

# 'Saw IV' slices through box office



Photo courtesy of Lion's Gate

"Saw IV" earned about \$32 million at the box office last weekend. The increasingly gory movie features new torture devices and victims.

BY FRANKLIN CLINE  
Reviewer

I know what you're thinking. "There's no way in hell one of those cookie-cutter Saw movies is deserving of four out of five stars. They're all the same! They're all repulsive! They're all stupid!"

Well, you're exactly right, and that is precisely what makes the Saw franchise one of the most interesting and entertaining movie chains in recent memory.

The Saw franchise occupies a weird niche in mainstream horror films as one of the most outlandish, disgusting and convoluted to hit the box office recently. And hit the box office it did. The movie raked in about \$32 million in the first weekend. With each film, the Saw tetralogy has become more complex. It began with a simple story of a crazy old man (the Jigsaw killer, a.k.a. John Kramer, played stoically by Tobin Bell) determined to teach the most serious of life lessons to people who, he thinks, take certain aspects of their life (or their life itself) for granted. These lessons are doled out in the form of bizarre torture-or-death contraptions: For instance, in this installment, one man has to make the unfortunate choice of keeping his eyes or having his limbs ripped off with serious force.

Trust me, if you really want to

delve into the plot of all four of these films, there are silly links all over the place between characters and places, and "Saw IV" directly parallels the second and third installments. The series also is known for its incredibly unforeseen twist endings — remember the first one, where it turns out the mastermind of the whole plot was just pretending to be dead and was in the room the whole time?

Basically, you can break every Saw movie down into a combination of horrific torture scenes, derivative "CSI"-like analyses of Jigsaw's latest puzzles by the cops, who are always hot on his trail, and loads of Jigsaw's life philosophies, my favorite of which is the subjective-truth championing "see what I see." "Saw IV" is no different from its three predecessors in that respect, or in any respect really, except the torture devices have gotten a little cruder, and some of the screaming, bloody faces have changed.

So if the movie is derivative and willingly stupid, why four out of five stars?

From the ridiculously graphic opening autopsy scene (ever wonder what the inside of a stomach looked like?) to the oh-wait-this-was-happening-all-along twist ending that concludes the film, "Saw IV" never loses sight of

the fact that it wants to be a mindless, contrived, violent movie with very little, if any, artistic value. And it is! It's as if Thomas Fenton, the screenwriter who is new to the Saw franchise, and Darren Lynn Bousman, who has directed each installment except for the first one, set an intentionally low goal for themselves: Try to gross out everyone in the theater out at least once. And it works! Eyes are gouged out, skulls are cut open, heads are obliterated by giant mechanical mallets, and so on and so on.

Death after death after death eventually renders death as meaningless, and in this respect, "Saw IV" plays like a dumbed-down version of John Donne's "Death Be Not Proud," inviting us to conquer the sweet inevitability of death (and to think, "Hey, at least when I die, it probably won't be from a bunch of knives cutting up my face and then being thrown into a giant pile of razor wire!"). And all that stuff about the complexities or unity of the series can be thrown out of the window in favor of watching some people get cut up real good.

"Saw IV" is exactly the movie it wants to be, and even though the second half of the film drags a bit (too much talk, not enough gore), it's still worth it for the 10 or so over-the-top deaths and the twist ending, which is so goofy you'll get a nice giggle out of it.

## Movie Review "Saw IV"

Directed by Darren Lynn Bousman

Lion's Gate

Released: Oct. 26

Rating



# Radiohead's 'In Rainbows' delivers icy sound at any price

BY JONATHAN STUTTE  
Reviewer

Radiohead released "In Rainbows," its seventh studio album, on the Internet with a price tag of however much money you want to spend.

Some people like it. Some people don't. Some people paid a lot. I spent nothing. Why does it matter? It gives independent bands ideas about how to market their music without going through a major label. Labels care. It's an issue, but it's one that isn't relevant to the quality of the music.

