

## Jumping The Broom: DVD Review

Written by Kam Williams

Sunday, 18 September 2011 02:59

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### Headline: Ghetto Meets Suburbia Comedy Co-Starring Alonso and Patton Arrives on DVD

Jason Taylor (Laz Alonso), a rising star at Goldman Sachs, never introduced any of his friends or family members to his refined fiancée, Sabrina Watson, (Paula Patton). After all, her high-falutin' parents (Angela Bassett and Brian Stokes Mitchell) have a mansion up on Martha's Vineyard, so he's a little embarrassed about his humble roots and the fact that his mom, Pam (Loretta Devine), works as a clerk in a Post Office in Brooklyn.

Nevertheless, that doesn't prevent Jason from popping the question after a whirlwind romance of just five months and, when Sabrina accepts, the two decide to tie the knot right away at her folks' place up on the Vineyard. However, that means that the Taylor and the Watson clans will finally meet for the first time.

This sets the stage for the epic ghetto vs. bourgie clash which ensues over the course of one incomparably-eventful weekend in

#### *Jumping the Broom*

, an old-fashioned "fish out of water" comedy marking the feature film debut of veteran TV director Salim Akil ("Girlfriends" and "The Game"). Not only does this unlikely gathering serve as fodder for plenty of coarse jokes, but the festivities also take on the distinct tone of a soap opera as all manner of messy skeletons come bursting out of the closet.

Not surprisingly, most of the laughs come courtesy of the trashy Taylors while the uptight Watsons serve as straight men and are the ones with the shocking revelations. Since it would be unfair to spoil the flick by divulging the latter, allow me to elaborate solely on the movie's lowbrow brand of humor.

For example, flirtatious Cousin Malcolm (DeRay Davis) offends a bridesmaid by saying, "I don't usually talk to dark-skinned girls, but I'm making an exception with you." Furthermore, he confesses to feeling nervous about the presence of Caucasians since, "Any time I'm around white people, I get arrested." Yet, that doesn't prevent the loquacious ladies man from later developing a case of *Jungle Fever* when he has his head turned by the terminally-clumsy wedding planner (Julie Bowen). Speaking of guests

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dating the help, maid of honor Blythe (Meagan Good) rejects Malcolm's awkward advances in favor of the smoothly-seductive Chef McKenna (Gary Dourdan). And elsewhere on the sprawling estate, Pam's middle-aged, best friend, Shonda (Tasha Smith), finds herself falling for a charming Yale University undergrad (Romeo Miller) less than half her age.

Then there's Jason's Uncle Willie Earl (Mike Epps), who hates ferries because, "They make you feel like they're taking you back to Africa." Still, the movie's most divisive remarks are reserved for sassy Pam who feels "like a bald stepchild at my own son's wedding" after the bride and groom initially refuse to incorporate the heirloom she's brought along into their solemn ceremony.

Mother Taylor would like the couple to "Jump the Broom" in accordance with a longstanding, cultural tradition dating back to slave days when their ancestors weren't even allowed to marry legally. "You're black!" she blurts out in frustration to try to shame her mortified hosts into acknowledging their ethnicity.

As hopeless as the situation sounds, leave it to Reverend James (Bishop T.D. Jakes) to minister to this dysfunctional menagerie. With him on the case, it's merely a matter of time before compromises are reached, vows are exchanged, and the entire wedding party's doing the Cupid Shuffle as the closing credits roll.

An African-American version of "Meet the Parents!"

Very Good (3 stars)

Rated PG-13 for sexuality and coarse language.

In English, French and Italian with subtitles. Running time: 113 Minutes

Distributor: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment DVD Extras: Commentary with director Salim Akil, Paula Patton and Laz Alonso; and two featurettes: "Honoring the Tradition of Jumping the Broom" and "You're Invited: Behind the Scenes."



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To order a copy of the DVD, go to [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or . ca or [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com)

**About the author of this article:** **Kam Williams** is a syndicated film and book critic who writes for 100+ publications around the U.S., Europe, Asia, Africa, Canada, and the Caribbean. He is a member of the New York Film Critics Online, the NAACP Image Awards Nominating Committee, and Rotten Tomatoes. He is a contributor to TheLoop21.com. He is also a columnist for our webmag [www.megadiversities.com](http://www.megadiversities.com)

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