

MOCKINGJAY PART 2 SATISFIES BUT DOES NOT IMPRESS

by Olivia Hill
Humor Editor

Warning: this article contains spoilers.
On Nov. 20, the final installment of the wildly popular Hunger Games franchise, *Mockingjay Part 2*, was released to a global audience of avid fans. The film, however, had the lowest opening weekend of any film in the series, earning an estimated 101 million dollars.

Mockingjay follows Katniss Everdeen, a teenage girl struggling with her role as the symbol of a revolution against the Capitol as she fights to assassinate the tyrannical ruler of a futuristic dystopian society.

The film closely follows the plot of the third novel in the series of the same name, a welcome change to fans after *Mockingjay Part 1*'s liberal changes to the plot; however, in order to adapt the novel into a thrilling two hour experience, filmmakers sacrificed a realistic timeline and subtlety. The intended

suspension of disbelief is never fully achieved as the film progresses, and it's all too easy to get caught up in the implausible nature of many aspects of the story. Katniss sustains various debilitating injuries throughout the film, but after a night in the hospital, she is shown heading straight back into action time and again without any sign of pain or discomfort. The dialogue is often unstimulating as characters announce taglines seemingly used for marketing the movie.



The talented actors that have blessed the Hunger Games films fell flat in many cases. Jennifer Lawrence, who plays Katniss, tiptoed on the line between appearing broken and looking bored. Katniss is mentally and emotionally scarred and dealing with the effects of PTSD while still entangled in intense trauma, but Lawrence's performance is,



at times, jaded and lacking energy. One of Katniss's love interests, Peeta, played by Josh Hutcherson, is recovering from being brainwashed by the Capitol. Peeta spends a majority of the film sorting out his real feelings of love for Katniss and the implanted feelings of hatred. Peeta's dialogue and Hutcherson's portrayal are too hot and cold, and Peeta's recovery is abrupt as he falls in love with Katniss only days after his second attempt to murder her. Liam Hemsworth's performance as Katniss's other love interest is uncharismatic and uninteresting, leaving the audience feeling like the filmmakers were once again trying to shove in a love triangle that never really took off.

The film in no way shies away from intense violence and, instead of glorifying gore, emphasizes the impact and consequences of war by aiming the attention towards characters during fighting.

However, director Francis Lawrence's (no relation to Jennifer Lawrence) inability to



shoot action scenes leaves the audience confused and uncertain of what is happening.

Despite this, the film remains engaging, and the cinematography reaches new heights. *Mockingjay* is largely focused on its theme that power can corrupt even the soundest minds, and the politics involved are skillfully communicated through visual imagery and dynamic performances by Julianne Moore and the late Philip Seymour Hoffman. What *Mockingjay* lacks is made up for with captivating thrills and an original story. It's worth seeing for die hard fans.

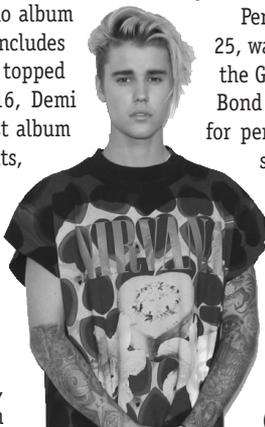
ARTISTS RELEASE NEW MUSIC

by Jessica Blough
Center Editor

This fall, several artists who had dropped off the charts have made a comeback, releasing new singles and albums that reclaim their images and experiment with new sounds. Child stars like Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez return to the music industry with a more mature sound, while old favorites like Adele blow their audiences away the same way they did years ago.

Two pop music queens released new albums in early October. Selena Gomez's *Revival* debuted on Oct. 9, her first solo album since she released *Stars Dance* in 2013. The record includes popular tracks *Good For You* and *Same Old Love*, which topped iTunes charts prior to the album's release. On Oct. 16, Demi Lovato, another former Disney star, dropped her newest album *Confident*, which includes one of summer's biggest hits, *Cool for the Summer*. The album narrated Lovato's journey to self confidence and features artists like Iggy Azalea and Sirah.

