



# SCOTT PILGRIM VS THE WORLD

MOVIE REVIEW!

12A/112 mins

**DIRECTOR:** Edgar Wright

**WRITERS:** Michael Bacall, Edgar Wright

**CAST:** Michael Cera, Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Kieran Culkin, Ellen Wong, Alison Pill, Mark Webber, Anna Kendrick, Chris Evans, Jason Schwartzman,

Brandon Routh

**OUT:** NOW!

★★★★★

Scott Pilgrim first appeared in 2004, in the black-and-white graphic novel *Scott Pilgrim's Precious Little Life* by Canadian Bryan Lee O'Malley. The series ended in volume six, *Scott Pilgrim's Finest Hour*, in July 2010, by which point Edgar Wright's feature adaptation was poised for release. So there's a clear divergence between the two – never mind the fact that it would have been impossible to squeeze six graphic novels into a single 112-minute film. Despite this, Wright has nailed the comic's tone, while also exploiting all the possibilities of bringing it to life on the big screen.

Scott (Michael Cera) is a 22-year-old Toronto slacker who plays the bass in three-piece band Sex Bob-omb. He's dating high schooler Knives Chau (Ellen Wong) when he meets the girl of his dreams – literally, because

she's already appeared in his subconscious. This is Ramona Flowers (Mary Elizabeth Winstead), who's relocated from New York. The pair start dating, but there's not only the issue of the jealous Knives – there's also the fact that to win Ramona's heart, Scott first has to fight her seven evil exes.

In many ways, *Scott Pilgrim Vs The World* is Wright's closest film to his breakthrough TV series, the much-loved *Spaced*. Both feature twenty-somethings inhabiting a world that's part dork, part cool, and both are rich in oddball social dynamics and quality banter. Notable here are Scott's relationships with his gay flatmate (Kieran Culkin) and with his band-mates, particularly deadpan drummer Kim Pine (Alison Pill). And both productions are packed with Wright's trademark tight editing, comic scene-changes and clever visual puns.

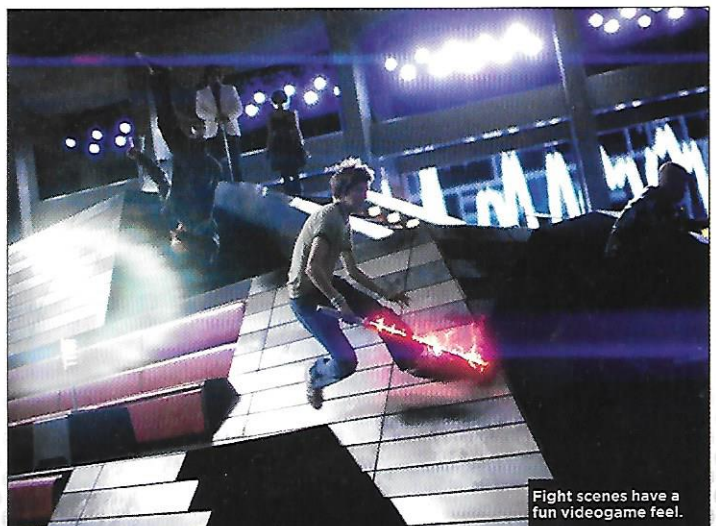
Of course, Wright's been honing his filmmaking technique through *Shaun* and *Hot Fuzz*, but here he has the added benefit of clicking with O'Malley's highly inventive source material. The comics are packed with pop culture nods (such as the name of Scott's band for starters, right Mario fans?), which Wright utilises

superbly. So Scott's fights play out like videogame duels, combined with comical wire-fu and feisty visual effects. Speaking of the fights, there's some great casting for the exes too, with Chris Evans and Brandon Routh getting to subvert their prior superheroics by both playing egotistical sods.

The Scott character is also somewhat egotistical (albeit endearingly so), which should give Cera a chance to escape his 'nice geek' typecasting (see *Superbad*, *Juno*, *Nick And Norah's Infinite Playlist*, *Youth In Revolt*

etc). Sadly, although he's reliable with the humour, can handle a bass and is novel for the fighting, Cera doesn't bring much extra to the role. Indeed, his casting and that of Winstead may be among the film's few questionable areas, because the pair have barely any chemistry – which kinda ruins the notion that Scott's getting into all these crazy scraps because he's falling in love with her. Thankfully, the whole thing is so fun and snappy, it easily survives this single shortcoming.

**Daniel Etherington**



Fight scenes have a fun videogame feel.