

## REVIEW

# 'Aquaman and The Lost Kingdom' fails to make a splash

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A franchise like Aquaman can get jaded over time and the newly released "Aquaman and The Lost Kingdom" suffers precisely from this. It seems to have lost its novelty and its only saving grace is that it is widely rumored to be the final instalment. Part of the DC Universe, the film is helmed by James Wan with a screenplay by David Leslie Johnson-McGoldrick.

Jason Momoa is the superhero Arthur Curry, or Aquaman, and practically all the film's energy goes into reintroducing this half-human-half-Atlantean hero. As a human member of the Justice

League and the heir to the Atlantean empire, Arthur is unique: He holds power over many marine kingdoms. However, a few years after his marriage to Mera (Amber Heard) when he becomes a father, he realises his responsibility to keep his kingdom safe and decides to spend most of his time with his wife and son. Fatherhood both softens and strengthens him and while there is something relatable about this, the narrative spends far too much time on the "cool dad" aspect of his character — which can get a bit boring.

The stakes are high here — especially considering the production budget that has been reported



Jason Momoa, right, stars in 'Aquaman and The Lost Kingdom.' Supplied

for "Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom" is around \$205 million, \$45 million greater than the original Aquaman film — but the movie falters. Even with an all-star

cast including the charismatic Momoa, Heard, Willem Dafoe and Nicole Kidman, the film fails to make a splash.

In this instalment, Aquaman

must face off against the Black Manta, played by Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, and despite the villain's entourage including the comedically gifted actor Randall Park, there is nothing memorable when it comes to the bad guys either.

Momoa's chemistry with his co-star Patrick Wilson, returning as Arthur's half-brother Orm Marius, is endearing but that isn't enough to save the film.

Although the 124-minute film examines concepts like brotherhood, betrayal and redemption, the narrative style and execution are shoddy and it is only worth it if you have time to kill and are in need of some light-hearted entertainment.