

Tyler Perry Bores Criminals to Death in ‘Alex Cross’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on October 19, 2012 - 8:42am

- [Alex Cross](#) [2]
- [Along Came a Spider](#) [3]
- [Cicely Tyson](#) [4]
- [David Twohy](#) [5]
- [Edward Burns](#) [6]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [7]
- [Jean Reno](#) [8]
- [Kiss the Girls](#) [9]
- [Matthew Fox](#) [10]
- [Movie Review](#) [11]
- [Rachel Nichols](#) [12]
- [Tyler Perry](#) [13]



Rating: **1.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – A cinematic lifetime ago, Morgan Freeman injected a bit of class and style into the role of Alex Cross in the adaptations of James Patterson’s “Along Came a Spider” and “Kiss the Girls.” Seventeen years later, director Tyler Perry steps into the shoes of the detective doctor with all the answers in the narcoleptic, horrendous “Alex Cross,” a misfire that makes the Freeman movies look like “The Silence of the Lambs” by comparison.

With a nightmarish production that saw a talented director (David Twohy, “A Perfect Getaway”) and talented actor (Idris Elba, “The Wire”) replaced by the truly inept Rob Cohen (“Stealth”) and the miscast Mr. Perry, “Alex Cross” is the kind of disaster that should have been shelved entirely once the wheels came off. Instead, the producers played games with the character and boring script, substituting Cleveland for Detroit in shooting instead of just throwing the entire production in Lake Erie. “Alex Cross” is mostly just an inept, shockingly boring affair until about the hour mark when it becomes such a poorly made movie that one starts to get angry that anyone involved earned a paycheck or that anyone will be forced to sit through it. You may be expecting just a standard mystery/thriller. You’ll get a mess that’s so poorly constructed that if it were a pilot for a cop show, no network would pick it up.



Alex Cross

Photo credit: Summit Entertainment

Perry plays the title character with nary an ounce of depth or style, turning Alex Cross into another movie super-cop, the guy who knows all the answers and can kick some ass at the same time. He’s partnered with Tommy Kane (Edward Burns) and Monica Ashe (Rachel Nichols) when the trio comes upon a disturbing case. A madman named Picasso (Matthew Fox) has cut off a rape-date-drug-sedated woman’s fingers before killing her and all of her bodyguards. (And, yes, observant readers may be saying, “IN A PG-13?!?!” “Alex Cross” is further proof of the absolute ineptitude of the MPAA. There’s no justification in a sane world for a movie that features as much death and torture as this one to

be PG-13 while "The King's Speech" is R for language. It's total nonsense. Sorry for the rant, back to the review...)

Cross and his partners track Picasso to his next target after he leaves them a clue in a drawing clearly inspired by Mad Magazine and get in the way of this wide-eyed lunatic and his prey. Bad idea. Picasso turns his focus on the detectives and their loved ones, taking the time to track down and try and kill them even though he's being paid \$3 million for a different hit. He's not really very professional.

You might assume that this paper-thin plot is merely the skeleton on which Cohen and his team hang what should matter in a movie like this – white-knuckle action. You'd be wrong. There's so little tension and action in "Alex Cross," that one wonders why the project was even kept afloat after the original team departed. The action scenes are so ineptly cut that they could be used in a class about how not to do this kind of thing. The climax features the most frenetically shot call to OnStar in history and the worst-edited fight scene of the year, a tragic affair cut together with such mania that you can't really tell what's going on. Although that could be because Mr. Perry struggled with the physical combat.



Alex Cross

Photo credit: Summit Entertainment

Because he sure struggled with everything else. I've defended Perry's directorial work before. I think he's too easy a target and some of his true melodramas work more effectively than most critics would ever give them credit ("I Can Do Bad All By Myself" and "Meet the Browns" spring to mind). However, I am less forgiving of his acting. He's simply not charismatic enough for a role like this one and isn't believable for a single minute, neither as a family man nor as a cop. I just didn't buy it. And the supporting cast isn't much better.

With one arguable exception. If you're going to get any B-movie joy out of "Alex Cross," it's going to come in the form of Matthew Fox's ridiculous, over-the-top, manic bad guy performance. Having lost a ton of weight and bulked up his muscle mass, Fox looks terrifying and plays up his unique appearance with wide eyes and facial tics that would make Uwe Boll shout, "Cut!" He has moments of true lunacy that could produce entertainment value although one would argue that laughing at a movie instead of with it doesn't qualify as praise.

Of course, most of the blame needs to come back to Cohen, a man who got bored enough with his own project that he forgot basic rules of movie direction. There are scenes that go on too long, as if he fell asleep. Others that are too brief, as if he was in a hurry. But, most of all, there's no fingerprint of the director at all. It's a movie that could have been directed by anyone. Then again, anyone could probably have done a better job.

"Alex Cross" stars Tyler Perry, Matthew Fox, Edward Burns, Rachel Nichols, Cicely Tyson, and Jean Reno. It was released on October 19, 2012. It is rated PG-13.



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- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/cicely-tyson>
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