

# **AMERICA AND THE MOVIES**

## **WHAT THE ACADEMY AWARD NOMINEES FOR BEST PICTURE TELL US ABOUT OURSELVES**

Today we have an opportunity to study, as Karl Barth once put it, the two Bibles. One—and in many ways the most important one—is the Holy Scripture, which tells us clearly of the great story of Creation, Fall, Redemption and Consummation, the story by which all stories are measured for their truth, goodness and beauty. But the second, the book of Nature, rounds out that story, and is important, too, in its own way. Nature in its broadest sense includes everything human and finite. Among so much else, it gives us the record of humanity’s attempts to understand the reality in which God has placed us, whether that humanity understands the biblical story or not.

And that is why we study the great writings, music, paintings, poetry and, yes, films of humankind: to see how humanity understands itself and to compare that understanding to the reality we find proclaimed in the Bible. Without those stories, we would be at a much greater loss in sympathizing with those who have gone through something we never have. We hope never to have many of those experiences. One would have to have a screw loose to desire, for instance, pulling the plug on a comatose loved one, or living on our own as a small child in the walls of a public building, or experiencing as a parent an adult child’s death, or fighting in the trenches of a war. Those of you with “eyes to see” will of course recognize in the list I just read the central crises of four of the movies we’ll be discussing tonight. But, even though we would not want to have those experiences, it is true that the movies give us at least a glimpse of what it means to suffer in these ways, and therefore a greater opportunity for comfort and understanding of those who are actually doing the suffering. Just one of the many

reasons thinking about and discussing movies is an important part, I think, of being a Christian in late modern America.

And that is what I hope we will do tonight. This is the twelfth year in a row I have, in one form or another, looked at the Academy Award nominees for best picture and discussed what they tell us about life in American society.

Because three years ago, the Academy changed the number of nominees from five to something less than or equal to ten, we better get going. Later in the talk, I will give only the briefest of introductions to the basic content of most of the films. During the course of the talk, I will of course say more about some films than I will about others. Please feel free to make up for my omissions by during the Q&A time, asking questions about the movies or ideas you'd like to discuss.

I'd like to dwell for a moment on the first movie on our list, the winner of the great prize for Best Picture. If someone had told me before last October that a black and white, silent film would be nominated for Best Picture, much less win the award, I would have laughed in their face. I personally don't even like silent films that much. Because it is my job, I have sat through *Birth of a Nation*, and *King of Kings*, but that doesn't mean I had to like the experience. Even a movie with as racy a title as *Flesh and the Devil* (1925) with two stars like John Gilbert and Greta Garbo put me right to sleep.

So it was with extreme curiosity that I came to a showing at the Virginia Film Festival last year of *The Artist*. After the movie, I had trouble figuring out what had just happened to me because I had sat transfixed for two hours, never looking at my watch once, staring at the silver screen like a small boy seeing "the pictures" for the first time. It was an extraordinary experience.

*The Artist* is that unique combination of great writing, acting, directing, cinematography, and editing that tells a clean (in more ways than one), consistent story

well. Basically a riches-to-rags-to-riches story—or, more theologically, a prideful success to deserved fall to repentant redemption story—the movie tells the tale of a successful silent actor named George Valentin, who is a major star as long as the movies are silent. When the talkies come in, his pride, the stock market crash and the rise of a female star, whom he had helped with her first role, cause his demise. The film proceeds through a number of escapades until the two are reunited in a way I won't tell you because it would spoil the fun, but I will just say that a clever ending of two words, breaking the silence that has reigned throughout the majority of the picture, gives the reason for George's inability to make it in talking pictures.

The themes of *The Artist* are standard themes for movie comedies during the whole silent picture era: pride goes before a fall; love conquers all; a good man, down on his luck, comes to his senses, repents, and is rewarded for his humility; a cute dog can make a picture successful. Such themes continue to be the stuff of many great comedic stories wherever they are found; the movies are no exception. So what made this one stand out? What made it bring audiences to their feet in 2012?

