

Seagal return pathetic

■ The martial arts actor is too old, overweight and slow for the action and unbelievable plot of his new movie 'Exit Wounds.'

BY BILLY SMUCK

"Exit Wounds" is an over-saturated succession of street fights, gunfire, explosions and car chases in search of a plot that leaves no tired action cliché unturned.

But who really goes to action movies for their story line anyway?

Besides, Steven Seagal made a name for himself as a movie star in the martial arts/action genre playing similar roles in his first six films that attracted audiences because of their taste for a good ass whipping.

Now, the 49-year-old Seagal is not only older, but he is heavier and slower, meaning this has been may not be able to cover up the wounds of this movie before audiences decide to make an early exit.

Seagal plays rage-aholic maverick cop Orin Boyd who is reprimanded for saving the vice president's life in a reckless manner.

As punishment, Boyd is reassigned to Detroit's 15th precinct and is forced to attend anger management classes where he meets the jabbering Tom Arnold, who is the host of the Detroit Morning Show.

Similar to Joe Pesci's role in Lethal Weapon 3 as Leo Gehls, Arnold tries to team up with Seagal and his partner Isaiah Washington, but his mouth gets in the way.

In this follow-up film, director Andrzej Bartkowiak has brought a chunk of the cast from his debut, "Romeo Must Die" including Washington, rapper DMX and Anthony Anderson from "Me, Myself and Irene."

Boyd has no trouble finding mayhem at his new post because the criminals are conveniently

dropped in his lap right from the start when he finds some gangstas trying to break into his truck. From there, Boyd's on the trail of the wealthy owner of his own Internet company and drug operation, DMX and his side-kick Anderson who runs a strip joint.

The corrupt police force and their business relationship with DMX is soon interfered with by the spoiler Boyd whose stunt double gets a healthy amount of stunt time as bad guys are brought down.

However, when Seagal does appear in his own fight scenes, Bartkowiak uses a slow-motion technique that worked for him in "Romeo." Originally used to enhance Jet Li's movements to full exposure, it is incorporated here to make up for Seagal's sluggish motions.

Despite whatever mechanisms Bartkowiak uses to accommodate for what this film lacks, the hollowness of "Exit Wounds" is too much to salvage.

Plenty of blood and firepower keep the action level high, ridiculously too high in fact. And like clockwork, every 10 minutes, there is another over-the-top action sequence that after awhile does more harm than good.

The best part of the film was during the credit sequence where Arnold and Anderson exchange what appeared to be improvised toilet and masturbation jokes.

While it ends on a funny note, the film as a whole is lacking even by its own standards and doesn't make the grade.

"Exit Wounds" is a good example that even action movies need something more than just heavy action. There needs to be a half-way convincing story line that makes the action worthwhile and effective. Without that kind of backbone, films like this will continue to slump at the box office.

"Exit Wounds" starring Steven Seagal, Tom Arnold, Anthony Anderson and DMX. Directed by Andrzej Bartkowiak. Rated R for violence, language and nudity. Playing at Douglas 3 and East Park 6.

Nadas epitomizes indie rock

■ The four man band from Ames, Iowa has made a name for itself with 'Coming Home,' its newest release.

BY CASEY JOHNSON

The main selling point of indie rock is that it holds the truth close to its bosom and clings to that epithet for lack of another foot to stand on.

Sometimes this credo backfires in the industry's face when the artist or band goes past the grass roots ideology and tries to be something it is not.

This is not the case with the Ames, Iowa, based four piece band The Nadas and their latest release "Coming Home."

The Nadas This sincere and honest effort depicts the allure and charm of a talented indie group that's keeping it real.

Full of authentic and engaging songs, "Coming Home" soars through its length with a believability that is refreshing.

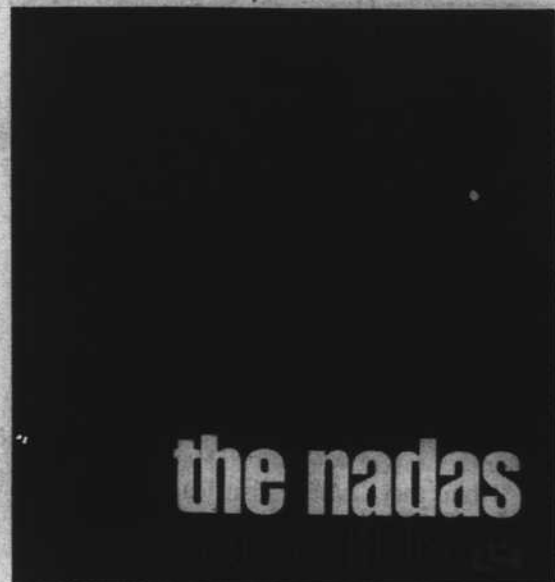
The track "Rock Star" delves into the dreams and eventual reality most every musician goes through.

