

Interceptor (film)

Interceptor is a 2022 action thriller film directed by Matthew Reilly in his directorial debut, from a screenplay by Reilly and Stuart Beattie and a story by Reilly. An international co-production between Australia and the United States, the film stars Elsa Pataky and Luke Bracey. It follows a tough and reality-bruised army officer who finds herself in charge of a lone nuclear missile interceptor base in the middle of the Pacific Ocean after she is wrongfully drummed out of her dream job at the Pentagon.

The film began streaming on Netflix on June 3, 2022, and climbed to number one on the streamer's top 10 list with about 50 million hours viewed.^[3] It received mixed reviews from critics, and was nominated for Best Production Design at the 12th AACTA Awards.

Plot

The United States has two interceptor launch sites aimed at intercepting any nuclear warhead launches; the first, Fort Greely in Alaska, is attacked by unknown assailants presumably affiliated with a terrorist faction, while 16 nuclear warheads are simultaneously seized from Russian territory. The second site is a remote platform in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. U.S. Army Captain J. J. Collins is recently reassigned to the latter of the two interceptor missile launch sites. Following a high-profile case where she reported sexual misconduct by her superior, she experienced hazing, bullying and threats and a new deployment as retaliation.

Under Lt. Colonel Marshall, and working alongside Cpl. Beaver Baker and Cpl. Rahul Shah in the station's command center, Collins is part of the last line of defense after the hostile takeover of Fort Greely. The station is infiltrated by a small group of operatives led by ex-military intelligence soldier Kessel, who promptly kill Marshall and the other occupants of the base, leaving only Collins, Shah, and an unconscious Beaver (who was grazed by a stray bullet) in the command center. The infiltrators attempt to enter the command center, by which they can disarm the interceptor system and leave the U.S. open to nuclear attack from the sixteen stolen warheads. However, they are rebuffed and attempt to forcibly enter instead with blowtorches. An operative launches a surprise attack after entering via a floor hatch, but is defeated and killed by Collins

Interceptor



Official promotional poster

Directed by	<u>Matthew Reilly</u>
Screenplay by	<u>Matthew Reilly</u> <u>Stuart Beattie</u>
Story by	<u>Matthew Reilly</u>
Produced by	<u>Michael Boughen</u> <u>Matthew Street</u> <u>Stuart Beattie</u>
Starring	<u>Elsa Pataky</u> <u>Luke Bracey</u>
Cinematography	<u>Ross Emery</u>
Edited by	<u>Rowan Maher</u>
Music by	<u>Michael Lira</u>
Production companies	<u>Ambience</u> <u>Entertainment</u> <u>Foryor</u> <u>Entertainment</u>
Distributed by	<u>Netflix</u>
Release date	June 3, 2022

and Shah. Beaver regains consciousness and reveals himself to be an inside man for the infiltrators and motivated by a big payday and xenophobia, holding both Collins and Shah at gunpoint while allowing Kessel and the remaining operatives to enter and assume control.

Running time	92 minutes ^[1]
Countries	Australia United States
Language	English
Budget	\$15 million ^[2]

Kessel hijacks a live feed and streams his manifesto about the failures in the history of the United States online, naming the sixteen American cities to be destroyed, and instructing the terrorist faction to launch the nukes immediately. Collins breaks free of her restraints and locks Kessel, Beaver, and a henchman back out of the command center, while defeating and killing Kira, the lone enemy operative still in the room, and another henchman. Kessel attempts to force Collins to surrender, torturing her father, but she refuses and her father is apparently killed when the transmission is cut. Kessel then plans to scuttle the station if he cannot take control of it. As the station begins to sink, Shah volunteers to drop through the floor hatch to the ocean below and manually re-engage the station's hatches, such that the interceptors are still able to launch and destroy the warheads when they eventually pass through the airspace overhead. Shah succeeds, but he is killed by Beaver.

