

Film Review: Rousing Adventure Awaits in ‘Kong: Skull Island’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on March 10, 2017 - 10:52am

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CHICAGO – King Kong is a wholly generated creature of the movies. Ever since the gorilla legend came to life on screen way back in 1933, he has appeared in countless official remakes, cheap exploitation flicks and now as a symbol of American overreach. He still rules in “Kong: Skull Island.”



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

The story is by John Gatins – interpreted by three screenwriters – and directed with confidence by Jordan Vogt-Roberts (“Kings of Summer”). The premise is right on point, as Skull Island becomes a destination in 1973 for a shadowy government agency, clueless scientists and a military desecrated by Vietnam. The obvious Kong/Cong allegory (as in Viet Cong) is never overtly exposed, it just becomes apparent as the mission creeps into potential tragedy on the island (sound familiar?). Besides this cool symbolism, the scale of the CGI monsters and humans interact well in the story, with enough humanity to play against the mystery of Kong and the island itself – it’s great popcorn stuff and a testament to how modern filmmaking should work. Somewhere Merian C. Cooper, the impresario of the first Kong movie, is smiling.

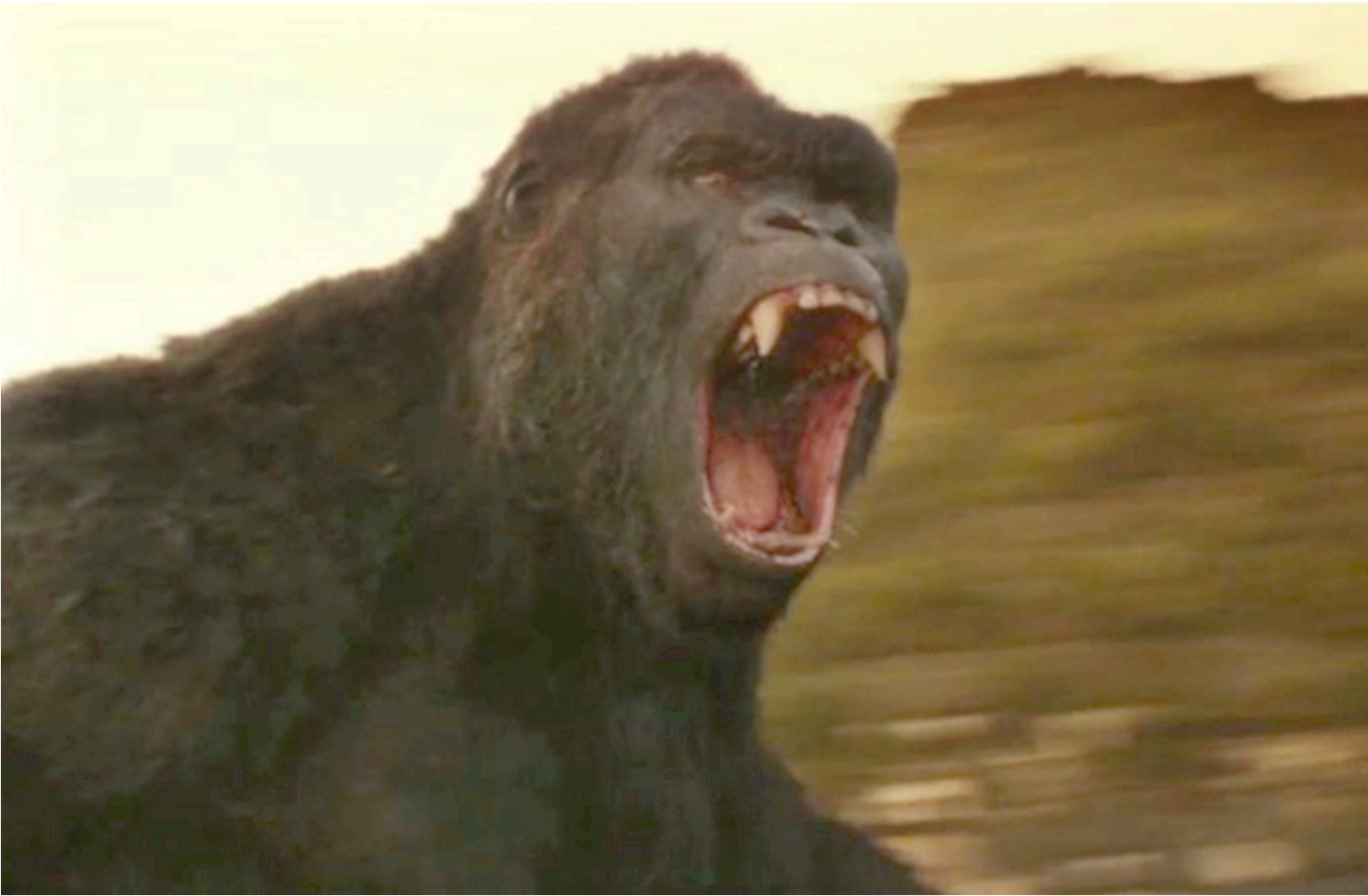
The year is 1973, and the Vietnam War is whimpering to an end. Bill Randa (John Goodman) knows government funding is ending as well, so he manages to get one more project through his shadow government agency approved. It is a expedition to Skull Island, an uncharted land mass in the Pacific Ocean. Randa hires James Conrad (Tom Hiddleston), and ex-British military attaché and expert tracker. The military gives the crew a helicopter escort through Lieutenant Colonel Preston Packer (Samuel L. Jackson).

There are always suspicions, and they are represented through photojournalist Mason Weaver (Brie Larson) who tags along hoping to expose more government folly. The government, military and scientific crew barely makes land before they are attacked by giant gorilla Kong, the protectorate of Skull Island. When casualties mount, Lt. Col. Packer wants the kill, which is contrary to the warnings from an American WWII veteran Hank (John C. Reilly), stuck on the island since 1944. To escape harm, they all have to learn who or what Kong is.

“Kong: Skull Island” opens every where on March 10th, in 3D and regular screenings. See local listings for 3D theaters and show times. Featuring Tom Hiddleston, Samuel L. Jackson, Brie Larson, John C. Reilly and John Goodman. Screenplay by Dan Gilroy, Max Borenstein and Derek Connolly. Director by Jordan Vogt-Roberts. Rated “PG-13”



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The Menacing Title Character of ‘Kong: Skull Island’

Photo credit: Warner Bros.



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