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"Olympus Has Fallen"

By Derek Zemrak

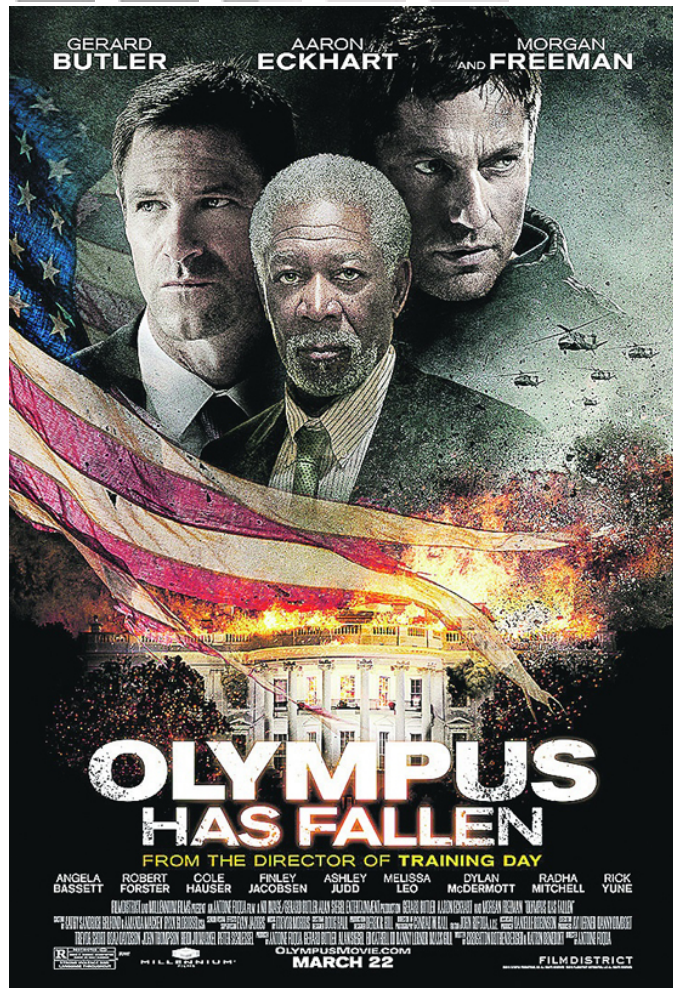


Photo courtesy FilmDistrict

Political thrillers are always fun to watch but in these times they can be a bit too realistic. "Olympus Has Fallen" stars Gerald Butler ("300," "The Phantom of the Opera") as Mike Banning, a fallen, dishonored presidential security guard who failed to save the first lady, portrayed by Ashley Judd. Jump forward 18 months and the White House is under attack by a Korean terrorist organization. Mike realizes he is the only one who can save the president (Aaron Eckhart) and his son Connor, played by Finley Jacobsen, from this terrorist group lead by Kang, the very talented actor Rick Yune ("Snow Falling on Cedars," "The Man with the Iron Fist"). Yune delivers a great performance and moviegoers will hate him from his first scene in the movie.

The cast is amazing and also includes Oscar winner Morgan Freeman ("Million Dollar Baby") as Speaker Trumbull; Indie favorite and Oscar winner Melissa Leo ("The Fighter") as Secretary of Defense Ruth McMillan; and Oscar nominee Angela Bassett ("What's Love Got to Do with It") as Secret Service Director Lynn Jacobs.

The best way to describe "Olympus Has Fallen" is that it is an enjoyable Hollywood blockbuster, but it should have been a lot more. The script, co-written by newcomers Creighton Rothenberger and Katrin Benedikt, has too many off the wall one liners for me. What could have been an intense, suspenseful thriller quickly turned into an unsophisticated "Die Hard" film. Director Antoine Fuqua ("Training Day") should have focused on the suspense. All in all, if you want to see an action-packed film made without much thought, then "Olympus Has Fallen" is for you.

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