

= The Watch ( 2012 film ) =

The Watch ( previously known as Neighborhood Watch ) is a 2012 American science fiction comedy film directed by Akiva Schaffer and written by Jared Stern , Seth Rogen and Evan Goldberg . It stars Ben Stiller , Vince Vaughn , Jonah Hill and Richard Ayoade . The film follows Evan ( Stiller ) , Bob ( Vaughn ) , Franklin ( Hill ) , and Jamarcus ( Ayoade ) , a group of neighbors who form a suburban neighborhood watch group . When they uncover an alien plot threatening the world , they are forced into action .

The film began its development in 2008 under producer Shawn Levy as a teen @-@ targeted project written by Jared Stern . Between 2009 and late 2010 it saw different directors and stars join the project until November 2010 , when it moved in a new direction under Rogen and Goldberg ( who rewrote the script for an adult audience ) . Filming began in October 2011 in the state of Georgia , concluding in January 2012 .

The film 's marketing campaign was affected by the 2012 shooting of Trayvon Martin by a neighborhood @-@ watch member . As a result , the campaign was refocused on the alien premise instead of the film leads and the film 's name was changed from Neighborhood Watch to The Watch . Released on July 27 , 2012 , the film received generally negative reviews , with critics focusing on the plot , frequent " vulgar and offensive " jokes and numerous product placements . However , the lead cast was more positively received .

= = Plot = =

In the town of Glenview , Ohio , Evan Trautwig ( Ben Stiller ) is an active participant in the community and senior manager of the local Costco store . His life is disrupted when the store 's night security guard is murdered . The local police have no leads , and show no interest in investigating further . Determined to find the killer and bring him to justice , Evan decides to form a neighborhood watch . However , he only manages to recruit Bob ( Vince Vaughn ) , a construction worker and loving father ; Franklin ( Jonah Hill ) , a high school dropout who dreams of being a police officer but failed the written , physical , and mental @-@ health tests ; and Jamarcus ( Richard Ayoade ) , a recent divorcé .

The watch members use the group as an excuse to drink and have fun ( much to Evan 's annoyance ) . While driving on patrol , they accidentally hit something . They discover a strange metallic orb that acts as a highly @-@ destructive weapon , and deduce that it is of alien origin . Meanwhile , several more townspeople are mysteriously killed . The watch responds to the murders and encounters an alien , which attacks them . Evan ( apparently ) kills it with a lawn gnome before the group returns with the creature to Bob 's house . The creature regains consciousness and escapes , stealing the metallic orb and warning them that the aliens have already infiltrated the town . The watch theorizes that the aliens are stealing their victims ' skin and disguising themselves as humans , so anyone in Glenview could be an alien . Bob confides to Evan that he is worried about his daughter Chelsea ( Erin Moriarty ) , and does not trust her boyfriend Jason ( Nicholas Braun ) . Evan admits that he has been avoiding his wife Abby ( Rosemarie DeWitt ) because he is infertile , and revealing that it may cause her to leave .

Evan suspects that one of his neighbors is an alien ( due to his strange , stiff way of speaking and because he always seems to be watching him ) . As the watch scouts the neighbor 's house , Bob learns that Chelsea is at an unsupervised party with Jason . Bob disobeys Evan 's orders , and rushes to the party with Franklin . Bob prevents Jason from raping Chelsea , but Jason beats him until Franklin intervenes . Evan and Jamarcus investigate the odd neighbor alone , discovering that he ( only ) hosts orgies in his basement . When Bob returns , he and Evan argue over his putting his daughter above the watch . Bob is fired from the watch after saying Evan has no friends because he tries to control everything . Evan goes home and admits his infertility to Abby , who accepts the news and tells him they will work things out .

