

Two movies with unique plots

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Highlander

Highlander is a cross between D & D fantasy and science fiction as far as its atmosphere and plot are concerned. The idea for the film had potential but the ending is very weak.

Connor MacLeod, the Highlander, was played by Christopher Lombart. MacLeod was born in Scotland in the 1500's. Somehow he has the gift of immortality and this leads to many problems. He is rejected by his clansmen, he cannot lead a normal love life and, worse, he is doomed to fight to the death with all other immortals (the immortals can only die by cutting each others heads off).

MacLeod lives to the present day and has taken the assumed name of Nash. Throughout the film we see flashbacks to MacLeod's earlier days, but the main plot concerns MacLeod's relationship with Brenda Wyatt (Roxanne Hart) and his approaching showdown with the evil immortal Kurgan (Clancy Brown).

The special effects were great, as was the photography. The acting was also quite good with some superb sword-fights.

The problem was the plot and the lack of meaningful theme. If the immortality idea had been used to more advantage we could have tolerated the bland 'good versus evil' theme; and with more of a theme, the plot would have been bearable. With weakness in both aspects though, *Highlander* was sorely lacking.

The script is not the fault of the director though; Russell Mulcahey was able to make *Highlander* reasonably enjoyable despite the flaws in the screenplay.

Gung Ho

There have been plenty of films about down-and-out American towns facing crisis because their industries are shutting down. We also read about this in the news. *Gung Ho*, directed by Ron Howard, is a comic look at how one town deals with this problem and has a case of culture-skock as a side-effect.

The central character is Hart Stevenson (Michael

Keaton). As a former foreman at the shut-down auto plant in Hadleyville, Hart is sent to Japan to try and convince the directors of Assan Motors to take over the idle plant. He is successful. By twisting the truth he convinces the Assan directors to take over the plant, and also convinces the workers to go along with the Japanese way of doing business 'just for a short while.'

Stevenson puts his foot in his mouth so many times that the inevitable time approaches when he will be 'found out.' He risks alienating the Japanese, his fellow workers and his girlfriend.

Gung Ho tastefully pokes at both the American and Japanese cultures. Although the inevitable stereotypes are forefront—the Japanese 'work for the company' ethic and the American 'beer-drinking slovenly' attitude—the film shows how each culture can take the best of the other. The Americans have to learn to be more dedicated to work, and the Japanese have to learn that the family is at least as important as the work.

Although *Gung Ho* is a comedy, the only truly comic

character is Stevenson. This seriously detracts from the film because the atmosphere becomes inconsistent—we do not know what to take seriously and what not to. Ignoring the comic intent, Stevenson could never have attracted the Japanese to America with the

stupidity and language he displayed. On the other hand, the role of the Japanese plant boss Kasihiro (Gedde Watanabe) could have been played with little change in a perfectly serious version of the same film.

RATINGS OF RECENT FILMS

Film	Cinema	RATINGS											
		L	Y	G	S	E	S	N	T	Y	Y		
Out of Africa	Plaza	A+	A+	A+	A+	A+	A+	A+	A+	A+	A+	A+	A+
Gung Ho	Plaza	A-	B+	A	B	A-	B+	B+	A-	B+	A-	B+	A-
Pretty in Pink	Plaza	B+	B-	A-	B-	D	B	B	B	B-	B-	B-	B-
Iron Eagle	Na'sis	B+	B-	B+	B	C	B+	A+	B	D	A-	A-	A-
Highlander	Plaza	B	B+	B+	B-	C	A+	A-	C+	D	A	A	A

GROWTH

a flower in bud —
watered by early and latter rains
warmed, a precious necessity,
disturbed gently; stretching —
blossoming into richness of joy.

By M. Jane Arnolt

the Brunswickan

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