




Hacksaw Ridge (2016) [139m] D: Mel Gibson. C: Andrew Garfield, Sam Worthington, Teresa Palmer, Vince Vaughn, Hugo Weaving, Jim Robison, Mikael Koski.

Remarkable and unusual biography of Desmond Doss (Garfield), a Seven-Day Adventist who eagerly volunteered services as a combat medic during World War II with one condition: to withhold from bearing arms. This peculiar conduct not only imperils him from the enemy, but also garners frustration and suspicion among peers and superior officers.

Garfield is so earnest and disarming (so to speak) and his acts of heroism so genuine one can easily overlook Gibson's excessive exhibition of blood and gore that almost negates the anti-war message the film shamelessly conveys!



Live footage of the real Doss and some of the survivors in his unit are presented during the film's final credits.

Won Oscars for film editing and sound mixing.   

Arrival (2016) [116m] D: Denis Villeneuve C: Amy Adams, Jeremy Renner, Forest Whitaker, Michael Stuhlbarg, Mark O'Brien, Tzi Ma

A brilliant linguistics professor (Adams) and hotshot physicist (Renner) are handpicked to converse with an alien species of whose incentives and purposes remain unclear. The communication development is slow causing impatience among the United States military (lead by Whitaker) and unrest among global leaders.

Intelligent and challenging science-fiction bares more than a few resemblances to Spielberg's **CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND**, but Villeneuve and his technical visionaries aid in establishing a moving and intimate reflection on the impacts of language and time. Adams is excellent in compelling lead. Arresting cinematography by Bradford Young.

Academy Award winner for sound editing.  



Mark WHELAN