To answer that question, it may be useful to say what *The Artist* is not. It is not a profoundly philosophical movie. This is not *Gladiator*, consciously exploring the heroic individual who stands for what is right and endures until he is vindicated, or *Saving Private Ryan*, showing the power of the communal commitment of a squad to a purpose in war that reaches back to home and answers why soldiers are willing to suffer the unspeakable misery of war. *The Artist* is rather simply a good, old-fashioned movie in the deepest sense of the word, holding up a set of values that are worth believing in, and doing so with a beauty and grace that is hard to deny. Hollywood wants to believe it still stands for that, and so *The Artist's* nomination for best picture.

Having said that, I do believe that *The Artist* has a theme that is discernible, whether conscious or not: **the triumph of the individual over his own failings and foibles**. Again, this is certainly not uncommon; just look back to last year's *127 Hours* or *The King's Speech* for evidence of the prominence of that value in film today. But while in those two movies, the individual would have been lost were it not for family in the first and friendship in the second, in *The Artist* George Valentin basically pulls himself up by his own bootstraps—or in the words of the Biblical story of the prodigal son, “comes to his senses”—, seeks out Peppy Miller, and is saved by her from ruin.

This radical individualism is easily seen in the film. Though Peppy, the chauffer (played by the always good James Cromwell), and certainly the little dog Uggie, all end up playing their parts in helping George come back to full strength, they do not play much of a part in helping him see his pride. His own gazing at his tuxedo in the window of a pawn shop, seeing the near miss he has had in the fire in his apartment, and going along at the end of the movie with Peppy's idea that can reunite them on screen, all contribute to the notion that, though he could not have come back without the help of others, the final responsibility for his restoration lies with him alone. When he chooses to receive her love for him is when he finally is revitalized.

This theme of the rugged individual making his own choices, pretty much on his own, is found in other nominated films this year. Matt King, played by George Clooney in *The Descendants*, has help from his two daughters, but is more challenged by them to find his own place in the family, after neglecting them and his wife for the sake of work almost all his life. The supporting subtheme of the movie of the family's decision to sell property worth millions before it returns by law to the state also clearly puts the judgment of what to do in Matt's hands, and he in fact decides entirely on his own to go

against the will of the majority of his family and keep the land. Matt comes to his position at the end of the movie entirely on his own.

Gil, the Owen Wilson character in Woody Allen's comedy *Midnight in Paris*, has to figure out on his own what is happening to him and why, when at midnight every night he has the opportunity to go back to 1920's literary Paris. Not only is he alone in his speculations, but he also has the opposition of his fiancée and her family, and the bewilderment of his soul-mate played by Marion Cotillard to contend with. It is all up to him to figure out that every age is looked on by its participants as a lesser age than the one that went before, when really every age has its own strengths and weaknesses.

A third example presents itself dramatically in the boy Oskar in *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close*. Though he is helped more than he knows by others unseen, Oskar must do the journey he has laid out for himself largely alone, and even those that he persuades to help him must do so under his direction and according to his rules. *Loud* is a movie that beautifully tells the story of a boy's self-discovery by going on an adventure, and really all such stories are the story of the triumph of the individual. Not all the movies this year sing such a strong song of individualism, but one could easily add *Moneyball* and *War Horse* to this list. Only *The Help*, *Hugo*, and *The Tree of Life* among the nominees promote community, friendship and family as crucial for self-discovery.

It has long been argued that individualism, so wed in America to the historic theme of the liberal society with its focus on individual rights, is what makes our country great. But individualism has just as long been seen as the potential source of our demise, if we do not balance it with a care for others that extends beyond our own circle of family and friends to the nation at large. Alexis De Tocqueville saw this in his great book about the early years of our country, *Democracy in America*. Writing in 1835, he famously said near the end of his book:

...I see an innumerable multitude of men, alike and equal, constantly circling around in pursuit of the petty and banal pleasures with which they glut their souls. Each of them withdrawn into himself, is almost unaware of the fate of the rest. Mankind, for him, consists in his children and his personal friends. As for the rest of his fellow citizens, they are near enough, but he does not notice them. He touches them but feels nothing. He exists in and for himself, and though he still may have a family, one can at least say that he has not got a fatherland. (692)

As one commentator has put it, "This passage may have been taken from Tacitus' consideration of first century Rome, or it might more precisely conjure the spiritual malaise of a twentieth century American city" ("An Angel and a Brute: Self-Interest and Individualism in Tocqueville's America", Tom Murphy, St. John's College, Santa Fe, NM, 1985, <http://www.brtom.org/sjc/sjc4.html>).

