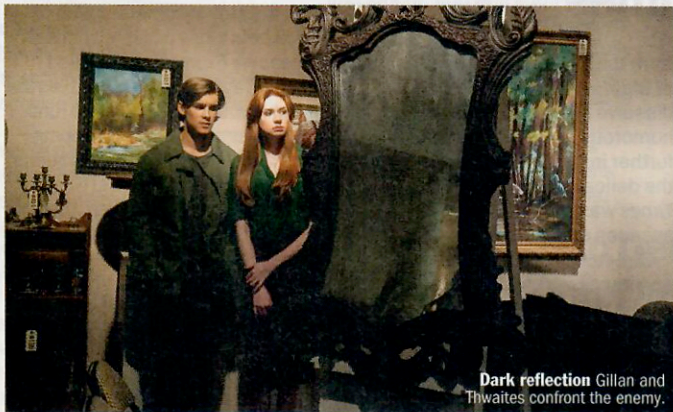


Oculus



Dark reflection Gillan and Thwaites confront the enemy.

★★★

Dir. Mike Flanagan. 2013. R. 105mins. Karen Gillan, Brenton Thwaites, Katee Sackhoff, Rory Cochrane.

Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the deadest of them all? That's the sort of rhetorical query facing

siblings Kaylie (Gillan) and Tim (Thwaites), who reunite after a decade to take care of some unfinished, supernatural business. Mike Flanagan's well-made if featherweight horror movie gives the characters a pretty cool antagonist: an antique mirror known as the Lasser Glass that has the uncanny habit of

persuading its owners to commit murder and suicide.

That sad fate befell Kaylie and Tim's parents (Sackhoff and Cochrane), whom we see in flashback sequences interwoven with the siblings' present-day attempts to conquer this evil piece of furniture. Flanagan has lots of fun with the crisscrossing timelines, in which the protagonists can never be sure if what they're seeing is figment or foe: Glowing-eyed ghosts flit menacingly, and Kaylie has a memorably cringeworthy moment involving a broken lightbulb that she mistakes for an apple. Yet the familial discord the film attempts to plumb for emotional effect never jells into anything substantial. For all its genre delights, *Oculus* is little more than a well-tooled creepshow. (Local theaters; opens Fri)—*Keith Uhlich*

THE BOTTOM LINE Worth a sidelong glance—not much else.