

# Dick jokes no substitute for plot

**Movie**  
*Superbad*  
 Cinemas nationwide  
 Directed by Greg Mottola  
 Reviewed by Mike Kilpatrick

Following the success of *Knocked Up*, *Superbad* is the latest in the growing line of Seth Rogen/Judd Apatow collaborations to hit the local multiplexes.

The roles are slightly different this time, with Rogen co-writing and acting, Apatow settling for a producer's credit and television director Greg Mottola trying his hand at a feature film.

The plot centres on school seniors Seth, played by Apatow-regular Jonah Hill, and Evan, played by *Arrested Development*'s Michael Cera. The action takes place over a 24-hour period, during which the characters have to arrange alcohol for a party so they can get drunk and have

their wicked way with the objects of their desire before heading off to college.

The bumbling "heroes" rely on Fogell (newcomer Christopher Mintz-Plasse) using his fake identification, under the pseudonym McLovin, to score the booze. Despite sounding like a McDonald's social dating experiment, McLovin survives a robbery only to be taken under the wings of investigating officers Slater (Bill Hader, *Saturday Night Live*) and Michaels (Rogen).

So the plot isn't exactly Oscar material, but it's the lowbrow nature of the film that really grates. It starts with a discussion about a website called "vagtastic voyage" and moves quickly to Seth looking down Evan's mother's blouse, proclaiming "I am truly jealous you got to suck on those tits when you were younger". And it doesn't get much cleverer than that.

*Superbad* is similar in style to a Kevin Smith film. Dick and fart jokes? Tick. Mouthy main characters? Tick. Laugh out loud moments? Tick. But the real difference is in the quality of the dialogue and the heart of the film. *Superbad*, unfortunately, isn't *Chasing Amy*.

The thing is *Superbad* tries to be more than it is. At the end of the film, two characters are descending an escalator towards a restaurant called "Fellini's". Given virtually nothing on screen isn't well-thought and planned carefully, one can only suspect it's a nod to influential director Federico Fellini. Dream on, guys.

Apparently the script was first written by Rogen and co-writer Evan Goldberg when they were 13, and it's really not that hard to believe. Most of the jokes certainly seem to be aimed at that age-group.

It's not that *Superbad* is well . . .

super bad. It's just not very good. It has the occasional excellent scene and some hearty laughs – unfortunately it relies too much on the use of the word "fuck" to raise laughter from the audience.

One of the major problems is that the character of Seth appears to have no redeeming features whatsoever. The only decent thing he does is when he (literally) picks up Evan and carries him away from the party. But when he gets drunk and starts crying, there is so little emotional attachment with the character that it's hard to feel anything other than apathy. One can only hope for Rogen's sake that he no longer closely resembles the main protagonist that he named after himself.

Go and see *Superbad* if you



PHOTO: SONY PICTURES

**THE 17-YEAR-OLD VIRGINS:** Michael Cera, Christopher Mintz-Plasse and Jonah Hill.

enjoyed *Knocked Up* and *The 40-Year Old Virgin*, just don't expect to come out feeling anything other than a little dirty and a tad disappointed.

# Snow Patrol concert one big sing-along

**Concert**  
*Snow Patrol*  
 September 14  
 Vector Arena  
 Reviewed by Joanna Davies

When Snow Patrol toured here in February, I was told lead singer Gary Lightbody forgot the words to a song. This didn't give me much hope for the Irish band's second visit – especially since all the singles from their latest album, *Eyes Open*, have been played to death on radio

and C4.

Luckily for me, I was pleasantly surprised. Playing at Vector Arena, a much better choice than the sterile, out-of-the-way Trusts Stadium, Snow Patrol had the crowd singing to every song. Playing material from both *Eyes Open* and *Final Straw*, their show was filled with a good mix of older and newer tracks – although they didn't delve into any of their earlier, lesser-known material.

The supporting acts let the overall night down a bit. Iain Archer, who had a cool alt-rock

sound, just didn't have the crowd behind him. And Opshop, our own Kiwi boys playing their first stadium gig, played too many of their slower songs and didn't amp the crowd enough.

It took the crowd a little while to warm up to Snow Patrol, partially because of the supporting acts and also because New Zealand crowds sometimes take a few good songs to respond to any band. At one point I think I was one of the only ones jumping around, which was a bit disappointing.

