

## Kam's Kapsules: Movies Opening Friday, Dec. 15



'Star Wars: The Last Jedi'

### BIG BUDGET FILMS

**Ferdinand** (PG for action, rude humor and mature themes) John Cena plays the title character in this animated adventure about a peace-loving bull who'd rather stop to smell the roses than chase a matador's red cape around an arena. Voice cast includes Kate McKinnon, Anthony Anderson, Gabriel Iglesias, Boris Kodjoe and Davud Tennant.

**Star Wars: The Last Jedi** (PG-13 for sci-fi action and violence) Second episode in the trilogy directed by Rian Johnson (Looper) finds Rey (Daisy Ridley), Finn (John Boyega) and Poe (Oscar Isaac) embarking on an epic, intergalactic adventure with the legendary Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill) to unlock the mystery of "The Force." Featuring Adam Driver, Lupita Nyong'o and the late Carrie Fisher.

### INDEPENDENT & FOREIGN FILMS

**The Ballad of Lefty Brown** (R for profanity and violence) Bill Pullman assumes the title role in this Western, set on the plains of Montana, about an aging cowboy who enlists the assistance of a young gunslinger (Diego Jose) and a lawman (Tommy Flanagan) to track down the outlaws responsible for the gruesome murder of his friend, a newly-elected U.S. Senator (Peter Fonda). Cast includes Jim Caviezel, Kathy Baker and Joseph Lee Anderson.

**Beyond Skyline** (R for graphic violence and pervasive profanity) Sci-fi sequel about a veteran LAPD detective (Frank Grillo) who mounts a daring attempted rescue of his son from an alien spaceship that vacuumed the entire population of Los Angeles off the face of the Earth. With Bojana Novakovic, Johnny Weston, Kevin O'Donnell and Iko



**Kam Williams**  
*Kam's Kapsules Movie Reviews*

Uwais. (In English, Indonesian with subtitles)

**Killing for Love** (Unrated) Tabloid news documentary revisiting the events surrounding the high-profile murder trial of University of Virginia student Elizabeth Haysom and her German boyfriend for the decapitation of both of her parents.

**The Leisure Seeker** (R for sexuality) Romantic romp revolving around an elderly couple (Donald Sutherland and Helen Mirren) who embark on a road trip from Boston to Key West to recapture their passion for life and love. Support cast includes Joshua Mikel, Kirsty Mitchell and Janel Moloney.

**Permanent** (PG-13 for profanity, crude humor,

sexual references and mature themes) Coming-of-age comedy, set in the South in 1982, revolving around a white 'tweener' (Kira McLean), new to a town, who ends up ostracized at school after her hairdresser accidentally leaves her with an afro instead of curls like her idol, Farah Fawcett. With Patricia Arquette, Rainn Wilson and Devin Albert.

**Sundowners** (Unrated) Buddy comedy about a couple of jaded wedding photographers (Phil Hanley and Luke Lalonde) who get a break from the monotony when they land a gig in Mexico. Featuring Tim Heidecker, Cara Gee and Nick Flanagan.

**Youth** (Unrated) Coming-of-age adventure, set in the Seventies, revolving around the trials and tribulations of members of a military cultural troupe. Ensemble cast includes Xuan Huang, Miao Miao and Caiyu Yang. (In Mandarin with subtitles)

## FILM REVIEW: 'The Man Who Invented Christmas' Credits Dickens for the Way We Celebrate

By **Kam Williams**  
For *The Skanner News*

Charles Dickens (1812-1870) is considered the preeminent novelist of the Victorian Era because of his touching and timeless tales that shed light on the plight of the poor. He probably began developing an empathy for the less fortunate at an early age. That's because he had to drop out of school to work in a factory to support the family after his bankrupt father (Jonathan Pryce) went to a debtors' prison.

Charles' challenging childhood ostensibly served as the source of inspiration for such coming-of-age classics as "The Adventures of Oliver Twist," "Great Expectations" and "David Copperfield." But the book which has had the most profound effect on Western culture is "A Christmas Carol," since it irreversibly altered how we celebrate the holiday.

That notion is the genesis of "The Man Who Invented Christmas," Les Standiford's historical narrative recounting the events in December of 1843 leading up to Dickens' publishing "A Christmas Carol." Now, that opus has been adapted to the big screen by Bharat Nalluri (MI-5) as a sentimental tale of redemption.

As the film unfolds, we find a cash-strapped Dickens (Dan Stevens) living beyond his means and struggling



'The Man Who Invented Christmas'

to support his family. Truth be told, he didn't even marry his wife, Kate (Morfydd Clark), and have the first of their 10 kids until 1836. That anachronism makes one wonder to what extent the picture conveniently takes further license with the facts in order to spin a heartwarming yarn.

Anyway, with debt collectors closing in, we see Dickens fighting writer's block to crank out another best seller after releasing three bombs in a row. Luckily, key elements of "A Christmas Carol," like the characters Ebenezer Scrooge (Christopher Plummer) and "The Ghost of Christmas Past" (Anna Murphy) come to him in a variety of ways, ranging from dreams to an off-hand observation made by his humble, Irish housekeeper (Donna Marie

See **FILM** on page 7

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