Does it matter how the band released the album? Is it worth adding to a collection of mostly pirated MP3s anyway? Pre-release reporters said "In Rainbows" fits neatly between "OK Computer" (Radiohead's third and most critically lauded album) and "Kid A" (Radiohead's next album, a difficult transition into electronica). Sure it might. Really it just sounds like a condensed version of "Hail to the Thief," Radiohead's last studio album. "Hail" was everywhere. It had excess, it had dance numbers, it had meteorite political stratagems attached to guitars and turntables. It sleeps in the trees in one song and burns

them down in the next. "In Rainbows" is nothing like this — or rather it's all of that in a tight little package. "In Rainbows" is coherent. The songs feel like a piece of each other. But should Radiohead's albums really be compared to each other? They all belong in a certain place in time: some on earth and some in space.

With "In Rainbows," Radiohead finally sounds like it feels comfortable in the arctic. "Kid A" was the plunge. "Amnesiac," the follow up, was uneasy living and "Hail" was cabin fever — these are their places in time. This album glistens with

"One might even glimpse the same red, green and blue of heaven's rainbow that Yorke sees at the pearly gates. It's despairing or majestic: Ultimately it's awesome."

the warm glow of all of the icy arctic colors. "15 Step" is the trip to nowhere. It sports a too-cool-for-trip-hop beat, a subway-train guitar and bubbly glitch effects. "Nude" is the approach: Austere glacial strings and naked sirens on cliffs in arctic caves (a concept Radiohead isn't beyond pursuing), embracing lounge jazz at its calmest. "All I Need" could be the northern lights, a low-key fuzzy synth, sounds of a snaky cold wind and of course lead singer Thom Yorke making it all sound wanted with the lyrics, "You are all I need." "Weird Fishes/Arpeggi" is a trip through

shimmering green caves with chiming guitars, Yorke's echoes coming from deep within the caves and drums propelling the vessel around every turn.

"Reckoner" sounds like being lost in Antarctica or adrift in the Arctic Circle. It doesn't move far in four minutes, revolving around a simple guitar riff and Thom Yorke's rise-and-fall vocals. "House of Cards" is the resignation to confinement. The guitar is the only thing that sounds close to the listener. Yorke's echoing vocals sound near but originating from afar. Guitar distortion creeps up, driving around the left channel and into the center like a violent wind miles away.

"Videotape" is the song to buy the album for when it's released on vinyl or CD. It's an unnerving vision of being caught between heaven and hell and belongs in a Charlie

Kaufman film ("Adaptation," "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind"), signaling the imprecise beauty of death. Listening to the piano is like sinking into the arctic green waters being pulled to the deepest parts of earth but hoping for heaven. The double-tracked drum could be any sound echoing ever more through the water the deeper one sinks. One might even glimpse the same red, green and blue of heaven's rainbow that Yorke sees at the pearly gates. It's despairing or majestic: Ultimately it's awesome.

The disparate sounds and music techniques Radiohead has been working with since "Kid A" finally have come together in a coherent and positively beautiful pop album. It's certainly not a masterpiece, but there's nothing like it this side of pop.

## Music Review

"In Rainbows"

Radiohead

Label: Radiohead

Released: Oct. 10

Rating



What's on your

iPod?



Design by Andreea Bailey/Index

## King's Buffet & Restaurant

1707 S. Baltimore

665-6622



**College Student Discount**  
Sunday to Thursday Evening Buffet  
\$6.28 (plus tax)

**Buffet includes:**  
Grand salad bar,  
variety of appetizers,  
cocktail shrimp, sesame shrimp,  
beef, chicken, pork and more,  
ice cream and desserts.

## Chariton Valley Association

**APPLY NOW**

Support Staff  
Part-time Flexible Schedule  
Starting wage \$8.25/hr  
Must be available to work weekends, evenings, nights  
and holidays

**Rewarding Work**

Seeking patient, observant and caring applicants  
to support individuals with disabilities

★ **Successful Applicant** ★

Must be reliable, motivated and have the ability to work independently

**Apply in Person**

Chariton Valley Association for Handicapped Citizens, Inc.

905 E. George  
Kirksville, MO 63501

Equal Opportunity Employer