

# October Releases



## Palo Alto

Director: Gia Coppola

Starring: Emma Roberts, James Franco

Running time: 100 mins

On limited release from Oct 17th

Successfully scratching the surface of some raw yet universally relatable struggles of teenage life, Gia Coppola's new film *Palo Alto* reaches the deep recesses of adult viewers' consciousness by taking them on a trip down a not-so-pretty memory lane.

Based on a collection of short stories penned by James Franco, first-time director Gia Coppola is wonderfully unafraid of exposing the darkness within high school classmates and protagonists Emily, Teddy and Fred. Franco himself plays a seemingly sappy and well-meaning football coach, who goes on to ignite a brief yet misguided passion with Emma Roberts's Emily. His role as the solitary adult presence creates a stark contrast against the hormone-fuelled battle of advances taking place at Palo Alto High.

The film has all the components necessary to convey the angst of the teen psyche: crazy parties, unrequited love, reckless driving and copious amounts of drug dabbling. However, the 'no rhyme or reason' mantra of the high school years acts at times to set the plot adrift, preventing it from forming a substance that would make this story a touch more memorable.

Charlotte Ross

## All Is By My Side

Director: John Ridley

Starring: Andre Benjamin, Hayley Atwell

Running time: 118 mins

On limited release from Oct 24th

There are few artists in musical history as iconic as Jimi Hendrix, so making a biopic about him is a difficult task. It's even harder when you don't have permission to use any of Hendrix's music. Luckily, *All Is By My Side* does have John Ridley - whose Oscar winning screenplay for *12 Years A Slave* received widespread acclaim - in both the writing and directing chairs.

Unlike the James Brown biopic *Get On Up*, *All Is By My Side* isn't a sweeping epic retelling Hendrix's life story, instead focusing on his much mythologized time in London in 1967, where he began his rise to fame. Playing Hendrix is André Benjamin (aka André 3000, aka the other half of hip hop duo Outkast), with support from an impressive British supporting cast.

It's a tall order to play such a legendary figure, especially considering that this is one of the few times Benjamin has played a leading role. However, his acting experience in supporting roles, combined with his musical background (Outkast have done far more than just perpetual earworm *Hey Ya!*, after all) should hopefully provide an insight into one of the most complex and influential figures in rock music history. Even if Ridley can't legally show us Hendrix the musician, he can still show us a snapshot of Hendrix the man.

Thomas Sweet

