

## **'Crossing Over': Looks like we've been here before**

USA TODAY

February 27, 2009 Friday, FINAL EDITION

Copyright 2009 Gannett Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved

**Section:** LIFE; Pg. 10D

**Length:** 418 words

**Byline:** Claudia Puig

### **Body**

---

**Crossing Over** has hurtled into Crash territory, and the smash-up is not a happy collision.

In its tale of immigrants seeking citizenship and pursuing the American dream in Los Angeles, **Crossing Over** brings to mind that 2005 film, and its interweaving tales have a whiff of 2006's Babel. But **Crossing Over** doesn't come close to the power and emotional resonance of either.

While Crash's intertwined story lines went in unexpected directions and Babel packed an emotional wallop, much of what occurs in **Crossing Over** is predictable and leaves the viewer unmoved.

Immigration is a worthy topic, but writer/director Wayne Kramer doesn't add any insight. Instead, he offers a collection of characters who feel more **like** types than real people and a story filled with coincidences. It would work much better with about half as many plotlines.

Harrison Ford anchors the cast as a Max, a police officer who handles immigration and customs enforcement. Though his role is intended to be heroic, we don't learn anything about Max beyond his pangs of conscience as he rounds up undocumented workers. His growing distaste for the raids pushes him in directions that are hard to swallow.

A couple of especially unconvincing scenarios involve Hamid (Cliff Curtis), Ford's Iranian-American partner on the immigration beat. He's in a convenience store when an Asian gang bursts in to rob the place. Though he stops much of the crime with force, Hamid chooses to negotiate with a robber and jeopardizes his career. "I think you made a mistake and you will not make a mistake **like** this again," he assures the thug. The exchange is supposed to highlight his empathy, but it feels hollow.

Other plot strands: a British musician (Jim Sturgess) seeking citizenship and an Aussie actress (Alice Eve) who strikes a deal with an immigrations official (Ray Liotta) who takes advantage of her.

The performances are often strong. Lesser-known actors such as Curtis, Sturgess and Summer Bishil (Towelhead) come across better than such veterans as Ford and Liotta. But nearly all characters are underdeveloped.

There is undoubtedly a good movie in the varied experiences of American newcomers. But it would need to involve sagas more urgent and more original.

### **Crossing Over**

Stars: Harrison Ford, Ashley Judd,

Cliff Curtis, Jim Sturgess, Summer Bishil

'Crossing Over': Looks like we've been here before

Director: Wayne Kramer

Distributor: The Weinstein Co.

Rating: R for pervasive language, some strong violence and sexuality/nudity

Running time: 1 hour, 53 minutes

Opens today in New York

and Los Angeles

## Graphic

---

PHOTO, B/W, The Weinstein Co.

## Classification

---

**Language:** ENGLISH

**Publication-Type:** NEWSPAPER

**Subject:** IMMIGRATION (93%); CITIZENSHIP (90%); FOREIGN LABOR (78%); MOVIE RATINGS (77%); FILM (77%); MOVIE REVIEWS (77%); ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS (73%); LAW ENFORCEMENT (73%); WRITERS (71%); SINGERS & MUSICIANS (62%)

**Company:** WEINSTEIN CO LLC (84%)

**Industry:** ACTORS & ACTRESSES (89%); MOVIE RATINGS (77%); MOVIE REVIEWS (77%); WRITERS (71%); SINGERS & MUSICIANS (62%); CONVENIENCE STORES (50%)

**Person:** ASHLEY JUDD (78%)

**Geographic:** CALIFORNIA, USA (79%); NEW YORK, USA (76%)

**Load-Date:** February 27, 2009