

# Jurassic World

## Park Strife



**Release Date:** OUT NOW!

12A | 125 minutes

Director: Colin Trevorrow

Cast: Chris Pratt, Bryce Dallas Howard, Irrfan Khan, Vincent D'Onofrio, Judy Greer

**“NO ONE’S IMPRESSED BY** dinosaurs anymore,” says Bryce Dallas Howard’s tightly-wound Claire Dearing, early on in *Jurassic World*. It’s a fair point: some 22 years since Steven Spielberg brilliantly breathed life into these prehistoric creatures in *Jurassic Park*, seeing dinosaurs roam the Earth – or rather on a private island near Costa Rica – is no longer quite the wonder it once was.

Even if the T-Rex and its pals have been largely absent from cinemas since 2001’s Joe Johnston-directed *Jurassic Park III*, their mythological counterparts have not. From *Pacific Rim* to *Godzilla*, modern audiences have been well-served with CG-driven beasts causing wanton destruction on the big screen. So, like the lady says, why on earth do we need another *Jurassic Park*?

Incoming director Colin Trevorrow approaches the question with zeal. Inspired by a trio of ideas bestowed to him by Spielberg, *Jurassic World* is a fiendishly crafted blockbuster: old-fashioned thrills, heroism and romance, locked inside a smart, self-aware shell. Quite an achievement for a director whose

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only previous experience was the likeable-but-limited 2012 time-travel indie *Safety Not Guaranteed*.

Unlike Johnston’s sequel and Spielberg’s own earlier 1997 follow-up *The Lost World*, both of which were guilty of recycling ideas and characters from the original, *Jurassic World* finally realises the vision of John Hammond, Richard Attenborough’s billionaire who first dreamt of a theme park full of prehistoric dinosaurs. It takes us back to Isla Nublar, where this ultimate attraction has been open to the public for a decade – backed now by Masrani Global, the corporation that took over Hammond’s InGen after his death.

With ticket sales dwindling, Irrfan Khan’s helicopter-flying tycoon Simon Masrani has opted to radically stimulate interest in *Jurassic World*, with a genetically-modified dinosaur hybrid that’s been bred in isolation. With this so-called Indominus Rex set to be unveiled, overseeing final safety checks is Howard’s aforementioned Operations Manager – on the very same weekend that her two nephews, the hormone-sprouting teen Zach (Nick Robinson) and his younger, dinosaur-crazy brother Gray (Ty Simpkins), are set for a long-overdue visit.

It doesn’t take a palaeontologist to predict that the Indominus Rex will escape, nor that these squabbling siblings are set to be prime dino-feed. Saving the day is largely left to Chris Pratt’s park ranger Owen Grady. Part David Attenborough, part Steve McQueen, he’s soothing Raptors one minute, racing with them on motorbikes the next. If *Guardians Of The Galaxy*’s Star-Lord was Pratt’s Han Solo, then

Grady is his Indiana Jones. Should the rumours of Pratt’s appointment as a rebooted Dr Jones come to pass, then surely the barrel-roll he does under a closing gate of the Raptor enclosure serves as the ideal audition.

More problematic is Bryce Dallas Howard’s contribution. It’s her first film since 2011’s *The Help*, and with her character forced to cross a far bigger emotional canyon than Pratt, it makes for a tricky comeback. Her role is the career-driven cold-heart who must find her soul en route to survival, and it’s not hard to see why Joss Whedon tweeted that early

footage of her made him think of “’70s-era sexism”. It doesn’t help that, rather ridiculously, she spends the entire film in high heels (even springing in them, in one sequence).

As he did with *Safety Not Guaranteed*, Trevorrow toys with archetypes – and, to be fair, the banter between Pratt and Howard’s characters is more enjoyable than offensive; think Harrison Ford and Kate Capshaw in Spielberg’s own *Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom*. Impressively, when romance flares, it’s swift, unexpected and makes the heart leap. And while a safety video featuring US talk show





"We will defend these gentle trees!"

host Jimmy Fallon falls flat, the humour is largely well-timed – notably an attempted kiss, amid the height of panic, that goes disastrously wrong.

With *Jurassic World* like a Spielberg movie in all but name, Trevorrow pays great attention to what makes a summer blockbuster tick. Setpieces are brisk but well-executed – whether it's Zach and Gray trapped, like figures in a snowglobe, by the Indominus Rex, or the late-on scenes of park-wide carnage when the dinosaur droppings really hit the fan. Trevorrow may never quite match some of the classic scares of *Jurassic Park* – the blood is kept to a few splatters on the wall in this 12A –

but it's an electrifying watch, summed up by a superb smackdown of a finale every bit as beastly as *Godzilla* or *Pacific Rim*.

Aiding the adrenaline is the excellent 3D conversion. Trevorrow reserves the leap-out-from-the-screen moments until they're strictly necessary, but you'll really feel like you bought a ticket to *Jurassic World*. The blend of animatronics and CGI is also as seamless as you might expect, for the director clearly recognises the need for us to feel the textures of the earlier films, which is just as important as hearing that great John Williams score again.

Not everything clicks: a fight in the jungle with Special Forces soldiers vs the Indominus Rex feels like Trevorrow spent the night watching *Predator*. And a storyline involving Vincent D'Onofrio's scheming employee planning to use Owen's trained Raptors as military-grade weapons is under-developed. But these are minor gripes about a film that is easily the best entry in the franchise since the original. Not impressed by dinosaurs anymore? Now you will be. **James Mottram**

 The only actor to return from *Jurassic Park* is BD Wong, who once again plays geneticist Dr Henry Wu.

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## Chris Pratt

Owen Grady in *Jurassic World*



### ► How did you prepare yourself to play someone who works with dinosaurs?

We treated it very real. Disbelief was suspended, dinosaurs existed and someone was trying to train them. What techniques would you use? Who would you hire? I talked to people who train dolphins, canines and parrots. There's a lot of different techniques used to train animals – you can shock them, you can give them a hug, and everything in between.

### ► How does Owen Grady compare to the goofier characters you've played?

There's definitely a darkness to him. It's there underneath, but he still has fun. He also has a history with Claire, Bryce Dallas Howard's character. Something went on between them that we sort of explore through the course of the movie. It's reminiscent of *Romancing The Stone* or *The African Queen*. But essentially, he's dark. He's a combat veteran. He's chosen to live on an island for a reason. He's running from something, and a bit of an animal himself.

### ► Has the success of *Guardians Of The Galaxy* changed your life?

Yeah, I've noticed it. Very few elements of my life have changed, but the ones that have have been pretty drastic changes. I'm still a dad and I'm still a husband and when the light bulbs go out, you've got to fix them. Life is still going on at a slow and normal pace. But now opportunities at work have changed in a very hyper-real way. **Richard Edwards**

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