

Boston/Boston  
The Metro Paper  
**SIXTY SIX**  
August 22, 2008  
Review: Daniel Holloway  
Grade: 4 out of 5 Stars  
Photos: One Color Photo  
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# Boy becomes man

## 'Sixty Six'

Director: **Paul Weiland**  
Cast: **Gregg Sulkin, Helena Bonham Carter, Eddie Marsan**  
Rating: **PG-13**  
Grade: ●●●●●

As cute-and-quirky family comedy concepts go, "bar mitzvah from hell" isn't bad. It's at least as good as "road trip to a kiddie pageant." Throw in a backdrop of English World Cup mania in 1966, and you have pretty fertile ground for growing your own "Little Miss Sunshine."

"Sixty Six" aspires to such territory and pulls it off quite well. That it comes from an unlikely place — director Paul Weiland, best known (if at all) for such groundbreaking films as "Made of Honor" and "City Slickers II: The Legend of Curly's Gold" — shouldn't be a turn off. Weiland cut his teeth writing for the goofball British television show "Mr. Bean" and here offers a fictionalized memoir



From left, Bonham Carter as Esther Rubens, Marsan as Manny Rubens, Sulkin as Bernie Rubens and Ben Newton as Alvie star in "Sixty Six."

about his own transformation from Jewish boy with English accent to Jewish man with English accent. Bernie Rubens (Gregg Sulkin) is, like his father before him, a short, nerdy fellow forever stuck in the shadow of his older brother. But his

bar mitzvah offers the opportunity to wipe the slate clean. He'll be feted by hundreds of guests and finally have the chance to prove that he's worthy. Problems quickly arise — first when his father's (Eddie Marsan) business takes a hit and next when his mother (Helena Bonham Carter) schedules the big show on the same day as the World Cup finals.

Such a setup could allow

for a treacly picture, and Weiland, who wrote and directed, does go there on occasion. But more often he goes for gags — very good ones. Weiland displays a surprisingly complex sense of humor, given his long résumé of throwaway paycheck work. There are enough real and bitter moments here to cut the sweetness, making it palatable.

DANIEL HOLLOWAY/METRO