

Popcorn Ready 'Fast & Furious Presents: Hobbs & Shaw'

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on August 1, 2019 - 7:11pm

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Rating: **3.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – The dog days of the summer are upon us, which also reflects from the silver screen. "Fast & Furious Presents: Hobbs & Shaw" is a spin-off of the eight film "The Fast and the Furious" franchise. Dwayne Johnson and Jason Statham are the title characters, fighting and driving their way into our hearts.

This is a clunky movie, part super villain, part reluctant buddy movie and all fast fighting. In the Fast & Furious universe, Luke Hobbs and Deckard Shaw don't like each other much, but somehow are thrown together once again through an extra-agency law enforcement layer (no wonder our deficits are rising). But it is summer movie eye candy at the same time, with ninja style fighting, lots of hot weaponry and the signature car chases that created the oohs and aahs at the preview screening. Soon the cinema culture will be just a series of franchise chapters, like soap operas on old timey TV. Turn off your mind, pass the popcorn and enjoy the show.

There is a terrorist organization called Eteon, which possesses a virus that can literally melt human tissue. British Mi6 agents, led by Hattie Shaw (Vanessa Kirby), infiltrate the virus location, but the team is ambushed by Eteon agents led by a cyborg named Brixton (Idris Elba). Hattie manages to escape and puts the virus inside her body as a dormant host. She becomes one of the most wanted persons in the world.



Dwayne Johnson, Idris Elba and Jason Statham in 'Fast & Furious Presents: Hobbs & Shaw'

Photo credit: Universal Pictures

This looks like a job for Luke Hobbs (Dwayne Johnson) and Deckard Shaw (brother of Hattie, portrayed by Jason Statham). They are the undercover enforcers of The Fast and the Furious universe, brought in by the CIA and Mi6, except they don't like each other much. Their assignment is to find Hattie before cyborg Brixton gets to her, to save the world from the virus.

This a fairly formulaic teaming of Hobbs & Shaw, as they must come together, as rivals in these types of stories do, to defeat the bigger evil. Idris Elba is rather amusing as the cyborg villain, putting a method acting spin on his conflicted machine/man combination ... it's as if he's in a different or more serious movie. Throw in the confrontations, in this case hand-to-hand fights, lotsa gun play and cyborg smashing, and the movie awkwardly rides out from there, mostly in seriously cool cars.

Dwayne Johnson is most likely the most popular movie star in the world right now, and his transformation from Wrestlemania superstar to overall superstar is a crazy evolution. In the preview, his presence was actually cheered as his image came on the screen. And in many of his action films, he's always raising some sort of child – to humanize him I suppose – but once the action begins the moppet disappears (or in other films he is constantly protecting them through his kick-assery). He and Jason Statham also have good chemistry, which again highlights a summer action movie.



A Samoan Uprising in 'Fast & Furious Presents: Hobbs & Shaw'

Photo credit: Universal Pictures

The action is high octane, but not very creative. It relies on locations like London, Moscow and Samoa. Yes, Samoa, as a nod to Dwayne Johnson's roots and as an extra comic kick in the third act (his mother was straight out of islander central casting). It's almost like the plot is unnecessary in these travelogue and fight fests. Plus there is female spice in Hattie Shaw and some nerd force with a fire throwing scientist. It's a lot of ingredients in a two hour plus journey.

Part of the fun are the cameos, for example Helen Mirren pops up again as Deckard's mother. One more I can mention is the great Rob Delaney, who has broken out from his Amazon Prime TV show "Catastrophe." His smarmy persona is perfect for any appearance, and he's great because essentially he portrays the same attitude no matter the role. Keep presenting him any time.

"Fast & Furious Presents: Hobbs & Shaw" opens everywhere on August 2nd in IMAX, Dolby Cinema and regular screenings. See local listings for format theaters and show times. Featuring Dwayne Johnson, Jason Statham, Idris Elba, Vanessa Kirby, Helen Mirren and Rob Delaney. Screenplay by Chris Morgan and Drew Pearce. Directed by David Leitch. Rated "R"



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