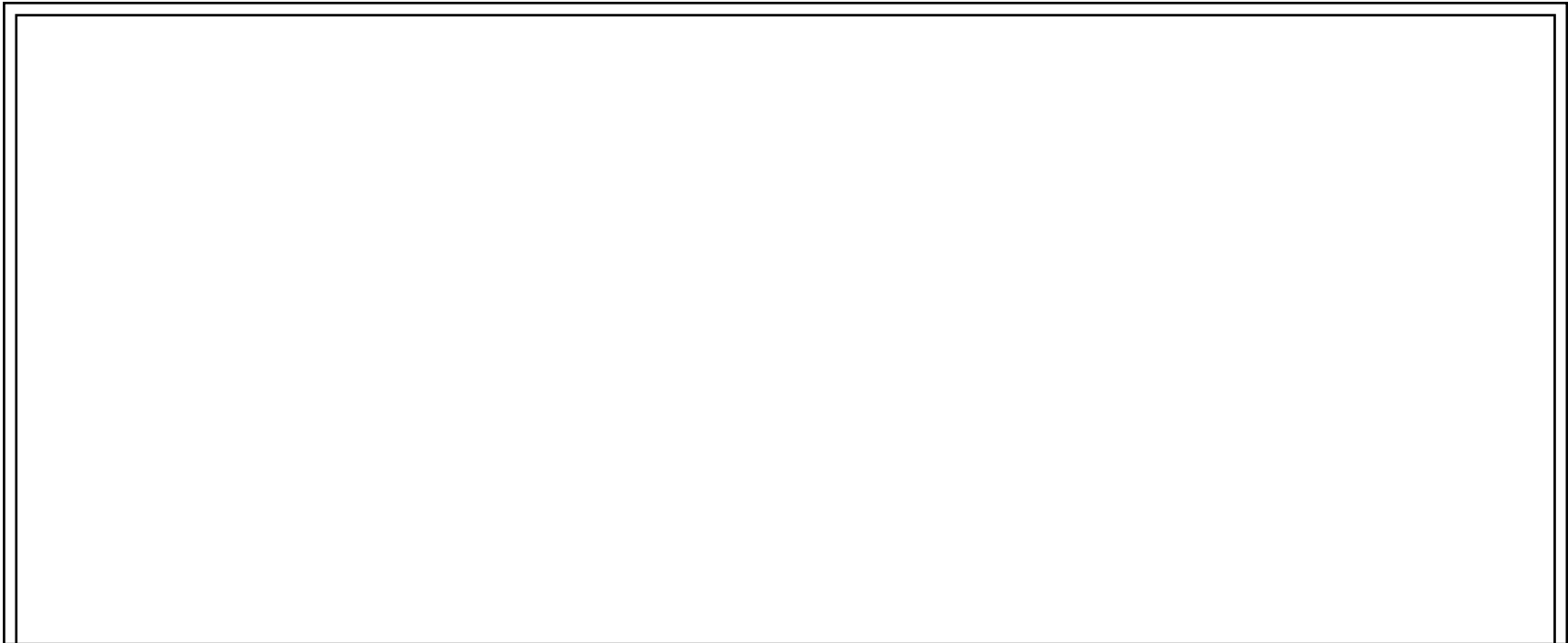
The look and feel of “The Host” gives it some promise, the new order of the earth is an alien race who penetrate humans and take over their beings. The stark, hospital-like production design is the best part of the film, as the beginning establishes the history of the takeover and its latest victim. Where the film breaks down is in the teen romance, as an invaded teen girl fights inside herself between the alien force and her old soul. It’s awkward, and involves too many hunks cast for their looks and not their ability to deliver a performance. The underground race of humans fighting the aliens take the girl in, and conveniently ally with her, despite jeopardizing their mission. There are too many unintentional laughs in this scenario, and not enough of the film’s strength, which is the science fiction.

Melanie (Saorise Ronan) is a human being on the run, determined not to be captured and used as a “host” for extraterrestrial aliens (The Seekers) who have taken over most of the earth, by assimilating themselves inside people and taking over their bodies. She desires to protect her brother Jamie (Jamie Canterbury) and continue her romance with Jared (Max Irons), while fighting the alien foes. However, she is captured, and is forced into the alien soul of “The Wanderer.”

But there is a difference, The Wanderer (or as she is now dubbed, Wanda) can hear the old Melanie inside, fighting within her consciousness. Melanie is trying to convince Wanda to leave the body and give it back to her former self. She is able to convince Wanda to find to her Uncle Jeb (William Hurt) and Aunt Maggie (Frances Fisher), who live in a secluded cave dwelling and nurture the humans resisting the assimilation of the aliens. Those humans include Melanie’s lover Jared, her brother Jamie and Ian (Jake Abel), who falls for the Wanda persona. This could be the most complex love triangle ever.

*“The Host” opens everywhere on March 29th. Featuring Saorise Ronan, Rachel Roberts, William Hurt, Max Irons, Frances Fisher and Jake Abel. Screenplay adapted by Andrew Niccol, based on a novel by Stephenie Meyer. Directed by Andrew Niccol. Rated “PG-13”*

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Who Do You Love?: Melanie/Wanda (Saoirse Ronan) and Jared (Max Irons) in ‘The Host’  
*Photo credit: Open Road Films*

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