

# The Best of 2009

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## 10 Best Films of 2009: Lisa Schwarzbaum's Picks

EW's critic includes inspired adaptations of children's books, a new classic from Pixar, and a stunning study of modern war among the year's top new releases. Plus: The five worst films of the past 12 months

By [Lisa Schwarzbaum](#) | Dec 18, 2009. **BIG FAN**

### 8. **BIG FAN**

It's easy enough for those who don't share the obsessive passions of a sports aficionado to make fun of a rabid fan. It's especially tempting if the fan under scrutiny is a 35-year-old parking garage attendant on New York's Staten Island, a dead-ender whose life is a circumscribed routine of punching a clock by day and phoning in to a call-in radio sports show by night. (He lives and dies for the New York Giants.) The great play in *Big Fan* — a giant directorial score for screenwriter Robert Siegel (*The Wrestler*) — comes from the patient love and empathy the filmmaker extends to this one schlub in a teeming city of schlubs who define themselves — ourselves? — by what or who we support. And the MVP is comedian Patton Oswalt in a powerhouse dramatic debut, inhabiting the role with nothing held back, but nothing over the top, either. A shout-out, too, to the great indie guy Kevin Corrigan, playing the buddy every big fan needs to share the magic.