The sense of alienation from each other in our country, not just in the cities but everywhere there is a television set (and that is everywhere), is palpable, and it is felt in this year's movies as well. As Robert Putnam put it in his classic, *Bowling Alone* (Simon & Shuster, 2000; p. 25):

Liberation from ossified community bonds is a recurrent and honored theme in our culture from the Pilgrims' storied escape from religious convention in the seventeenth century to the lyric nineteenth-century paeans to individualism by Emerson ("Self Reliance"), Thoreau ("Civil Disobedience"), and Whitman ("Song of Myself") to Sherwood Anderson's twentieth-century celebration of the struggle against conformism by ordinary citizens in *Winesburg, Ohio* to the latest Clint Eastwood movie.

The "latest Clint Eastwood movie", last year's biopic of J. Edgar Hoover, starring Leonardo DiCaprio as the FBI founder and long-time director, by the way, engages much more in an investigation of Hoover as a person, exploring his sexuality and pride, than it does in the social implications of any of his actions as founder and chief of one of the most powerful law enforcement agencies in the world. The same can be said of the Meryl Streep movie, *The Iron Lady*: the only great thing about that film is her performance, not the movie's consideration of the decisions Margaret Thatcher made during her time as Prime Minister.

But, if *individualism* is a theme in this year's films, is *alienation*? For they are not the same. My belief is that alienation is not so much seen in this year's Academy nominations, at least nothing like as much as it has been in other years. Not a single movie this year could be called anything like a tragedy in the classic sense of focusing on, and particularly ending with, a stark statement of the effects of evil in the world. Even last year's nominees, which were overwhelmingly comedic in their genres, had *The Social Network*, and I pointed out last year how far away 2010's movies were on the whole from recent years like 2007, when the nominees included sweet, happy movies like *Atonement*, *Michael Clayton*, *There Will Be Blood*, and the eventual winner, that funniest of light-hearted comedies, the Coen brothers' *No Country For Old Men*.

Instead of a thematic unity, demonstrating in their individuality the common theme of the sad loneliness of the individual in our society, this year's movies have done something radically different from any other year I've been doing this lecture. This element has two parts, which may have begun last year, but I didn't notice it so much as I have this year. The nine nominees for the Academy Award have 1) demonstrated the individualism in our society by being almost totally different structurally from one another in every way, and 2) they have done so comedically, not tragically. If there is a common theme, as I have already pointed out, it is the triumph of the individual over his imperfections, but that individual triumph is accomplished in totally different ways in totally different settings with totally different plots except in one strikingly unified way: they all end happily.

Let's unpack these two ideas. Look at this year's movies individually, and you will find such differences of story line, setting, character and hence theme, that it is really remarkable.

1. *The Artist* is set in 1920's and 30's Hollywood and is a romantic tale about fall and redemption.
2. *The Descendants* is set in present day Hawaii, portraying the self-discovery of a neglectful father and husband.
3. *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* is about a young boy who goes on a journey in New York City to try to find the lock which fits a key he believes his father left for him before his tragic death in the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center.
4. *The Help* is a female drama about race relations in 1950's and 60's Jackson, Mississippi.
5. *Hugo* depicts a boy, living alone in the walls of Paris's central train station at the turn of the last century, and how he helps a former filmmaker find his dignity again.
6. *Midnight in Paris* is a positive Woody Allen comedy—as opposed to his negative, cynical ones—which takes place in Paris during three different ages: the present, the 1920's and the “Belle Epoque” of the 1890's, and explores the tendency of many to believe that a former age was better than our own.
7. *Moneyball* is the true story of a season in 2003, when an Oakland A's general manager named Billy Beane changed his world.
8. *The Tree of Life* takes place at times as distinct as the creation of the universe, the age of the dinosaurs, 1950's Texas and 2000's Los Angeles. What the film is actually about is anyone's guess...
9. Steven Spielberg's *War Horse* follows the story of a horse and his boy from the fields of England's “green and pleasant land” to the war-torn trenches of France in World War I.

How could one dream up a set of movies more diverse?

And so, the second distinctive of this year's pictures, the fact they all end happily. This is a theme we can loosely call “romanticism.”

