



Film Review GOOD LUCK, HAVE FUN, DON'T DIE

By Duncan Forbes



Good Luck, Have Fun, Don't Die is the first film directed by Gore Verbinski since 2016's psychological horror flop, *A Cure for Wellness*. It stars Sam Rockwell as a time traveller who comes back to the early 2020s in order to prevent a powerful AI from destroying society.

Gore Verbinski's career has been full of ups and downs. While he has directed some genuine classics (*The Ring*, *Rango*), and given us one of the biggest franchises of the 21st century (*Pirates of the Caribbean*), he has also directed some shocking misses (*The Lone Ranger*). Thankfully, after the divisive *A Cure for Wellness*, the director is back on top form with this scintillating sci-fi satire. Taking the zaniness of *Rango* and the *Pirates of the Caribbean* sequels, mixing it with the social commentary of *A Cure for Wellness*, and offering up cinematography that stands with his very best, this is like a distillation of Verbinski's career to date. The script, by *Love and Monsters* writer Matthew Robinson, absolutely sparkles, with witty dialogue, and a story that wouldn't be out of place in *Black Mirror*. Like that acclaimed series, *Good Luck, Have Fun, Don't Die* examines



the dangers of technology, with a wry look at a very plausible near future. Unlike most *Black Mirror* episodes however, this film injects a lot of (admittedly very dark) humour into its bleak story. The ensemble cast is fantastic, with Michael Peña and Zazie Beetz bringing their usual charm and star power; Juno Temple delivering a highly emotive, career-best performance; and Haley Lu Richardson standing out as the film's most layered and interesting character. Sam Rockwell, of course, is the highlight. Always magnetic and always interesting to watch, his

twitchy, nameless time traveller makes for a wonderful protagonist. *Good Luck, Have Fun, Don't Die* looks incredible, with excellent framing and lighting, and visual effects that are genuinely impressive for its relatively meagre \$20 million budget. The soundtrack, by Geoff Zanelli, is fittingly madcap. While some may be put off by its blend of social commentary and wacky humour, or its considerable runtime, *Good Luck, Have Fun, Don't Die* is a return to form for one of Hollywood's most inconsistent directors, and one of the finest black comedies in years.