

Reviewer finds movie 'relentlessly' stupid

By Jim Hanna
Staff Reviewer

You often can learn a lot about a movie just by reading the advertising poster.

Perusing the poster for Judd Nelson's new movie "Relentless," one will be assaulted by the following declaration: "Killers aren't born, they're made."

That is an awful lot of insight for a movie poster. Now if the movie could only be half as insightful.

There is little that's relentless about "Relentless" except relentlessly bad dialogue, relentlessly cliched ideas and relentlessly stupid moments.

Judd Nelson is the center of the movie as Buck Taylor, a young man who was taught to kill by his aggressive, military father.

The drab, superficial point the movie seems to be trying to make is that young Buck was exposed to guns and violent behavior too much as a child, and now is a cold serial killer. Get it? Gun-happy fathers raise psycho killers.

Buck finds his victims from a phone book in the Los Angeles area.

He has a soft spot for victims with his given name: Arthur Taylor. Still he does murder a couple of people who are not named Arthur Taylor, and so the dramatic impact of this script choice is lost.

As he kills his victims he breathily says things like, "There, isn't this easy?" or "Do not fight it, doesn't this feel better?"

--Hanna

He usually surprises his victims in their homes and allows them to participate in their own death. For instance, he wraps one victim's hands around the knife before plunging it into his chest. It is not his intent to make it look like a suicide; he wants people to know it's a murder.

As a matter of fact, his intent with this gimmick is never learned. Apparently, it's just another one of the moviemakers' efforts to demonstrate that he is crazy. That's what all crazy people do, you know.

Two detectives are assigned to the case. Robert Loggia plays the weary Los Angeles veteran who doesn't try too hard. Leo Rossi plays a newly promoted detective who used to work in New York. Of course the movie's creators, devoid of a single original concept, infuse a great deal of friction into this detective team.

The eager detective from New York wants to solve the crime his way: put hundreds of workers on the case, follow every lead, pour over every bit of evidence. He wants to solve it in his gritty, work-ethic, New York way.

The veteran from Los Angeles, numb to it all, seems content to sit around and wait for the crimes to solve themselves.

Eventually, after the movie has exhausted every buddy-cop-don't-get-along, isn't-this-gripping cliché, they begin to cooperate and make progress on the crime.

Finally, the movie drones on and

on to its lame, yet merciful, end.

Congratulations must go out to Nelson who has chosen to go against his movie image and play a disturbed murderer. Unfortunately, his character is far too uninventive to appreciate. He's a very stereotypical, silent, psycho killer.

He says very little in the movie and what few lines he does speak are tiresome re-hashes of typical "crazy" slashers. As he kills his victims he breathily says things like, "There, isn't this easy?" or "Do not fight it, doesn't this feel better?" Eek . . . how chilling.

Loggia is the strongest actor in the show, doing the type of character he does best, the craggy, no-nonsense cop. Rossi, however, is bland, unconvincing and painful to watch as he tries to be a much tougher guy than he seems capable of playing.

The tense moments in the movie are not tense, the frightening moments are not frightening and the funny detective banter is not funny at all.

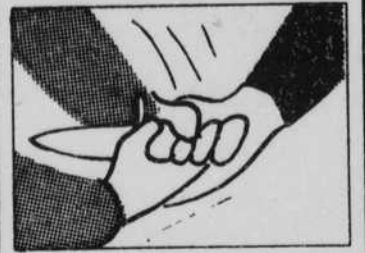
Save your money and simply read the poster outside of the theater. It costs less and is more entertaining than the movie.

From the people who brought you all those other really bad films...

Thumbsdown Pictures Inc.
"where bad movies aren't born, they're made."

Presents

RELENTLESS



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-John Bruce, Playbore

★ "I wanted to use the knife on myself!"

-Rob Holtorf, Ruling Stone

★ "Relentlessly bad dialogue, relentlessly cliched ideas and relentlessly bad moments."

-Jim Hanna, Daily Nebraskan

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Cliffs for Pinning Cigars! 140 N. 12th

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Art League Meeting
September 8, Friday 5:00 p.m.
Richards Hall Auditorium
Everyone Welcome

Arts and Sciences Advisory Board Meeting
Sunday at 6:30 p.m. at the Union. Room will be posted.

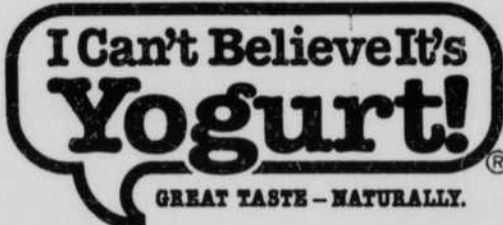
Attention:

First Campus Red Cross meeting 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, September 12th, 1989. City Campus Union, room posted.
Everyone Welcome!

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