Every single one of last year's Academy Award nominees comes, at its end, to a place of “happy endings.” Not a single protagonist is dead (with the possible exception of Jack in *The Tree of Life*. But can you explain the ending of *The Tree of Life* to me? I wish you would...). Not a single protagonist has failed at his business or gotten a divorce without finding a better love (Even Matt King in *The Descendants* has his daughters cuddling with him and sharing his ice cream on the couch at the end.). Not a single one has left a puzzle unsolved or a crisis of life unsettled. Every main character without

exception ends up in a better place, with more self-awareness, more sense of self worth, stronger relationships, in short with a much better and more hopeful life.

And every single one of them does it without God.

It is not as if 2011 had no films that could have been nominated, which end on a downer, or, in Christian terms, demonstrate vividly the fallenness of man or the hopelessness of man without God. *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*, though the murder mystery is mostly resolved, does not really end with Lisbeth Salander better off than when the movie started, and if you know the story of the trilogy of novels on which the movie is based, Lisbeth has far to go before she finds real resolution in her life. *Take Shelter* and *Melancholia*, both apocalyptic and both mentioned as possibilities for Best Picture nominations on many lists, assume the end of the world at the end of their stories (How can one get more depressing than that?!), and the responses of the characters in the movies, while very different from each other in tone, are still basically sad and dismal. No, there was no shortage of films that could have been nominated last year, which were essentially tragedies.

But the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences chose *en masse* to avoid these films. Rather, the Academy, if they do represent to us a reflection of ourselves (and I believe they do), show that at this point in our nation's history, we want to believe in a rosy future, and so the artists of our most influential artistic medium are honoring stories that do just that. We want to believe that economically, we can simply go on spending without paying for it, and everything will come out OK in the end. We want to believe socially that we can simply go on making decisions that have as their chief value our own personal peace and happiness, and that the consequences of those decisions will have no future effect on our descendants or on us in the after life. We want to believe that we can live, whether we are *philosophically* atheists or not, as

*practical* atheists, not praying, not worshipping, not heeding God's word, not learning to depend on each other as brothers and sisters in a family in which God is the Father.

Two anecdotal references, one to a blog post, one to something I mentioned in last year's talk. I was intrigued in my research this year to find that something called the "Pagan Newswire Collective—Southern California Bureau" exists. It is a blog on the web that provides us with "Pagan news and and [sic] views from the Orange County / LA area". An evaluation of one of our nominees, *The Descendants*, showed up on their site on December 23, posted by someone named Rayna, and it began like this: "*The Descendants* is a move [sic] that I appreciate on three levels, as a Pagan, as a lapsed Buddhist, and as someone who grew up in a family." The post goes on to praise the movie.

I ask you: As you watched *The Descendants*, did it strike you at all as Pagan? Rayna gave it four out of five broomsticks...

Secondly, as I mentioned last year, in a post-religious, never mind post-Christian, culture we should be careful about expecting from the medium of film much in the way of Christian symbolism of a very strong or striking nature. Of course since there is much virtue that is shared by all human beings—all of whom are, after all, created in the *imago dei*—we shall find in almost every film images of hope, love, and even trust, that we can praise.

But we must be careful to note when those images are accompanied by, or better originate from, images of transcendence and when they do not. Last year I noted that only a single film, *True Grit*, had "a relatively substantial breath of charitable expression toward the source of the whole human family, God Himself." This year again only two films do, *The Tree of Life* and *The Help*. Both these films' relationship to the faith is complex, and would require much more discussion than I want to take here, though

they would be worthy of a good bit of discussion during the Q&A. So only the briefest of statements.

*The Tree of Life*, if I have understood it correctly is in fact one of the strongest statements in years of the existence of God and of His working in the world through grace. Terrence Malick, its reclusive writer and director, is reputed to be Episcopalian, and the movie has many Christian leanings. The mysterious flame, which appears in front of a black background with nothing else on screen, and intercuts the movie in five places, is in fact a shot of Thomas Wilfred's "Opus 161", a video sculpture. As I have written in other places, this member of Wilfred's "Lumia" series reminds one of the representation of God in the burning bush confronted by Moses in the book of Exodus and of the tongues of fire representing the Holy Spirit descending on the disciples at Pentecost. The film begins with a placard, quoting from Job 38: "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? ...When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" Much of the voiceover, which runs throughout the film is laced with Biblical reference and Christian notions like Nature and Grace. *The Tree of Life* is an obscure film, but seems definitely to contain a deeply Christian vision of the world and of life in the world.