One Direction released their much anticipated new album, *Made in the A.M.*, on Nov. 13. The record is their first without past band member Zayn Malik, who left the band in March to pursue his own musical career. *Made in the A.M.* features singles *Drag Me Down* and *Perfect*, which topped the charts upon their release. The album



reached number two on the iTunes charts the day it debuted.

On the same day, another teenage heartthrob dropped his latest album, which was met with cheers by his loyal Beliebers. Previous child-star-turned-bad-boy Justin Bieber released his honest and introspective *Purpose*, a huge contrast from his original sound. Chart toppers *What Do You Mean?* and *Sorry* are featured on the album, which is rumored to be about Bieber's ex-girlfriend, Selena Gomez. Guests on the record include the newly popular Halsey and Big Sean.

Perhaps the most highly anticipated album of the season, *25*, was released by Adele on Nov. 20. After her last album, the Grammy-winning *21*, and her track for the 23rd James Bond film, *Skyfall*, Adele took a hiatus for nearly four years for personal reasons. On Oct. 18, Adele dropped the first single off *25*, *Hello*, which skyrocketed to number one on the charts. *25* includes both upbeat anthems, like *Send My Love (To Your New Lover)*, and the belted ballads that Adele is known for, like *I Miss You*.

Moving into December, look forward to Coldplay's new album, *A Head Full of Dreams*, as well as Troye Sivan's *Blue Neighborhood*, both to be released on Dec. 4. Later on Dec. 18, Cage the Elephant is set to release their third album, *Tell Me I'm Pretty*.

(Sources: iTunes, Metacritic)

Terminally ill man previews new Star Wars movie

by Neil Lugovsky
National Editor

Daniel Fleetwood, an avid Star Wars fan, died of cancer on Nov. 10, but not before getting to see the newest Star Wars film, *The Force Awakens*. Through the combined efforts of thousands of fans, Fleetwood fulfilled his dying wish to see the movie a week before he passed away.

Fleetwood was diagnosed with spindle cell sarcoma, which covered more than 90 percent of his lungs with tumors. He learned from his doctors in September that he had one or two months left to live. This meant that he would not be alive when the new Star Wars film would premiere, so he took to the internet to try to get a chance to see the film.

Fleetwood asked fans on the Star Wars forum of the website Reddit to help him request Disney Studios, the distributor of the movie, to let him see the film before he died. Thousands of fans tweeted the hashtag #ForceForDaniel more than 59,000 times to JJ Abrams, the movie's director, and Disney Studios. Over 4,000 people signed a petition to let him watch the film early, and fans donated more than 63,000 dollars to his crowdfunding campaign to help pay for his medical bills. He even received the support of Mark Hamill,



the actor who played Luke Skywalker, and John Boyega, an actor in the new film.

On Nov. 4, JJ Abrams called Fleetwood and his wife, Ashley, to tell them that Fleetwood's wish had been granted. The Fleetwoods got to see an early version of the movie in their home the next day. Two days after that, the Star Wars fan group 501st Legion visited Daniel's home with homemade Star Wars costumes and gear. Less than a week later, Daniel died at the age of 31.

Ashley Fleetwood wrote that "Daniel put up an amazing fight to the very end," and "He is now one with God and with the force." Some fans have requested that his name be added to the ending credits of the film, and he has already been immortalized in various fan art creations. One such fan art piece shows Fleetwood as a Jedi ghost alongside Obi-Wan Kenobi and Anakin Skywalker. Every step of the campaign has been documented on Ashley Fleetwood's Facebook page. Recently she shared an article showing that not even movie critics will get to see the film early, saying "Look Daniel, you really were and are so special."

(Sources: New York Times, NBC News, CNN News, Go Fund Me, Ipetitions, Change.org)

Fallout 4 is an immediate fan favorite and commercial success

by Cole Potter
Web Editor-in-Chief

Earlier this year I wrote a story on the announcement of *Fallout 4* in which I heralded it as gaming's holy savior. With the long-awaited release of the game last month, this prophecy seems to have been realized. Within the first 24 hours of its launch, *Fallout 4* sold over 12 million copies and generated 750 million dollars in profit. And it only gets better from there.

