

# 'Alien Nation' depicts vicious future

By Ken Nolan  
Emerald Contributor

"Alien Nation," the newest "buddy cop" action flick, sure does pack a wallop. With swift pacing, excellent photography and effects, not to mention two terrific actors, James Caan

## Movie Review

("The Godfather") and Mandy Patinkin ("Princess Bride") in the title roles, how could this movie miss?

Well, it doesn't miss. In fact it hits so hard that you may leave the theatre feeling like someone gave you a belt in the

gut. It is the year 1991, and aliens, or "Slags" as they have been crudely nicknamed, have been living in our society for three years in the slums of Los Angeles. Cast adrift in outer space, these alien "boat people" find refuge on Earth, bringing with them their own forms of crime, prostitution, and deep, dark mysteries.

Caan plays a street-wise, tough, butt-kicking cop from L.A. who loses a partner to a couple of two-bit Slags. Caan in turn seeks the help of Slag police officer Mandy Patinkin.

The plot sounds reminiscent of dozens of recent buddy cop flicks, but is the concept and

combination of an alien-human cop duo original or exciting enough to keep the audience's attention?

You bet. The team is as fresh, original and lively as Danny Glover and Mel Gibson were in 1987's "Lethal Weapon."

It is a joy to see Caan return to the screen in a role as tough and brash as characters from his acting heyday in films such as "Rollerball" and "The Godfather."

This time Caan hits a bullseye, giving his character all the gusto and vigor that an L.A. cop teamed with an alien must have.

Although "Alien Nation" sounds a lot like a sci-fi genre film, it should not be

miscategorized, because the movie takes place only three years in the future, and there are no gadgets, spaceships, or other sci-fi trademark paraphernalia.

This film is a present-day cop thriller with a plot that includes a future-day problem: an evil and highly concentrated drug that could make addicts out of the entire alien population.

Though the cop portion is not a highly original premise, the dialogue between the characters and action in the film is original and captivating.

Mandy Patinkin, playing the role of the alien/cop/husband, is again the surprise of the year, rebounding from his excellent portrayal of Inigo Montoya, the Spanish swashbuckler out to avenge his father in "The Princess Bride."

He is absolutely convincing as the polite, subdued alien police detective, taking punishment from Caan for (of all the prejudiced reasons) being a creature from another planet.

Even through layers of make-up, Patinkin nearly upstages Caan in every scene, making them both work all the more diligently to be convincing and believable.



James Caan (right) and Mandy Patinkin (left) star as Sykes and George, police detectives from different worlds who team up to catch a murderer, in 20th Century Fox's "Alien Nation." The film, which can attract science fiction and action/adventure fans, offers a unique twist on the "buddy cops" theme.

# Craft center dispenses knowledge, tools

By Kyle Butts  
Emerald Contributor

Walking into the EMU Craft Center is like entering a world full of creative tools, buzzing sounds and unique creations. The musty smell of wood fills this center as students make their way through the maze of workshops.

With projects or equipment tucked under their arms, most of these students display either a wide smile of pride or a grim look of determination on their faces.

"Anyone who comes here realizes it's a great place," Anne Schneider said of the center. Schneider, one of the center's three full-time directors, said the craft center is a studio facility and a center for workshops.

The center's non-credit workshops range from woodworking to ceramics and from sewing to jewelry making.

The craft center has the room to facilitate such a wide variety of workshops. The maze of rooms includes wood and metal shops and areas for sewing, throwing pots and painting. The center also includes dark-room facilities for both color and black and white film.

Workshops generally cost about \$30, and this fee usually includes all supplies. A membership at the craft center allows students and faculty to receive a discount for these workshops and to use the center free of charge.

Membership is open to all members of the community but aimed toward students, faculty and their spouses. For these people, a center membership costs \$5 a term.

Community members, however, must pay more. To receive a membership, non-students must take a workshop. If that class charges over \$20,

membership costs \$8. If the workshop fee is \$20 or less, the cost is \$12.

Even non-members can use the craft center. Students pay \$1 a day for the facility and alumni, \$2.

However, for people who make extensive use of the center, a membership is the best bet, Schneider said. She pointed to freshman Celina Samuels as an example of a person who became very involved in the center.

When Samuels arrived in Eugene this summer she spied a pamphlet about a ceramics class offered at the center. From the time she signed up for the class until the end of summer, Samuels said she virtually lived at the craft center.

"I loved it," she explained. "It's a really nice atmosphere to work in. You come in and everything's alive."

Samuels now works at the EMU Craft Center through a

work study program. "They don't come in here to just sit," she said of the center's patrons.

"Even if one of these students does not know how to use one of the tools, they still come in," she said.

Samuels is one of about 25 students who work at the center through the work study program. These students run the information windows, and some supervise the wood shop. One of the current projects for these student staff members is making additional weaving looms for the center.

Schneider explained that the workshop instructors constitute a staff separate from the work study staffers and the directors. Although some of the 25 instructors are graduate students, many are professional artists from the area.

In addition to providing workshop facilities and classes, the EMU Craft Center also contains reference books for use while at the center. A bulletin board across from the information desk advertises art contests, other classes and exhibits.

The center is also in charge of the ASUO's tool library. Students can check out hand and power tools on a 24-hour basis by leaving their identification card at the craft center. Hand tools cost 25 cents and power tools cost \$1 each day.

With all of these programs, workshops and tools to offer, Schneider invited any interested students to join the center's 500 members.

"We really do encourage people to come in here and make use of what's available," she said.

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