

The Mill (2023 film)

The Mill is a 2023 American science fiction thriller film directed by Sean King O'Grady and written by Jeffrey David Thomas. It stars Lil Rel Howery, Pat Healy, Karen Obilom, and Patrick Fischler. It began streaming on Hulu on October 9, 2023.

Plot

Joe, an employee of the Mallard Corporation, wakes up in a strange courtyard with no recollection of his arrival. As Joe seeks help, he hears the voice of another inmate who explains some — but not all — of the circumstances of the prisoners ("employees"). Any attempts to escape or ask for help during food deliveries results in further isolation. Joe and the other employees' primary task is pushing a millstone in order to reach the targeted quota. He faces the daily pressure of meeting the deadline, and failure carries severe consequences.

Over time, Joe's physical and mental strength are continuously tested. Despite exhaustion and distressing hallucinations, he remains determined to reunite with his pregnant wife, Kate. Joe confronts the malevolent AI orchestrating his ordeal, making a plea for freedom and reuniting with his wife. The AI, now threatened, concedes to his request.

It turns out that Joe has been part of an augmented reality as part of Mallard's training. After he secures his position and reassures contact with Kate, Joe then plots to expose Mallard's wrongdoings.

Cast

- Lil Rel Howery as Joe
- Pat Healy as a guard
- Karen Obilom as Kate
- Patrick Fischler as a neighbor

Production

In February 2023, *Deadline Hollywood* reported that the film was "recently-wrapped" and was shot in New Jersey.^[1]

O'Grady and Howery had previously worked together in the comedy film *I Love My Dad* (2022), in which the former produced and the latter played a supporting role. In an interview with

The Mill



Promotional release poster

Directed by	Sean King O'Grady
Written by	Jeffrey David Thomas
Produced by	Lil Rel Howery <div>Josh FeldmanSean King O'GradyJesse FordBarbara GoldnerBrooke Goldner</div>
Starring	Lil Rel Howery <div>Pat HealyKaren ObilomPatrick Fischler</div>
Cinematography	Seamus Tierney
Edited by	Shane Patrick Ford
Music by	David Chapdelaine

MovieWeb, O'Grady said that he wanted to collaborate with Howery again but in a drama film rather than a comedy. Upon reading the screenplay of *The Mill*, O'Grady had Howery in mind as his first choice for the lead.^[2] O'Grady said in an interview with Blavity that he "read (the screenplay) in a night", after producer Josh Feldman shared it with him.^[3] O'Grady also said in an interview with Comic Book Resources that the screenplay he read was Jeffrey David Thomas's first draft.^[4]

According to O'Grady, Howery chose not to know where the filming location was set and was literally blindfolded as he entered the set.^{[3][5]}

Production companies	<u>20th Digital Studio</u> <u>Hulu Originals</u> Altar Rock Pictures
Distributed by	<u>Hulu</u>
Release date	October 9, 2023
Running time	106 minutes
Country	United States
Language	English

Release

The film was released on Hulu on October 9, 2023.^{[6][2]}

Reception

On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, 42% of 12 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 6/10.^[7]

Nick Allen of RogerEbert.com gave the film a score of two out of four.^[8] Tyler Nichols of JoBlo.com gave the film a positive review and wrote, "Unless they're given a theatrical release, Hulu Horror films often miss the mark, so I went into this with very low expectations. Thankfully this provided a smart and poignant thriller that really takes aim at a lot of issues going on in society today".^[9] Brandon Yu of *The New York Times* gave the film a negative review, writing, "The film lacks any well-executed surprises to help it push past one-dimensional satire, and Howery is not strong enough of a dramatic actor to keep a single-setting, single-character film like this consistently engaging".^[10]

References

- Grobar, Matt (February 1, 2023). "Lil Rel Howery To Topline Hulu Sci-Fi Thriller 'The Mill'; Scoot McNairy, Pat Healy Among Others Set – First Look" (<https://deadline.com/2023/02/lil-rel-howery-to-star-in-the-mill-also-producing-hulu-sci-fi-thriller-1235246580/>). *Deadline Hollywood*. Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20231009182946/https://deadline.com/2023/02/lil-rel-howery-to-star-in-the-mill-also-producing-hulu-sci-fi-thriller-1235246580/>) from the original on October 9, 2023. Retrieved October 4, 2023.
- Mahler, Matthew (October 6, 2023). "Exclusive: The Mill Director Wants to Change Your Life and Break the System" (<https://movieweb.com/the-mill-sean-king-ogrady-interview/>). *MovieWeb*. Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20231018054842/https://movieweb.com/the-mill-sean-king-ogrady-interview/>) from the original on October 18, 2023. Retrieved October 8, 2023.
- Yates, Shanique (October 9, 2023). "'THE MILL' DIRECTOR RECALLS LIL REL HOWERY'S DECISION TO REMAIN BLINDFOLDED UNTIL PRODUCTION BEGAN FOR THE SCI-FI THRILLER" (<https://blavity.com/entertainment/the-mill-lil-rel-howery-hulu>). *Blavity*. Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20231014220936/https://blavity.com/entertainment/the-mill-lil-rel-howery-hulu>) from the original on October 14, 2023. Retrieved October 12, 2023.

4. Doll, Katie (October 9, 2023). "The Mill Director Sean King O'Grady Teases a 'Vampiric' Corporation" (<https://www.cbr.com/the-mill-sean-king-ogradys-interview/>). *Comic Book Resources*. Retrieved May 6, 2024.
5. Foertsch, Rachel (October 13, 2023). "The Mill Director On Collaborating With Lil Rel Howery For New Horror Film" (<https://screenrant.com/the-mill-movie-sean-king-ogradys-interview/>). *Screen Rant*. Retrieved May 6, 2024.
6. Collis, Clark (September 27, 2023). "Get Out star Lil Rel Howery faces a different kind of horror in The Mill trailer" (<https://ew.com/movies/lil-rel-howery-the-mill-trailer-hulu/>). *Entertainment Weekly*. Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20230930134217/https://ew.com/movies/lil-rel-howery-the-mill-trailer-hulu/>) from the original on September 30, 2023. Retrieved October 4, 2023.
7. "The Mill" (https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/the_mill_2023). *Rotten Tomatoes*. *Fandango Media*. Retrieved December 1, 2023.
8. Allen, Nick (October 9, 2023). "The Mill" (<https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/the-mill-movie-review-2023>). *RogerEbert.com*. Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20231010022005/https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/the-mill-movie-review-2023>) from the original on October 10, 2023. Retrieved October 9, 2023.
9. Nichols, Tyler (October 8, 2023). "The Mill Review" (<https://www.joblo.com/the-mill-review/>). *JoBlo.com*. Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20231009182945/https://www.joblo.com/the-mill-review/>) from the original on October 9, 2023. Retrieved October 8, 2023.
10. Yu, Brandon (October 9, 2023). "The Mill Review: A Cog in the Machine" (<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/09/movies/the-mill-review.html>). *The New York Times*. Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20231009123106/https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/09/movies/the-mill-review.html>) from the original on October 9, 2023. Retrieved October 9, 2023.

External links

- *The Mill* (<https://www.hulu.com/movie/the-mill-31c7f583-c7de-4fa4-82bc-27e7550d31db>) on Hulu
 - *The Mill* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt26569323/>) at IMDb
-

Retrieved from "[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=The_Mill_\(2023_film\)&oldid=1224624510](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=The_Mill_(2023_film)&oldid=1224624510)"

▪