

Freelance (2023 film)

Freelance is a 2023 American action film directed by Pierre Morel and written by Jacob Lentz in his feature writing debut. It stars John Cena, Alison Brie, Juan Pablo Raba, and Christian Slater.

Plot

Mason Pettits is a former U.S. Army Special Forces operator, who was injured and medically discharged after a failed mission to assassinate Juan Venegas, the dictator of the South American country of Paldonia. After being discharged, Pettits works as a lawyer, a job he despises. One day, Mason is approached by his former team member, Sebastian Earle, who offers him a highly paid private security job where he has to protect disgraced journalist Claire Wellington as she goes to Paldonia to interview Venegas. The mission upsets his wife Jenny, who doesn't want their daughter Casey to live without a father, should something happen.

After arriving in Paldonia and meeting Venegas, they are ambushed by a militant group that tries to kill Venegas, destroying their vehicles in the process. Mason fights off the assailants and they escape into the jungle. Venegas deduces that their attackers were his own soldiers, and that the assassination attempt is actually a coup orchestrated by his nephew Jorge, who is working with a South African mercenary named Colonel Jan Koehorst to kill him. Mason tries to leave Venegas behind while bringing Claire with him, but the two are ambushed by mercenaries. Mason, with a little help from Venegas, fights them off, and the group arrives at a village where Venegas is highly respected.

Claire successfully films her interview with Venegas. While Mason bonds further with Claire, he is unable to start a relationship with her despite her advances, remembering his family back home. The next day, Venegas hints at a real purpose for Mason's job - Mason calls Sebastian, who informs him that he was actually hired to kill Venegas. Jan and his men subsequently arrive at the village and chase the group; Mason and Venegas manage to escape while Claire is captured.



Theatrical release poster

Directed by	Pierre Morel
Written by	Jacob Lentz
Produced by	Jacob Lentz <div> <div>Chris Milburn</div> <div>Renee Tab</div> <div>Christopher Tuffin</div> <div>Steve Richards</div> </div>
Starring	John Cena <div> <div>Alison Brie</div> <div>Juan Pablo Raba</div> <div>Christian Slater</div> </div>
Cinematography	Thierry Arbogast
Edited by	Chris Tonick
Music by	Elliot Leung <div> <div>Geoff Zanelli</div> <div>(themes)</div> </div>
Production companies	AGC Studios

While on the way to Paldonia's capital, Venegas reveals that he wasn't responsible for killing Mason's friends during their mission. Later, the two stage a trade with Claire, while Venegas reveals that the revolution against his regime is actually controlled opposition. The next day, during said trade, Venegas brings in revolutionary protestors to distract Jan as he, Mason, and Claire run to the presidential palace. There, Venegas convinces Jorge to help him lead the country better, but the latter is killed when General Martínez, another conspirator, tries to shoot Venegas.

Jan and his men arrive at the palace, and a shootout ensues between them and Venegas' palace guards, during which Mason fights Jan alone. Jan reveals that he was responsible for killing Mason's crew. Claire, who films the battle, helps Mason defeat Jan. Afterwards, Sebastian and his team arrive and fight Jan's militants.

Some time later, Claire has regained fame for her footage in Paldonia, Venegas resigns from being dictator, and Mason reunites with his family before being gifted \$5 million by Venegas. Now with a newfound purpose on his life, Mason decides to spend more time with his family.

	Endurance Media
Distributed by	<u>Relativity Media</u>
Release date	October 27, 2023
Running time	109 minutes ^[1]
Country	United States
Language	English
Budget	\$40 million
Box office	\$9.7 million ^{[2][3]}

Cast

- John Cena as Mason Pettits, a medically retired Army Special Forces and now lawyer
- Alison Brie as Claire Wellington, a journalist
- Juan Pablo Raba as President Juan Venegas
- Christian Slater as Sebastian Earle, Mason's boss, and former Army Special Forces
- Alice Eve as Jenny Pettits, Mason's wife
- Marton Csokas as Colonel Jan Koehorst
- Sebastián Eslava as Jorge Vásquez

Production

Freelance is the feature writing debut of television screenwriter Jacob Lentz. The film was announced on October 6, 2021, with Pierre Morel directing and John Cena attached to star. The film was reported to have a budget of at least \$40 million.^{[4][5]} In January 2022, Alison Brie,^[6] Juan Pablo Raba,^[7] Alice Eve, Marton Csokas,^[8] and Bright shongwe joined the cast.^[9] Filming began in Colombia on January 17, 2022, with cinematographer Thierry Arbogast, and wrapped in April 2022.^[10]

Release

Freelance was released in theaters by Relativity Media on October 27, 2023.^[11] It was released on premium video on demand on November 28, 2023 with a DVD and Blu-ray release date of March 12, 2024.^[12]

Reception

Box office

The film made \$880,000 from 2,057 theaters in its first day, and went on to debut to \$2.1 million, finishing in seventh.^[13]

Critical response

Freelance was largely panned by critics. On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, 8% of 37 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 3.2/10. The website's consensus reads: "Much like a real-life *Freelance* gig, this sodden action comedy offers no benefits."^[14] Metacritic, which uses a weighted average, assigned the film a score of 22 out of 100, based on 12 critics, indicating "generally unfavorable" reviews.^[15] Audiences surveyed by CinemaScore gave the film an average grade of "B−" on an A+ to F scale, while those polled at PostTrak gave it an 58% overall positive score, with 27% saying they would definitely recommend the film.^[13]

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External links

- *Freelance* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt15744298/>) at *IMDb*
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