

Stallone's performance judged 'dredd'ful



Photo courtesy of Buena Vista

Sylvester Stallone prepares to dish out some judgment in "Judge Dredd."

The Facts

Movie: "Judge Dredd"
Director: Danny Cannon
Stars: Sylvester Stallone, Armand Assante
Grade: C
Rating: R
Five Words: Effects can't cover Stallone's acting

By Joel Strauch
Editor

If Ito held court like this judge, we wouldn't have to be worrying about anything like jury selection.

"Judge Dredd" brings to life the cult-icon of British comics.

Unfortunately, the film doesn't do as much justice as other comic book heroes who are on screen again this summer.

The premise is ideal for a futuristic sci-fi blockbuster hit.

In the Third Millennium, the world has changed to a poison planet, with the remnants of the population jamming themselves into a few Mega-Cities.

The crime rates soar beyond what normal police can handle and anarchy threatens.

The deteriorating legal system and the overburdened police force are combined to form a much more efficient hybrid.

These new guardians of the law can dispense both justice and punishment and are called Judges.

But the storyline and the acting along the way make this flick guilty of taking too much liberty.

Judge Joseph Dredd (Sylvester Stallone) is a legend in Mega-City One. To most of the citizens, he is the law.

But corruption has found its way to the upper echelons of political power.

Council Judge Griffin (Jurgen Prochnow) and Dredd's evil brother Rico (Armand Assante) frame Dredd for a murder and send him off to life in prison while they prepare to rule what's left of the world.

Of course, our hero escapes, but not without the hilarious help of a two-bit criminal Herman Ferguson (Rob Schneider).

He returns to Mega-City One and pounds his vengeance into the bad guys and saves the day for everyone.

Stallone has never had much of a talent for

acting. But if he can get into the role ("Rocky," "Cliffhanger"), it's possible to forget how bad he is.

In "Dredd," that only happens for a few fleeting seconds. Most of the time, the audience is forced to suffer through his pitiful one-liners and testosterone attitude.

The rest of the cast gives adequate performances, but most of their screen time is too limited to allow them to take up Sly's slack.

The exception to this is Schneider. Saturday Night Live's copy-machine guy fills the comic sidekick persona exceptionally well.

Schneider's cowardice and insults are a hundred times more entertaining than the old rhetoric of Stallone's bravado.

The special effects are the other glowing attribute of the film.

The first fifteen minute showing Mega-City One in all its overcrowded, computer-animated glory are very impressive.

Dredd's sidearm and vehicle complete the image of one man being the law. His voice-activated "Lawgiver" and flying "Lawmaster" cycle can help cynics see past the poor performance of Stallone.

"Judge Dredd" is more enjoyable than watching the O.J. saga, but at times is still a trial to sit through.

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