

Cut of Nostalgia in ‘Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on May 5, 2017 - 12:31pm

- [Bradley Cooper](#) [2]
- [Chris Pratt](#) [3]
- [Dave Bautista](#) [4]
- [Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2](#) [5]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [6]
- [James Gunn](#) [7]
- [Karen Gillan](#) [8]
- [Kurt Russell](#) [9]
- [Marvel Studios](#) [10]
- [Michael Rooker](#) [11]
- [Movie Review](#) [12]
- [Spike Walters](#) [13]
- [Sylvester Stallone](#) [14]
- [Vin Diesel](#) [15]
- [Walt Disney Pictures](#) [16]
- [Zoe Saldana](#) [17]



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – When I first saw “Guardians of the Galaxy” I was unfamiliar with the comic book source. I enjoyed the film, but worried it might be just a little too nerdy and obscure to develop a following. Now with “Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2,” the series has solidified itself as the class clowns of the Marvel Studios cinematic universe, and it’s been embraced for it.

Volume 2 doesn’t quite have the freshness of its predecessor, but still manages to win audiences over with its goofy pop culture-addled sensibilities. It’s not quite as much of its own thing, and more of a conventional Marvel movie, but it still mostly works. They’ve made the larger Marvel Comics Universe a little more welcoming to the bit players and oddballs on the fringes, and at this rate it’s not inconceivable Marvel could build a whole Simpsons-sized world of fringe characters, where even one-joke bit players get a chance to shine.



The Crews Gets Down in ‘Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2’

Photo credit: Marvel Studios/Walt Disney Pictures

This time Peter Quill (Chris Pratt), Rocket Raccoon (voice of Bradley Cooper), Gamora (Zoe Saldana), Drax (Dave Bautista) and a twig sized

groot (voiced by Vin Diesel, in his most expressive performance) come across Ego, Quill's Dad (Kurt Russell, these days apparently cornering the market on rugged authority figures in blockbuster franchises). They happen to all be on the run from a golden race of prissy beings called "The Sovereign," after an ill-advised prank gets the Guardians on their bad side. The Sovereign are essentially the boarding school-bred "Mean Girls" of the galaxy, but they occupy space in this film as little more than franchise duty, tying this story into upcoming adventures.

The main plot is kind of nonsense, and the pop culture references have been more hard wired into the plot this time. But when Quill explains the relationship with Gamora in terms of a Sam-and-Diane-from-Cheers relationship – that rightly should remain unspoken – it's silly, but it works in a very specific meta way. Quill gets even more meta explaining how blowing up the relationship into something more ...and making the unspoken spoken... is a desperation stunt for a show flagging in the ratings, and that whole thing is pretty cool. Pratt has a solid handle on Quill, who has stronger relationships with the pop culture ephemera of his youth than any actual person.

The supporting players grab many of the best lines, with the obsessively literal Drax achieving the group's highest laugh-to-line ratio, with Rocket Raccoon coming in a distant second. Michael Rooker returns as Yondu – with his whistling "Super Spear" – looking and acting like he's having a ball. And while Sylvester Stallone is technically in the movie, if you blink you'll miss him. The 1970s and 80's classic rock soundtrack remains, and the only thing surprising about it this time is there isn't a Hall and Oates tune snuck in somewhere.



Baby Groot Does His Thing in 'Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2'

Photo credit: Marvel Studios/Walt Disney Pictures

But there's something that keeps this film out of the upper echelon of Marvel movies. Even though the father and son stuff between Pratt and Russell is kinda cute, the high stakes aren't really there – the film ends up like every other Marvel Studios movie, with a giant battle against some universe-destroying force.

But on the whole, I enjoyed "Guardians" as a thoroughly suitable sojourn through the scruffy looking nerd-herder corner of the galaxy. The characters are really fun to check in with now and again, riffing on their own franchise duties inside the larger overarching Marvel plan. But while nostalgia is a powerful force that covers a multitude of crappy products, it only can go so far.

"Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2" opens everywhere on May 5th, in 3D and regular screenings. See local listings for 3D theaters and show times. Featuring Chris Pratt, Zoe Saldana, Kurt Russell, Bradley Cooper, Vin Diesel, Dave Bautista, Michael Rooker and Sylvester Stallone. Written and directed by James Gunn. Rated "PG-13"



[18]

By [SPIKE WALTERS](#) [19]

Contributor

HollywoodChicago.com

spike@hollywoodchicago.com [18]

© 2017 Spike Walters, HollywoodChicago.com

Source URL (retrieved on **Apr 23 2024 - 4:06pm**):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/27495/cut-of-nostalgia-in-guardians-of-the-galaxy-vol-2>

Links:

[1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/hankq>
[2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/bradley-cooper>
[3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/chris-pratt>
[4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/dave-bautista>
[5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/guardians-of-the-galaxy-vol-2>
[6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/hollywoodchicagocom-content>
[7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/james-gunn>
[8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/karen-gillian>
[9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/kurt-russell>
[10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/marvel-studios>
[11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/michael-rooker>
[12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/review.html>
[13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/spike-walters>
[14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/sylvester-stallone>
[15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/vin-diesel>
[16] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/walt-disney-pictures>
[17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/zoe-saldana>
[18] <mailto:spike@hollywoodchicago.com>
[19] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#SPIKE>