



Superbad

2007

Tagline: *From the guy who brought you The 40-Year-Old Virgin and Talladega Nights*

Directed by: Greg Mottola Stars: Jonah Hill, Michael Cera, Christopher Mintz-Plasse, Bill Hader, Seth Rogen, Martha MacIsaac, Emma Stone

Length: 114 minutes



In a nutshell

Evan (Michael Cera) and Seth (Jonah Hill) have been best friends since they were little. Rejected by the cool kids and bullied by the bad kids, they long to be invited to a party and get a chance to try it on with their dream girls Becca (Martha MacIsaac) and Jules (Emma Stone). In the last few weeks of high school their wish gets granted, but at a price - they have to provide alcohol for the entire party. Armed with their geeky friend Fogell (Christopher Mintz-Plasse) and his Hawaiian fake ID they embark on the craziest night of their lives so far. Will they get the beer? And will they get the girls?

Opinion

Are modern movie trailers designed to make people not want to watch the films they advertise? I saw the trailer for *Superbad* a few weeks ago and vowed not to waste my time, so it was very reluctantly that I dragged my heels down the auditorium aisle to see it. Imagine my surprise when, instead of the cheap, smutty, obvious film I'd expected to see, a clever, smutty, hilarious one showed up.

The secret is in the characters - gross out humour is all well and good but is only interesting for so long without three dimensional people showing some sort of emotion. Coming from the stable of producer Judd Apatow (also responsible for *Knocked Up*, *The 40-Year-Old Virgin* and *Anchorman*) *Superbad* follows the trend for brash, obnoxious humour with a heart, and does it very well.

Jonah Hill and Michael Cera are perfectly cast as the best friends, their relationship almost that of a married couple at times. Their closeness is compromised when Seth fails to get in to the top school Evan is headed for, and while Seth's apoplectic bursts of resentment are hilarious in contrast with Evan's delicate confusion; his pain and paranoia at losing his friend makes it meaningful too. Christopher Mintz-Plasse is wonderful as third wheel Fogell, a character even more dorky than the best friends with his awkward attempts at hip-hop speak, wobbly voice and constant fidgeting. His alter ego McLovin becomes the hero of the film when he teams up with the the horrifyingly incompetent police officers played by Bill Hader and the ever-brilliant Seth Rogen (who also co-wrote this film) for a rampage around the city.

It's ironic that the adventures the three outsiders have trying to get booze for the party they've been so desperate to attend make the party itself somewhat of an anticlimax, and their realisation that getting girls drunk enough to do stuff to them either won't work or isn't as satisfying as they thought is another sign of this film's intelligence. Martha MacIsaac and Emma Stone give lovely performances as Becca and Jules, echoing the characters of Seth and Evan and pairing off with their opposite with interesting consequences. Physical humour plays a big part in this film and there are some fantastic laugh out loud moments the whole way through.

Superbad expertly shows that you don't have to play to the lowest common denominator to be funny or forego crude humour to be intelligent. Great characters, a fast moving storyline and a fantastic young cast make for a film full of belly laughs, leaving just enough room for a tear in the eye.

Facts

- Michael Cera, who plays Evan, lost out on the part of Cole “I see dead people” Sear in *The Sixth Sense* to Hayley Joel Osment.
- The ‘f’ word is used an amazing 186 times in this film, so mind out if you’re easily offended!

Laura Kidd

Laura saw this film courtesy of The Ritzy, Brixton.

