

‘Ocean’s 8’: A delightfully smart crime caper



CHENNAI: Over the years, dozens of heist stories have played out on the silver screen, but director Gary Ross’ female-driven crime caper is a delightfully smart breath of fresh air.

“Ocean’s 8” stars Sandra Bullock and Cate Blanchett, who lead a team of razor-sharp women on an ambitious mission to steal a \$150 million Cartier diamond necklace.

A spinoff of Steven Soderbergh’s Ocean’s trilogy, Ross’ film is no less ambitious, although a focus on the planning part of the robbery leaves the movie unevenly balanced, with the run-up to the robbery eating up much of the 110-minute run time.

Bullock plays the character of Debbie Ocean, who spends five years in prison seething with anger and planning revenge after her art dealer boyfriend, Claude Becker (Richard Armitage), saves himself by trapping her in the midst of a crime. Out on parole, she seeks her former comrade-in-crime, Lou (Blanchett), and gets together an all-women team to pull off a dazzling heist.

Bullock plays the character with astounding confidence — look at the way she walks out of jail and into a high-class store, shoplifts and enters a posh hotel room, it is thrilling. With the same devil-may-care attitude, she forms a gang with Rose Weil (Helena Bonham Carter), a disgraced fashionista, Amita (Mindy Kaling), a jewelry maker, Constance (Awkwafina), a hustler-pickpocket, Nine Ball (Rihanna), an ace hacker and Tamy (Sarah Paulson), a suburban mother and profiteer. Anne Hathaway plays the dim-witted model who becomes a passive accessory to the crime.

The narrative flows along with remarkable editing, a haunting score and some fantastic top shots. The scripting is smooth, despite moments of disbelief. A subtle yet strong performance by Blanchett and Bonham Carter's charming awkwardness add to the fun in what has turned out to be a deliciously delightful film that proves an all-female cast can score Box Office gold.

The film earned another \$8.03 million in its fourth weekend in the US, Forbes reported on Monday, making for a \$114.7 million 24-day total.
