

Soldier bombards theaters

"Universal Soldier"



By Gerry Beltz
Staff Reporter

"Universal Soldier" (Plaza 4, 12th and P streets) is full of action and stunts, but has holes in the plot that Jean-Claude Van Damme could do one of his infamous "triple pirouette kicks" through.

Please don't misunderstand what is being said. Van Damme and Dolph Lundgren fans alike will not be disappointed at this movie, unless they get picky about things like plot development, realism and so forth.

movie REVIEW

The movie starts out in Vietnam, with Lundgren as a psychotic sergeant who has laid waste to an entire village, believing all the villagers to be the enemy.

Van Damme is done with his tour of duty and just wants to go home.

But after Van Damme watches Lundgren kill two more of the inhabitants, Lundgren and Van Damme end up killing each other at point blank range.

The incident is covered up and the two bodies are listed as Missing In Action, packed in ice and shipped off to a secret installation.

The film then switches to today's setting, where both Lundgren and Van Damme have become members of a team of programmed supersoldiers used in last-resort situations dealing with terrorism.

Unfortunately, Van Damme has "deja vu" experiences that begin to snap him back to free thought, and Van Damme does a complete turn-around when Lundgren is about to blow away a nosy reporter (newcomer Ally Walker) as part of a cinematically-required military cover-up.

Van Damme then saves Walker and abandons the Universal Soldier detachment.

This snaps Lundgren out of his program, but his character is still psychotic (making necklaces out of human ears, etc.) and wants to catch the traitor, no matter what.

For the Van Damme fans, they won't be disappointed. One of his best scenes puts him in a roadside cafe mashing in heads for about 20 seconds, then munches a tuna salad sandwich for a little bit, then starts up again. His martial arts sequences are fairly infrequent, but decent.

For the action/adventure fans who want their adrenaline pumping, "Universal Soldier" is recommended. For those seeking well-rounded plots and acting, look elsewhere.



Courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox

Meg Ryan and Alec Baldwin star in "Prelude to a Kiss," an enchanting fable about the immortality of true love.

Meg Ryan's Kiss a smash

"Prelude to a Kiss"



By Stacie Hakel
Staff Reporter

True Love: a love without limitations, without haste—an unconditional love. This is the basis for the movie "Prelude to a Kiss," in which two young lovers find themselves falling in love at first sight.

On a dark city night, Peter Hoskins (Alec Baldwin) arrives at a party his friend Taylor (Stanley Tucci) is having. Upon arrival, he meets the eccentric and interesting Rita Boyle (Meg Ryan), who he becomes immediately attracted to.

After finding out about her insecurities and fears, Hoskins asks her for her hand in marriage, and she accepts.

The wedding day arrives and a strange happening occurs. A mysterious elderly man (Sydney Walker) pops up out of no where and asks to kiss the bride.

Apparently, neither of them were aware of the power of a kiss, as the pair switch personalities following their climatic kiss.

movie REVIEW

After his work for the Academy Award-nominated "Longtime Companion," playwright/screenwriter Craig Lucas has again pleased his audience with "Prelude to a Kiss."

Baldwin, who has been seen in "The Hunt for Red October," "The Marrying Man" and "Beetlejuice," puts on a gentle show of affection in this film, as Hoskins' love for Boyle is seen traveling further than

just looks.

Ryan, who has appeared in "When Harry Met Sally...," "Top Gun," "Innerspace" and "The Doors," has a unique and confusing character as Boyle, but plays the character in such a lovable and adorable manner that her eccentricities are almost forgettable.

The movie also stars actress Patty Duke and actor Ned Beatty as Boyle's parents, and it is obvious that Boyle has somehow inherited these eccentricities she acquires.

Walker's ("Love Story") character, as the mysterious old man, is excellent, yet he just pops out of no where.

"Prelude to a Kiss," while somewhat comical, is a heart-warming film that shows more than just passion. It brings across a message of love, a love that will stretch to all means

Disney film tops new video releases

By Gerry Beltz
Staff Reporter

The new releases at video stores is looking pretty slim this week, unless you're into Disney flicks, that is.

Sylvester Stallone and Estelle Getty kick off this week's trio of new releases with "Stop! Or My Mom Will Shoot!"

This is a droll comedy of a cop's mother coming into his life, turning it upside down, then seeing something she wasn't supposed to.

Naturally, he gets to protect her from anyone carrying a gun and the movie runs downhill from the open-

ing credits on (Available July 16).

Next, we have bad character acting at its best in "Love Crimes."

Here, Patrick Bergin portrays a psycho with a camera, who entices women to be photographed in compromising situations and rapes them after doing so.

movie PREVIEW

However, his victims regularly refuse to prosecute because of impending humiliation.

Dana Greenway ("A Kiss Before Dying") is the district attorney that

wants this "shutterbug psycho" behind bars. Unfortunately, Greenway's character has the emotional range of a cheap water pistol.

"Love Crimes" will be available in both R-rated and unrated versions (Available July 15).

Finally, there is a bright spot this week—the release on video of "The Great Mouse Detective" from Disney.

It is an adventure that could be deemed "What If Sherlock Holmes Was A Mouse?"

The animation is superb throughout the movie and is entertaining both for the young and the old.

Christmas begins in Nebraska

By Stacie Hakel
Staff Reporter

If the summer's heat is getting a bit irritating, be sure and cool off with winter's "Season's Greetings," staged by the Nebraska Repertory Theater.

The play takes place in the merry atmosphere of Neville and Belinda Bunker's (Kevin Paul and Leigh Dillon) home, in which their relatives fight and complain while they scurry around preparing for the arrival of Christmas day.

Mary Riepma Ross
Film Theater

During the play, Neville ignores Belinda and puts off the few chores he is assigned to.

Neville spends most of his time with his friend Eddie (Devon Schumacher). Eddie also has a poor relationship with his wife, Pattie (Ann Niergarth), who is pregnant for the fourth time and trying to control her anxiety towards Eddie's lazy behavior.

The oblivious doctor Bernard (Stephen A. Gaines) who is concerned only about his annual puppet show, spends his time constantly bickering with Harvey (Clifford Mason) the overzealous veteran, who is obsessed with guns and knives.

Phyllis (Liann Pattison), Bernard's ditzzy and drunken wife, attempts to cook Christmas dinner, and pulls it off with only a few minor cuts and bruises.

Rachel (Jean Lyle), Belinda's sexually deprived sister, digs for attention and finds it in the novelist Clive (John Lepard), who she has brought home to celebrate this joyous occasion.

British author Alan Ayckbourn has grasped the festive season of winter to collaborate this splendid play.

"Season's Greetings" is just one more in addition to the excellent plays he has written, such as "Mr. What-Not," "Relatively Speaking" and "A Case of Mistaken Identity."

After the opening his 37th play in 1989, Ayckbourn achieved equivalence—numerically—with William Shakespeare.

"I hope my plays hold up in 400 years; that's the real test," Ayckbourn said.

"Season's Greetings" was exceptionally appropriate, even for this time of year, so everyone can prepare themselves now for the joyous, yet horrid Christmas season.

"Season's Greetings" opened July 9 and will run through July 25 at the Carson Theater in the Lied Center for the Performing Arts. Performances are staged at 8 p.m. every Tuesday through Saturday and at 3 p.m. on Sundays.