Evan then receives an urgent visit from Jamarcus , who confesses that he is one of the aliens but has decided to side with humanity after experiencing human culture ( and oral sex ) . He warns the

group that the aliens are building a transmitter ( beneath the Costco store ) which will summon their armada to destroy the earth , and is expelled from the watch for his deception . Bob , Franklin , Evan and Abby arm themselves and infiltrate the Costco to destroy the transmitter . Bob encounters Jason who reveals that he is also an alien , and they fight . Evan and Franklin attempt to disable the transmitter , but are surrounded by aliens . Jamarcus arrives and saves the pair , revealing that the aliens ' brains are located in their crotch ; Bob kills Jason by ripping off his penis . Evan discovers that the transmitter is powered by the metallic orb and removes it , disabling the machine . More aliens arrive , forcing the group to flee . The watch uses the metallic orb to destroy the Costco building , killing all of the aliens inside .

In the epilogue , Evan and Abby rekindle their passion and adopt a daughter . Bob is closer to Chelsea and accepts her new boyfriend ( who is intimidated by stories of how Bob killed Jason by " ripping his dick off " ) . Franklin is finally accepted by the Glenview Police Department , and Jamarcus continues participating in the secret neighborhood orgies . The group maintains the watch , continuing to protect Glenview from criminals ( and aliens ) .

= = Cast = =

Ben Stiller as Evan Trautwig , a Costco manager and suburban resident who forms a neighborhood watch after his friend is murdered ; he keeps forming new groups because he has no friends .

Vince Vaughn as Bob McAllister , a resident who uses the watch to spy on his teenage daughter ; Vaughn began negotiations to star in June 2011 . The character 's relationship with his daughter is what convinced Vaughn to take the role .

Jonah Hill as Franklin , a resident with emotional problems who joins the watch after being rejected by the local police force ; Hill 's involvement was confirmed in August 2011 . His prior commitment to The Watch forced him to decline a role in Quentin Tarantino 's Django Unchained , which he had considered " the perfect next step " following his 2011 Academy Award nomination . However , he later secured a role in the film . Hill spent two weeks learning to use a balisong knife for his character .

Richard Ayoade as Jamarcus , a recently divorced resident ; Chris Tucker was considered for the role before Ayoade was signed .

Rosemarie DeWitt as Abby Trautwig ( Evan 's wife )

The cast also includes Erin Moriarty ( as Chelsea McAllister , Bob 's daughter ) , Nicholas Braun ( as Jason , Chelsea 's boyfriend ) , Will Forte ( as Sergeant Bressman ) , Mel Rodriguez ( as his partner Chucho ) , Doug Jones ( as the chief alien villain ) , R. Lee Ermey as Manfred Salisbury ( a local resident ) and Joseph A. Nunez as Antonio Guzman ( Evan 's colleague , whose murder inspires him to start the neighborhood watch ) . Billy Crudup appears ( uncredited ) as Evan 's " creepy neighbor " , Paul . Director Akiva Schaffer and his collaborators in the comedy troupe The Lonely Island , Andy Samberg and Jorma Taccone , make cameo appearances in the film as masturbating participants in Paul 's orgy .

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

The film began its development as Neighborhood Watch in early 2008 , with Levy developing the project over three years ( based on an idea by 20th Century Fox executive John Fox ) . Levy described his original vision as a " PG @-@ 13 kind of Ghostbusters @-@ y thing . " The original screenplay was written by Jared Stern . In May 2009 , David Dobkin and Will Ferrell were negotiating to direct and star , respectively ( with Dobkin 's involvement progressing to revising Stern 's script ) . However , by August Dobkin and Ferrell had left the project .

In December 2009 Peter Segal was in negotiations to direct the film , but by November 2010 the project had not named a director . Also in November , Seth Rogen and Evan Goldberg were brought

onto the project to rewrite the script as an adult @-@ oriented , R @-@ rated film . By June 2011 , Saturday Night Live alumnus Akiva Schaffer was given the option to direct his second feature film ( following the 2007 comedy Hot Rod ) . On May 4 , 2012 ( two months before the film 's release ) , it was renamed The Watch .

