By PATRICK HALL
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There’s no sugar-coating anything in **Quentin Tarantino’s** new film “Django Unchained,” nor should there be, and the movie is downright awesome, hilarious and so brutally honest that it is impossible to ignore when looking for the best movie of 2012.

In 1858, German bounty-hunter Dr. King Shultz (**Christoph Waltz**) encounters the slave Django (**Jamie Foxx**) and sets him free to help find three outlaws to collect the bounty. Along the way, Django and Shultz turn to freeing Django’s wife Broomhilda from the brutal Mississippi plantation owner Calvin Candie (
Leonardo DiCaprio
).

Right from the get-go we get no apologies from Tarantino on the manner of this revenge-film, similar to his 2009 film “Inglourious Basterds.” Like that film, “Django” is one in which the oppressed are given the chance to pay back their oppressors.

For Django it means, “Kill white folks and pay you for it? What’s not to like?” The film spares no expense on its brutality with the deaths of countless slavers, plantation owners, overseers and more. To be honest, it didn’t bother me in the least.

On the other hand, there’s no sparing the atrocities slaves endured at the hands of their masters in the Antebellum South. From beatings, to mandingo fights, to dogs ripping men apart and castration, Tarantino gives nothing but the truth.

But of course, this is a revenge-flick and the events are obviously fiction. If one can’t get past the brutality, which is pretty much on par with all of Tarantino’s films, you should definitely skip “Django.”

Waltz is not quite as phenomenal in his role as Shultz as he was in his last outing with Tarantino as Col. Hans Landa in “Basterds,” but his charisma and charm are always fun to behold. Tagging along, Foxx as Django shifts from submissive slave to confused fish-out-of-water, to full-on gunslinger and the hero of the tale.

DiCaprio is awesome as Candie, a cruel and unsympathetic plantation owner and top player in local mandingo fights. He’s cold and vicious and a proper villain for Django’s attempt to rescue his beloved wife.

Like all of Tarantino’s films, the dialogue in “Django” is amazing, with hilarious exchanges between proto-Ku Klux Klan gangs about the poor quality of their white hoods, to the exchange of insults between Django and whites who aren’t used to seeing an African-American on a horse.

The film is an ode to classic Spaghetti Westerns and harkens back to Blaxploitation films of the 70s. Django is almost a side note for much of the first half of the film, thanks to Shultz, but once he gains his confidence and becomes a sure-shot like all Western heroes, Foxx takes over.

He’s cool and brash like great heroes in Western flicks and you cheer for him every step of the way. He puts quite a few overseers and hired thugs in their place and the body count rises as his rage is completely, justifiably unleashed.

Of course, given the setting, the use of racial slurs is constant by white and black characters alike and the film spares no one associated with or complicit in the slave trade.

The film’s soundtrack is outstanding, blending hip-hop and great compositions by **Ennio Morricone**
and many more. It gives the film weight while reminding us this is reimagined history. Of course, the ramifications of Django’s actions aren’t as broad as they were in “Basterds.”

“Django Unchained” will probably go down as one of the best films this year, deservedly so, and will surely be up for awards. Tarantino has said reactions from audiences have been less

divisive than he thought, but then again, he points out, he would find it unbelievable anyone watching would sympathize with the slavers.

The film moves in a much more linear fashion than pretty much all of Tarantino’s other films, doing away with the episodic format, which is enjoyable.

The brutality of “Django” is simply a mirror on the brutality of the economy of the Antebellum South and the amount of white surfaces that get littered with blood is symbolism enough on how our great democracy, the ivory towers of our nation’s principles, were literally built by and on the blood of the oppressed during that time.

But “Django” doesn’t seek to shame us, although there’s plenty of scenes that any human being with a conscience would be ashamed to know these atrocities were actually committed. The film is the story of Django’s attempt to rescue his wife, to find freedom and to live life, but it also delivers revenge, cold and bloody.

Django was truly unchained and man, oh man, I am so glad he was, and will be visiting theaters again for a second-viewing.

“Django Unchained” is rated ‘R’ and is now playing in local theaters with a runtime of 2 hours 45 minutes.

Editor Patrick Hall may be contacted at patrick@hendersonvillestandard.com.