

Taxi remake one dull ride Film not worth the time or effort

By Daniel Kaszor
The Gateway
(University of Alberta)

EDMONTON (CUP) -- Sometimes movie stars can make giant asses of themselves. Otherwise decent performers are thrown into movies with half-finished scripts while studios hope that their stars' talent for "daring" improv will add hilarity that isn't in the story. Take, for instance, Queen Latifah and Jimmy Fallon in Taxi.

Taxi is a remake of the 1998 French film of the same name, which was produced and written by Fifth Element creator Luc Besson. The film was an enjoyable little popcorn flick that revelled in its own stupidity and had more than a few spectacular action sequences. The American remake, on the other hand, takes itself too seriously and relies solely on humour that simply isn't there.

The story features Belle (Queen Latifah), a bike courier who has saved enough money to move up to the level of taxicab driver. Washburn (Jimmy Fallon) is a screw-up cop with his heart in the right place and an insurmountable fear of driving. After he gets his driver's license taken away, Washburn and Belle team up to take out a band of supermodel bank robbers in Belle's tricked-out cab.

If this sounds dumb, that's because it is. The point of the plot is to segue into the daring eye candy of the driving sequences and the humorous interplay between the characters. Unfortunately, this "humorous interplay" is painfully absent. The jokes are too often based on something fundamentally unfunny -- take the gag that Washburn's mother is a lush. Frequently, the character interaction will drag on, leaving an awkward and unsettling feeling instead of laughter. One part in particular, where Belle is teaching Washburn to drive by making him sing songs he loved as a child, is particularly excruciating.

The action scenes fare better, but are nothing exceptional. While the daring car chases through the tight streets of New York City are decently exciting, they aren't strong enough to hold up the rest of the film. If you simply want to look at exciting car crashes, you'd be better off renting The Matrix: Reloaded, Bad Boys 2, or, if you're desperate, The Fast and the Furious -- movies whose directors obviously spent more time and effort crafting their car chase centrepieces.

From tepid humour to average action, Taxi always feels like it's holding back -- it's a censored version of itself. If you've seen the trailer, there's a scene where Queen Latifah says, "Buckle up for safety, mother . . ." with the trailer cutting away, implying that her line's R-rated conclusion will be in the film. However, the film plays the scene just as it was in the commercial.

Not that Taxi could've been saved with four-letter words, but the result is a movie that feels like a castrated version of an enjoyable film. And when the original wasn't even a cinematic masterpiece itself, Taxi's one dull ride.

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Newswire



Notice of Motion to Amend The Constitution

January 17, 2003

Article 7 - d. Executive Committee

Was:

d. The term of office for the members of the Executive Committee shall be from May 1st to April 30th.

Amend:

d. The term of office for the members of the Executive Committee shall be from May 1st to May 31st of the following year. (To allow time for the incoming Executive to work with the outgoing executive).

Article II - b - 2 Amendments

Was:

2. To all members of the Association, by publishing the proposed amendment in the Netted Gem, at least fourteen days prior to the General Assembly vote.

Amend:

2. To all members of the Association, by publishing the proposed amendment in the school news paper, at least fourteen days prior to the General Assembly vote.

NOTICE

As of September 1, 2004 MAPUS fees for part-time students have been increased to \$10.00 per course per semester to a maximum of \$20.00.

Terry Fox Run and Run as present, the Queer McGill sent 10
ure, which benefit can- people to the walk, and has so
rch. far raised \$400 to be donated to
is always difficult for us AIDS Community Care
t people. People are Montréal.
ven all these different
said Taillefer.
his year's Terry Fox Run
ec garnered a 30 per
rease in participation

Men's Volleyball

ekend, the UPEI men's volleyball travelled to Fredericton
ke in a double-header against STU. The boys played well
their first two matches of the year, finishing with a
rd. This weekend the boys play in another double-header,
against UNBSJ, at the Chi-Wan Young Sports Centre in
uld possibly be the only home matches of the season for
elling team. Come out and catch some of the best volley-
on in the region.

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