*The Help* is both simpler and more complex. The main character, Aibileen, writes out her prayers and shares them with Skeeter, her biographer in the film. From her attendance at church to the cross on the wall in her humble abode Aibileen's conversation, demeanor and overall characterization suggest the profound influence of Christianity in the African-American community of the South in Aibileen's day. But in the texture of the film, that Christian element seems as *socially* depicted as it is *personally* so. One gets the feeling that neither the filmmakers, nor the actors, nor the novelist herself, really intends anything other than a proper historical reference, rather than the

portrayal of a path to be followed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I don't remember anything that the Christian Aibileen of the film said or did that wouldn't have been said or done by a secular but warmly humanitarian Aibileen.

But laying aside *The Tree of Life* and *The Help*, none of the rest of the nominees this year even nod—at least positively—toward prayer, personal meditation, worship, priests or pastors who are wise and caring, church buildings, or any other of the thousand ways a filmmaker has at his or her disposal to remind us that God is there, and that He loves and watches over us.

No, in America today, we basically think of ourselves as alone in the universe as we face our problems. No nation will help us; in fact as a nation of individuals, we largely have become what Tocqueville called “an innumerable multitude of men” existing “in and for ourselves”. As he put it in reference to the American individual, “As for the rest of his fellow citizens, they are near enough, but he does not notice them. He touches them but feels nothing.”

And yet, we persist in believing that as individuals we shall prevail. William Faulkner in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech of 1950 captures this spirit well. Faulkner hated giving speeches and rarely did, but he felt about the Nobel Prize acceptance speech, as Richard Ellmann put it, “a special obligation to take the changed situation of the writer, and of man, into account.” Speaking as the first American novelist to win the prize since the end of World War II and the dropping of the bomb, Faulkner said, “There are no longer problems of the spirit. There is only one question: When will I be blown up?” But he went on famously to encourage young writers to forget their fear, indeed to fear nothing, and that, if they would, man would not only endure, “he will prevail.” In the last few sentences of the speech, he tells why.

He [i.e. Mankind] is immortal, not because he alone among creatures has an

inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance. The poet's, the writer's, duty is to write about these things. It is his privilege to help man endure by lifting his heart, by reminding him of the courage and honor and hope and pride and compassion and pity and sacrifice, which have been the glory of his past. The poet's voice need not merely be the record of man, it can be one of the props, the pillars to help him endure and prevail.

It is my opinion that most Americans still believe what Faulkner propounded. Note the great novelist finds the glory of present-day man originating only in what he calls "the glory of his past", not in the God of the Bible. Too many of us affirm what the vast majority of our artists, public intellectuals and leaders tell us, i.e. that man, with no help from above, need only forget his fears and move into the future to "endure and prevail." As we have seen tonight, the nominees for Best Picture tell us the same thing for the most part. Man can prevail on his own, and will prevail on his own.

I submit that apart from rediscovering each other, and even more profoundly, the God Who created us, redeemed us, and places us in relationship to one another, simple survival, much less triumph, will not be possible. "We were made for you, O God, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you" wrote Augustine over 1500 years ago, and it is still true today. On the basis both of our status as finite creatures before our Creator and as fallen creatures unable to redeem ourselves before a Holy Judge, we must find again the fear of that Creator and Judge that makes us realize the desperation of our plight without aid from outside ourselves. The truly good news that our faith proclaims is not that man will prevail by himself, but rather that the same Creator/Judge Whom we should fear, has also reached across the chasm of our finitude and failure to draw us to Himself in the courage and honor and hope and pride and compassion and pity and sacrifice of the One Who died that we might endure, and, yes, prevail. Let us dream of and work toward a nation that responds increasingly to this One with faith and hope and love. Thank you.