Some of the songs tell stories and some are traditional sappy love songs, but then again, so are most songs ever written.

Perhaps the most adventurous on the album, the tune "Mi Corazon" (My Heart) is a testament to the scars that bad relationships leave and the heart that pushes away from new ones.

Set to a catchy Squirrel Nut Zippers meets Ricky Martin kind of backdrop, "Mi Corazon" stands out only musically from the average song on this album.

Most of the songs are a representation of experiences that are common to most - the missed loved one, the desire to travel, envy, complacency and the desire to break things - the typical rock 'n' roll stuff.



In other words, one does not need an expert in Radiohead speak to translate the message. Although sometimes a little too close to the cheese side of a food platter, the writing on this album is good.

The incorporation of different instruments such as organ, harmonica, accordion and trumpet is done with modesty and adds just enough to relieve the monotony that a full album of lonely guitar, bass and drums can bring.

Not to say that these instruments aren't played skillfully because they are, one need only listen to songs such as "Cry" and "Let me sleep" to understand this.

Forceful yet never overwhelming, the nuts and bolts of sound remain, song in and song out, without gaudy solos or other overused tricks such as too much distortion on guitars, obnoxious bass or flashy percussion.

In its essence, "Coming Home" is just that, a return to the basics of its genre which is a sincere honesty, passion and appreciation for the wonder that is independent music.

Hewitt reveals, steals in 'Heartbreakers'

BY SARAH SUMNER

Love can be a miraculous joining of two passionate souls for the rest of their lives. They will forever share the ups and downs and hope for the best.

But if it doesn't work out, you hope that you will get a large chunk of change for the union.

"Con" could be the middle names for the mother and daughter con-artist duo. Sigourney Weaver and Jennifer Love Hewitt seduce rich men. The clever women make the blinded-by-love men marry mom, the daughter flirts until they succumb and mom finds them, they divorce and the cash is theirs.

Eventually, they run into a

Heartbreakers

small, legal problem. Taxes. The money they have worked for is gone and now Paige (Hewitt) can't break off from her mom to start her own conning journey. They decide to go to a town where wealth is dripping. They track down a multi-billionaire who is practically on his deathbed to entice. Paige goes on a scheme of her own and might just break the cardinal rule of conning. Don't fall in love.

Sigourney Weaver shows that she's still got it, and boy, she isn't afraid to show it to the

extreme. Weaver is very much a dominating actor ("Alien" 1-4 and "Working Girl"), but she interweaves a little womanly heart in by playing a mother. She has a softened look but still controls every step of her character.

Hewitt, known for "I Know What You Did Last Summer," the sequel and the TV series "Party of Five," is an experienced actress at quite a young age. Normally not one to overexpose her body, except for the here and there cleavage, she goes all out and all over with the clothes. She doesn't hide much. She switches her acting techniques well in the seemingly multi-personality Paige. It was strange to see the innocent Hewitt play a seduc-

ress, even though she has the body for it.

The characters were definitely a funny bunch of wackos, but the story rushed at the end. They spent too much time on the love story, setting up the main con and having some useless information thrown in, which caused for some problems to solve and some open ends.

You invest two hours into a pretty humorous movie just to have the last three minutes disappoint you in the end.

"Heartbreakers" Starring Sigourney Weaver, Jennifer Love Hewitt and Ray Liotta. Rated PG-13. Directed by David Mirkin. Showing at East Park 6, Douglas 3 and SouthPointe 6.

Poet offers free read

BY MATTHEW EBERT

Knickknacks. Miniatures. "Precious Moments" figurines. All sitting on a shelf or table, waiting to be looked at and admired.

Similarly, Judith Taylor's laconic poems rest on off-white pages in her recently published first book, aptly titled "Curios."

Taylor, who received her doctorate in English from the University of California at Berkeley and lived in Los Angeles, received ovation for her first book.

"Reminiscent of the jewel-like marbles, shot glasses and lemon-colored corks dreamily set in a Joseph Cornell Box," said a review in "The Village Voice."

Thursday at 7:30 p.m. in the Dudley Bailey Library in Andrews Hall, Taylor will be reading from "Curios." The reading is free.

Her poems range from "Nostradamus L.A. Style" where she quotes "Seinfeld," to "Day-Glo" about two lovers in bed, to "Instructions to Her Next Husband" playing with vices and conduct.

"Instructions" is a favorite of Hilda Raz, University of Nebraska-Lincoln professor of English and editor of the "Prairie Schooner."

"Taylor is a very lively poet whose work keeps expanding," Raz said.

Some of Taylor's new widening work was featured in the spring 2001 issue of "Prairie Schooner."

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