The release of the game enticed an enormous online following to begin playing the game concurrently. At one point in the 24 hour launch, over 470,000 individuals were playing the game on PC alone. This was within the same launch period of games from multimillion dollar franchises such as *Call of Duty* and *Star Wars: Battlefront*. *Fallout 4* greatly outdid both of these heavily



marketed and popular games; *Call of Duty Black Ops III* took three days to garner 550 million dollars and even approach *Fallout 4*'s sales figures. With high sales on both PC and console, the game has set the benchmark for all 2015 titles.

In addition to its enormous commercial popularity, *Fallout 4* is receiving overwhelmingly positive critical reviews. Earning an average score of nine out of ten from nearly every major gaming publication, reviewers cite the unrestricted and immersive environments as the game's main selling points. Andrew Reiner, of video game magazine *Game Informer*, claimed that, "Bethesda has created another game you can lose your life in."

This enrapturing experience is a hallmark of the *Fallout* series and other Bethesda titles. Players find themselves in meticulously crafted, captivating worlds which beg to be explored and experi-

enced. Reviewers have found this to be especially true of *Fallout 4*. Dan Stapleton from video games website IGN remarked that the, "... Relics of happier times, strong companions, and sympathetic villains driving tough decisions make it an adventure I'll definitely replay and revisit."

Fallout 4's success can be traced to Bethesda's quick and dirty marketing campaign. Revealing the game a mere five months ago, Bethesda spent the interim producing a variety of trailers targeted at audiences familiar with *Fallout* and those completely foreign to the game. One trailer in particular aired during football games and attracted attention as people mistook it for a movie trailer. All the while, Bethesda strictly adhered to its original Nov. 11



release date. This prompt and deliberate marketing is virtually unseen among larger game developers today, as many companies elect to announce unfinished games and rush to set inappropriately early release dates which they inevitably work beyond. Customers have proved through their purchase

of *Fallout 4* that they prefer titles that are near-finished at time of announcement, rather than games which rely on pre-orders to warrant full investment into completion.

With the holiday season approaching, *Fallout 4*'s sales promise to only rise. The game is projected to continue to set records commercially, and is surely set to win Game of the Year. (Sources: Fortune, Shacknews)

Amazon delivers fast

by Sean Clark
Editor-in-Chief

On Oct. 22, Amazon announced that Prime Now, the company's one-hour delivery service, will be available in the San Francisco Bay Area. For Prime members only, one-hour shipping is about eight dollars and two-hour shipping is free. This feature is available through a free iOS and Android app that allows users to choose from a smaller selection of electronics, groceries, home basics, toys, and more. Prime Now is also testing a Doordash-like service that delivers food from local restaurants to Prime members. In San Jose, Prime Now will be available from 8 am to midnight every night of the week.

In 16 metro areas, including the Bay Area, Amazon Prime users are eligible for free same-day delivery on orders over 35 dollars. Same-day delivery is six dollars for cheaper orders. This service allows shoppers to select from a broader range of items than Prime Now. Out of the 20 million items offered on Amazon, more than a million are available for same-day delivery.



Another hidden feature of Amazon Prime is unlimited photo storage. Users can store an unlimited number of photos in Amazon's Cloud Drive. To raise awareness of this feature, Prime members can gift this feature to one other person for free.

The Prime Now caused controversy for Amazon when several of the service's drivers sued the company. Drivers in California make less than minimum wage because they must pay for their own gas and vehicle expenses. So, several Prime Now drivers are taking legal action against the company for treating them like independent contractors even though the job description fits that of an employer-employee relationship. Beth Ross, an attorney representing Amazon's Prime Now drivers, said that drivers "make 88 dollars in pay for 8 hours with 69 dollars in expenses, and are left with 19 dollars."

Interested in Amazon Prime Now? New customers can receive 20 dollars off a purchase of 50 dollars or more with the promo code "GETITNOW."

(Sources: Amazon, TechCrunch, ThinkProgress)



Scan the QR code to read Camille Fowler's article on the social media controversy spurred by Instagram model Essena O'Neill as well as many more web-exclusive articles on elgatonews.com.