

## ‘Spider-Man: Homecoming’ Spins a Web of Fun

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on July 2, 2017 - 7:33am

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Rating: **3.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – Summer movies should be fun, and the superhero craze has Marvel Studios combining their adventures with a little joy. “Spider-Man: Homecoming” mostly contains that big high spirit, with Tom Holland portraying the title character with youthful zeal and energy.

What also makes the film different is that its set in high school, and it is a high school with the awkwardness of that atmosphere, albeit with diverse and good-looking students. The audience comes in shortly after the current Spider-Man had been introduced, in the previous Marvel Studios Avengers film “Captain America: Civil War.” Spidey is a whooping cowboy type as performed by Holland, headstrong and curious on his own. He is challenged in this film by the “Vulture,” a criminal whose basis in larceny is class warfare. That clash is framed by a good old fashioned high school romance, as Spidey’s hormones are also tingling. There is almost too much happening, but director Jon Watts and his team of five screenwriters were able – for the most part – to keep everything on track.

Youthful Peter Parker (Tom Holland) is coming off his first Avengers mission as Spider-Man, and Tony Stark/Iron Man (Robert Downey Jr.) is advising him to be patient in his role as a superhero. Stark leaves Parker the phone number of his wingman Happy Hogan (Jon Favreau) so he can report in, and takes the high schooler back to his Queens, New York, neighborhood and guardian Aunt May (Marisa Tomei).



Only in New York: Tom Holland in ‘Spider-Man: Homecoming’

*Photo credit: Sony Pictures Entertainment*

But Parker’s energy gets the best of him, and he continues to fight petty crime as the Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man. Spidey stumbles across an ATM robbery that has unusual weapons, and it turns out to be a gang headed by the Vulture (Michael Keaton), a disgruntled construction boss who stole space alien minerals and created the ultra weapons. Parker and his high school wingman Ned (Jacob Batalon) start investigating, but the case is also complicated by Parker’s crush on Liz (Laura Harrier). Overall it’s best to “look out, here comes the Spider-Man.”

Bottom line, the film is a balanced adventure between the web-slinging confrontations, and the humor of being a 16 year-old boy with new super powers. Tom Holland is the key to all that, and while he generated excitement in the last Avengers movie, in his solo film he has his star-is-born moments. He takes on the role with the naive confidence that the Spider-Man persona has possessed for years, and does it with good timing and acting – he and Keaton have a moral confrontation that was surprising in its give and take. Holland’s presence as Spider-Man will be exciting for the next several years.

The supporting cast also is strong in its presence. Jacob Batalon as nerdy Ned is hilarious, and once he finds out his best friend is a superhero, desires to be the “guy in the chair” who directs the action from afar. Michael Keaton is back in another superhero movie as the Vulture, but justifies his villainy with a well-placed prologue about being a small businessman screwed out of his biggest job. Keaton adds his veteran chops to the usual “evil guy,” and truly may be psychotic. The Marvel Universe characters are always welcome, although Robert Downey Jr’s smart-ass Tony Stark act is getting a bit weary.





Peter Parker (Holland) and Wingman Ned (Jacob Batalon) in ‘Spider-Man: Homecoming’  
Photo credit: Sony Pictures Entertainment

There is also a lot of distracting starts and stops in the film, and it could have been slimmed down a bit to make it a leaner story. The problem with superhero movies is that when a production spends a certain amount to create a CGI fight scene, a mere editor can’t come in afterwards and recommend cutting it. And while this Spider-Man film has cool action sequences, when combined with Peter’s high school soap opera is gets a bit choppy and long. And while the Aunt-May-is-hot meme – introduced in the Avengers film – is funny, it’s taken to a bit of a creepy level in “Homecoming,” especially in the way that Marisa Tomei is costumed and made up as Auntie. I guess I am getting old.

Sneak in your snacks from Walgreens and enjoy this latest Marvel Universe adventure on the big screen. He’s your Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man, and he’s swinging in along with the sand, fireworks and long days of our endless movie summer.

*“Spider-Man: Homecoming” opens everywhere on July 7th. Featuring Tom Holland, Michael Keaton, Robert Downey Jr., Marisa Tomei, Jon Favreau, Martin Starr, Laura Harrier, Jacob Batalon, Donald Glover and Gwyneth Paltrow. Screenplay by Jonathan Goldstein, John Francis Daley, Jon Watts, Christopher Ford, Chris McKenna and Erik Sommers. Directed by Jon Watts. Rated “PG-13”*



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