### = = = Filming = = =

Principal photography began in October 2011 in Georgia , with filming occurring in Atlanta ( including Inman Park ) and several areas in Cobb County ( including the Oakleigh , Echo Mill , and Amberton subdivisions in the city of Powder Springs ) . Filming also took place at Marietta Square in the city of Marietta , where businesses were renamed and an alley behind Hemingway 's Bar & Grill was treated to artificially age the buildings . One of the Marietta scenes filmed involved a young boy on a skateboard being abducted by aliens . Scenes were also filmed in the Brookhaven community . On October 25 , 2011 , a casting call was made for extras to fill the football stadium during two nights of filming on November 2 ? 3 at Campbell High School in Smyrna , Georgia . On November 23 , 2011 a minor , walk @-@ on role in the film was auctioned to benefit the Stiller Foundation ; the role was sold for \$ 23 @,@ 000 to an undisclosed bidder .

In late November 2011 , the site of a former BJ 's Wholesale Club in Norcross , Georgia was converted in appearance to a Costco for shooting . On January 23 , 2012 , Hill announced that filming had concluded . Multiple scene takes were made , allowing the cast to follow the script as written and inject their own improvisations . Special effects company Legacy Effects provided creature designs and effects for the aliens . The alien costume featured an animatronic head , remotely controlled by three people . The suit was hot even in cold areas , and had to be unzipped to let Doug Jones cool off between takes . The costume was enhanced with CGI in a number of ways , including replacing arms and dilating pupils ( which Schaffer thought made the creature seem more alive ) .

### = = = Marketing = = =

The Neighborhood Watch marketing campaign began on February 29 , 2012 with the release of a teaser poster , trailer and the unveiling of the film 's website , [jointhewatch.com](http://jointhewatch.com). The film 's trailer was nominated for a Golden Trailer award , recognizing achievements in marketing . On March 27 , 2012 , it was reported that 20th Century Fox had the poster and trailer removed from Florida theaters in response to increasing controversy surrounding the February shooting death of Trayvon Martin in Sanford , Florida by neighborhood @-@ watch captain George Zimmerman . The trailer featured Hill imitating a gun with his hand pretending to shoot at teenagers , while the poster featured a bullet @-@ ridden , alien @-@ themed neighborhood @-@ watch sign . According to insiders Fox intended to move into the next phase of the marketing campaign as soon as possible ( focusing on the film 's science @-@ fiction aspects ) , while replacing previous posters with images of the cast . Fox maintained that the July 27 , 2012 , release date would remain unchanged by the Martin case or the marketing changes .

In a statement about the changes Fox said , " We are very sensitive to the Trayvon Martin case , but our film is a broad alien @-@ invasion comedy and bears absolutely no relation to the tragic events in Florida ... these initial marketing materials were released before this incident ever came to light . The teaser materials were part of an early phase of our marketing and were never planned for long @-@ term use . " The alien @-@ focused campaign began on May 4 , 2012 with the release of a new trailer , coinciding with Fox 's changing the film 's title to The Watch to further distance the film from the Martin case .

### = = Release = =

The premiere of The Watch took place on July 23 , 2012 at Grauman 's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood . It was released in North America on July 27 , 2012 . On July 25 , Harkins Theatres ( the

sixth @-@ largest North American cinema chain ) announced it would not be showing the film after failing to reach a financial agreement with Fox .

= = = Box office = = =

The film earned \$ 35 @.@ 4 million in North America and \$ 32 @.@ 9 million from markets elsewhere for a worldwide total of \$ 68 @.@ 3 million . In the week before release , pre @-@ release tracking showed that up to 25 percent of North American audiences were reluctant to visit cinemas following the mass murder in a Colorado cinema the previous week . This , plus competition from the simultaneous launch of the 2012 Summer Olympics , would negatively impact ticket sales for The Watch . Tracking showed that the film could earn \$ 13 ? 15 million during its opening weekend .

The film earned an estimated \$ 4 @.@ 5 million on its opening day . During its opening weekend it earned \$ 12 @.@ 7 million from 3 @,@ 168 theaters ? an average of \$ 4 @,@ 025 per theater ? ranking third behind Ice Age : Continental Drift ( \$ 13 @.@ 3 million ) and The Dark Knight Rises ( \$ 62 @.@ 1 million ) . The largest segments of the opening @-@ weekend audience were over age 25 ( 59 % ) and male ( 60 % ) . The film left theaters on October 18 , 2012 ( after 12 weeks ) with a total gross of \$ 35 @.@ 3 million .