Collins hides in the command center and letting Kessel, Beaver, and the remaining henchman take over and disable the seemingly empty center. Her ruse works, with Beaver going to check up on the station's roof to find and eliminate her. Collins is able to stealthily dispatch the remaining henchman while Kessel flees the room. Grabbing a laptop, Collins ascends to the roof and plugs the device in, hoping to manually launch the interceptor missiles using this method. She is found by Beaver and they engage in hand to hand combat, with Collins emerging victorious after using razor wire to decapitate Beaver. Kessel, who had called in a Russian submarine to pick up the team of operatives earlier, finds Collins just as she successfully launches the interceptor missiles with a fraction of a second left before the nukes would have crossed the point of interception. His plan failed, he engages in combat with Collins, who manages to defeat and subdue him, just as the Russian submarine ascends from the sea. A pair of Russians emerge from the submarine tower, but rather than shooting Collins, they fire at Kessel instead, and the Russian Captain salutes Collins before departing.

Collins later recovers from her ordeal in the hospital, and she is personally given a promotion by the U.S. president for her efforts. She also receives a visit of her father who had been rescued by friends who had witnessed his plight on the live broadcast, and he comforts her over her grief for Shah's death.

Cast

- Elsa Pataky as Captain Joanna Julia "J.J." Collins
- Luke Bracey as Alexander Kessel
- Aaron Glenane as Beaver Baker
- Mayen Mehta as Corporal Rahul Shah
- Rhys Muldoon as Lieutenant Colonel Clark Marshall
- Belinda Jombwe as Ensign Washington
- Marcus Johnson as General Dyson
- Colin Friels as Frank Collins
- Zoe Carides as President Wallace
- Janelle McMenamin as Fox News Anchor
- Nick Barker-Pendree as CNN News Anchor

In addition, Mark Dessaix plays the dismissive game theory strategist advising the President, while Chris Hemsworth appears in an uncredited cameo as the laid-back salesman at a big box consumer electronics store.

Production

Reilly began writing the screenplay for *Interceptor* in 2017. The script's action took place predominantly on one set, as Reilly wanted to ensure that the film's budget would not go over \$15 million. Beattie was so sold on the script that he contacted Reilly asking if he could rewrite it, to which the latter agreed.^{[4][5]} Beattie shared the script with producers, who were told that Reilly intended to serve as director. Reilly experienced some pushback on this, but was successful in maintaining his position as director.

On March 4, 2021, it was announced that Elsa Pataky and Luke Bracey would star in the film, with Beattie producing with Matthew Street and Michael Boughen for Ambience Entertainment.^{[6][7]} Pataky prepared for the role by training for up to five hours each day with the help of her husband, Chris Hemsworth,^[8] who served as an executive producer and also had an uncredited cameo role as a salesman for an electronics store.^{[9][10]}

Filming took place in New South Wales, Australia over a period of 33 days,^[4] beginning on March 29, 2021.^[11]

Release

Interceptor was released globally on Netflix on 3 June 2022.^[5] Plans to release the film theatrically in Australia in 2021 were announced,^[12] but fell through. The film instead had a short theatrical release in Australia on 26 May 2022, the week before its worldwide Netflix release.^[13]

Reception

Critical response

On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, 44% of 45 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 4.7/10. The website's consensus reads: "*Interceptor* might spark a flicker of interest in viewers jonesing for a no-nonsense action thriller, but there's nothing here they haven't seen before."^[14] Metacritic, which uses a weighted average, assigned the film a score of 51 out of 100, based on 6 critics, indicating "mixed or average" reviews.^[15]

Paul Byrnes of *The Sydney Morning Herald* gave the film three-and-a-half stars out of five and wrote, "Parts of it are laughably silly, but that's intentional. It's not quite a satire, having some Serious Things to say, but mostly it's a romp."^[16] Nicolas Rapold of *The New York Times* stated that it "is clunky and barely coherent anytime there's not a fight scene."^[17] Benjamin Lee of *The Guardian* gave the film three stars out of five and called it "absurd yet entertaining."^[18]

Accolades

Year	Award	Category	Recipient	Result
2022	Screen Music Awards	Feature Film Score of The Year	Michael Lira	Nominated
	AACTA Awards	Best Production Design in Film	George Liddle	Nominated

References

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External links

- *Interceptor* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt14174940/>) at *IMDb*
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