As for the band's performance,

Lightbody had great energy and crowd interaction, and managed to get us all singing, if not jumping around. Bassist Paul Wilson looked like he was really enjoying himself, aided by the never-ending line of beer bottles on top of his amp.

For a band whose sound is becoming increasingly commercial, I was surprised at how true they stayed to their songs and how well they played.

Naming New Zealand as the most relaxing country in the world, the band genuinely sounded happy to be back here to play,

and returned to the stage for a three-song encore.

Crowd favourites included the over-played but much-awaited *Chasing Cars*, during which every couple in the venue got lost in their own little world. Opening song *Hands Open* was just what was needed to wake the crowd up a bit, and huge applause followed *Grazed Knees* and *How To Be Dead*.

Their 100 minute show transformed the crowd and by the end the singing was so loud that you couldn't really notice the concert didn't sell out.

## What's on

### cinema

**La Vie En Rose**  
*Rialto Cinemas*  
 Opens October 4

Troubled French singer Edith Piaf is the latest music star to get the biopic treatment. Olivier Dahan's *La Vie En Rose* is a non-linear, fractured look at the balladeer's life, from her early years in suburban Paris to wartime success and beyond. The movie features original recordings by Piaf, and stars Marion Cotillard and Gérard Depardieu.

**Superbad**  
*Cinemas nationwide*  
 Showing now

The latest comedy from writer/producer Judd Apatow and Seth Rogen, *Superbad* follows the trials and tribulations of high school nerds Seth (Jonah Hill), Evan (Michael Cera of *Arrested Development* fame) and "McLovin" (Christopher Mintz-Plasse) as they try to lose their virginity before college. Make sure you check it out.

### theatre

**Cinderella**  
*ASB Theatre, Aotea Centre*  
 October 10-14

The Royal New Zealand Ballet brings the classic fairytale to life this month. The production combines choreography by the UK's Christopher Hampson with costumes by Kiwi Tracy Grant. With the score by famed Russian composer Sergei Prokofiev, the production promises to wow audiences of all ages. Tickets from Ticketek.



PHOTO: ROYAL NEW ZEALAND BALLET

**ON YOUR TOES:** The Royal New Zealand Ballet's latest production *Cinderella* is at the ASB Theatre from October 10 to 14.

### events

**Auckland Seafood Festival**  
*Auckland Fish Market*  
 September 29-30

There are over 100 species of edible fish swimming about in New Zealand's waters, and here's your chance to try some of them! There's an all-day street party on Jellicoe St, competitions for the kids, and music from Nesian Mystik, Ben Lummis and more. VIP Lounge tickets are \$75, street party tickets are \$25, the remainder is free entry.

**TNT Pursuit**  
*Bluewater Pavillion, Gore St*  
 October 6

If you spot groups of people racing giddily from one city location to the next on Saturday, it's because they're competing in the *TNT Pursuit*. There are spot prizes to be given away, so dress your team wacky and have some fun with it. Entries are still open, check out [www.pursuit07.co.nz](http://www.pursuit07.co.nz) – before some other team beats you to it!

**Loud - Percussive Dance Showcase**  
*Tapac, 100 Motions Rd, Western Springs*  
 October 7

Witness the best the world has to offer in dance techniques that emphasise percussive feet. Performers include Boyzdance, a tap-dancing hip hop crew who combine the dancing of Fred Astaire with modern moves, and Clare Connor's traditional Irish and "Riverdance" styles. A part of this year's Tempo New Zealand Dance Festival, tickets are \$20-\$28 from Ticketek.

**Hot Hip Hop Showcase**  
*Tapac, 100 Motions Rd, Western Springs*  
 October 6

Certain styles of dancing have become synonymous with hip hop over the past two decades. See an amalgamation of dance, graphics and music live on stage as a part of this year's Tempo New Zealand Dance Festival. Tickets \$20-\$28 from Ticketek.

### exhibitions

**John Radford – Thanks A Lot Icarus**  
*Whitespace, 12 Crummer Rd, Ponsonby*  
 September 29 - October 20

Renowned for the sunken architectural installation titled TIP in Western Park on Ponsonby Road, John Radford's exhibition *Thanks A Lot Icarus* features intricately sculpted Bay Villas slumped on walls as if melting, pulled out of shape by some unseen force. Free entry.