Outside North America , the film had its most successful opening weekends in the United Kingdom ( \$ 3 @.@ 5 million ) , Australia ( \$ 1 @.@ 8 million ) and Russia ( \$ 1 @.@ 3 million ) . These countries also represented its largest total grosses , with \$ 6 million from the UK , \$ 5 @.@ 9 million from Australia and \$ 3 @.@ 2 million from Russia .

= = = Critical reception = = =

The Watch received negative reviews from critics . On the review @-@ aggregate website Rotten Tomatoes , it has garnered a 17 % approval rating from 154 reviews , with an average rating of 4 / 10 . The site 's critical consensus reads , " The Watch uneasily mixes sci @-@ fi elements with gross @-@ out gags and strands its talented cast with a script that favors vulgarity over wit at nearly every turn . " Metacritic gave it a score of 36 out of 100 , from 35 critics , indicating " generally unfavorable reviews " . CinemaScore polls reported that the average grade moviegoers gave the film was a " C + " on an A + to F scale .

The Hollywood Reporter 's Sheri Linden described the film as feeling like " part three of a past @-@ its @-@ prime franchise " , criticizing the plot as moving " lazily from setup to punchline to setup , with no particular point and almost no punch " . Roger Ebert awarded the film 2 out of 4 stars , stating that the film " has lots of energy but not much inspiration " . Ebert commented that the comic timing of the lead actors benefits the dialog , but frequent instances of " crude , vulgar and offensive " comedy became unwelcome and unamusing . The Rolling Stone 's Peter Travers awarded the film 1 @.@ 5 out of 4 stars , stating that it should have been a " Ghostbusters lite " and " should be crazy , stupid fun but settles for just stupid . " He was also critical of the use of Costco in the plot , which he considered product placement . However , he praised Hill 's " scene @-@ stealing " performance .

Entertainment Weekly 's Lisa Schwarzbaum commented that the film struggles to find a " coherent " style between the " PG @-@ 13 rated aliens " and adult themes and dialogue . The A.V. Club 's Keith Phipps also unfavorably compared the film to Ghostbusters , stating that it struggles to replicate that film 's successful formula but fails to innovate with the story or characters . He also criticized the frequent Costco promotion . Phipps praised Ayoade : " ... he lends an unpredictable element to the group dynamic , and to the film . It ? s the sort of performance that ought to be plucked for use in another , better movie . " Variety 's Justin Chang complimented the interaction between the four leads , but criticized the film for relegating ethnic characters to murder victims and female characters " to be protected or consoled " . He described the film as a " lowbrow , lame @-@ brained mash @-@ up of buddies @-@ on @-@ patrol comedy and sci @-@ fi actioner , held together ( barely ) by an endless string of penis jokes " . However , he praised Ayoade 's " mellow ,

nerdy @-@ funky appeal [ that represents ] one of the [ film 's ] few novel aspects " .

The Los Angeles Times ' Betsy Sharkey was more positive , stating that " the funniest stuff comes from the kind of situational misfires that can happen when dudes try to do things , like catch aliens , that they are clearly not cut out to do " . She considered that Schaffer 's previous experience directing short comic videos for Saturday Night Live was partially responsible for individual comic moments broken up by transitions where " things tend to fall apart " . Screencrush 's Matt Singer was positive , calling the film funny and praising the improvisational feel of the scenes and " ingenious " set @-@ pieces , but was critical of the promotion of Costco and Costco products throughout . Boxoffice 's James Rocchi offered a positive stance , stating that the " plot moves , the supporting cast is lively and the action stays small @-@ scale and intimate , never overwhelming the laughs " ; he felt that the profanity and vulgarity never became " stale " . Rocchi , however , commented that the film was forgettable and " disposable " .

= = = Accolades = = =

= = = Home media = = =

The Watch was released on DVD , Blu @-@ ray disc and digital download on November 13 , 2012 . The DVD version contains deleted scenes , a gag reel , the theatrical trailer and feature videos " Alien Invasions & You " and " Casting the Alien " . The Blu @-@ ray disc contains the DVD content , a digital copy of the film and two additional features : " Jonah Alternate Takes " and " Watchmakers . "