## TABLES OF INTEREST FOR MOVIE TALK, 2012

Recent Nominees for AA for Best Picture (Winner given first and in bold print)

- 1995: **Braveheart**; Apollo 13; Babe; Il Postino; Sense and Sensibility  
1996: **The English Patient**; Fargo; Jerry Maguire; Secrets & Lies; Shine  
1997: **Titanic**; As Good As It Gets; The Full Monty; Good Will Hunting; L.A. Confidential  
1998: **Shakespeare In Love**; Elizabeth; Life Is Beautiful; Saving Private Ryan; The Thin Red Line  
1999: **American Beauty**; The Cider House Rules; The Green Mile; The Insider; The Sixth Sense  
2000: **Gladiator**; Chocolat ; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Erin Brockovich; Traffic  
2001: **A Beautiful Mind**; Gosford Park; In the Bedroom; The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring; Moulin Rouge  
2002: **Chicago**; The Hours; The Pianist; The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers; Gangs of New York  
2003: **The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King**; Lost in Translation; Master and Commander; Mystic River; Seabiscuit  
2004: **Million Dollar Baby**; The Aviator; Finding Neverland; Ray; Sideways  
2005: **Crash**; Brokeback Mountain; Capote; Good Night, and Good Luck; Munich  
2006: **The Departed**; Babel; Letters from Iwo Jima; Little Miss Sunshine; The Queen  
2007: **No Country for Old Men**; Atonement; Juno; Michael Clayton; There Will Be Blood  
2008: **Slumdog Millionaire**; The Curious Case of Benjamin Button; Frost/Nixon; Milk; The Reader  
2009: **The Hurt Locker**; Avatar; The Blind Side; District 9; An Education; Inglourious Basterds; Precious; A Serious Man; Up; Up in the Air  
2010: **The King's Speech**; 127 Hours; Black Swan; The Fighter; Inception; The Kids Are All Right; The Social Network; Toy Story 3; True Grit; Winter's Bone  
2011: **The Artist**; The Descendants; Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close; The Help; Hugo; Midnight in Paris; Moneyball; The Tree of Life; War Horse

**2011 Nominees Domestic Box Office Stats per Box Office Mojo as of Feb 12, 2012. None are in the top 10 of all movies released in the last year; all are in the top 150.**

TITLE	DOM GROSS	FOR GROSS	BUDGET	% PROFIT
<i>The Artist</i> (#109)	\$25M	\$34M	\$15M	393%
<i>The Descendants</i> (#46)	\$72M	\$57M	N/A	%
<i>Extremely Loud &amp; Incredibly Close</i> (#102)	\$30M	N/A	N/A	%
<i>The Help</i> (#13)	\$170M	\$37M	\$25M	828%
<i>Hugo</i> (#49)	\$65M	\$40M	N/A	%
<i>Midnight in Paris</i> (#57)	\$57M	\$92M	\$17M	876%
<i>Moneyball</i> (#42)	\$76M	\$33M	\$50M	218%
<i>The Tree of Life</i> (#137)	\$13M	\$41M	\$32M	168%
<i>War Horse</i> (#38)	\$78M	\$48M	\$66M	191%

**2011 DOMESTIC BOX OFFICE FIGURES (ROUNDED UP OR DOWN. AS OF FEB 12, 2012).** Three years ago the top ten made \$2.5B. Two years ago they had made \$3.1B by now. Last year they had made only \$2.8B, and the downward trend, at least domestically continues this year, when the top ten have only made \$2.5B. Overall domestic BO was down again (3.7%) with \$10.17B in receipts. Ticket sales were also down 4.2% (following a year in which they were down 5.2% from the previous year) though sixty-four more movies were released than last year. The only statistic that is going up is average ticket price (2007=\$6.88; 2008=\$7.18; 2009=\$7.50; 2010=\$7.89; 2011=\$7.93)!

Rank	Gross	Movie
1.	\$381M	<a href="#">Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Part Two</a>
2.	\$352M	<a href="#">Transformers: Dark of the Moon</a>
3.	\$281M	<a href="#">The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn, Part One</a>
4.	\$254M	<a href="#">The Hangover Part II</a>
5.	\$241M	<a href="#">Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides</a>
6.	\$210M	<a href="#">Fast Five</a>
7.	\$207M	<a href="#">Mission: Impossible – Ghost Protocol</a>
8.	\$191M	<a href="#">Cars 2</a>
9.	\$185M	<a href="#">Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows</a>
10.	\$181M	<a href="#">Thor</a>