

ENTERTAINMENT

'Men in Tights' just plain stinks

One cannot help but think of Los Alamos while watching the new Mel Brooks film *Robin Hood: Men in Tights*. Not since the Manhattan Project have so many talented people come together to create such a bomb.

Men in Tights is nothing more than a museum of jokes that make Saturday morning cartoons look like a bastion of original comic material. Perhaps he just took all of the jokes that didn't work in his past films and figured that if he threw more money at them they would work this time.

The story is much the same as the recent *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*, with a few changes in order to match the more traditional story of the green-tighted avenger.

Cary Elwes plays the lead role as Robin Hood, an English gentile man who, though sometimes clumsily, tries to restore the usurped crown of Britain and must battle the evilly neurotic Prince John (Richard Lewis) and a bad script to do so.

The casting of Elwes seems to be some kind of cruel joke that is supposed to mislead the audience into believing that this film is on par with the excellent *Princess Bride* in which he played the main character. Elwes, like most of the cast, tries his best to deal with an inept script, but none of the actors are able to breathe life into this sterile clay.

Lewis turns in the worst performance of the bunch, mainly because of the fact that the character is a bad parody of his act. He has proven that he can play a great neurotic on the nightclub stage as well as on the small screen, but he fumbles around with most of his lines in what seems to be a failed attempt to make them funny.

As an example of how poor and outdated the writing is, one only has to answer one question: When was the last time you heard the word "Honky" used on the silver screen? When was the last time it was funny? Unless you are a collector of old racial slurs, this movie is not worth your time.

Although Brooks has been able to take old jokes and make them funny in the past, the jokes in this film come so slowly that you can see them coming

from 10 miles away, and by the time they are executed you may have forgotten the set-up (or perhaps your mind has blocked it out through selective memory).

Timing seems to be the main problem with *Men in Tights*, with jokes taking forever to finish themselves. There also is a long waiting period between jokes, so Brooks fills up the time with songs that go on for too long or cameos that seem to have no place.

Dom DeLuise makes an appearance that takes forever to finish and just slows down an already over-extended film. Chances are that DeLuise met up with Brooks at a party for people who used to be funny (perhaps at Bob Hope's house) and reminded his old pal Mel that no crummy movie is complete without a rotten impression of Marlin Brando as the Godfather.

If an impression of the Godfather seems out of place, then perhaps it is indicative of another flaw in the movie. The success of the *Princess Bride* was often because of Rob Reiner's ability to play with the time period. In *Men in Tights* the audience is too often assaulted with jokes that have less to do with Robin Hood's England than Brooks' Hollywood.

The only entertaining parts of *Men in Tights* are ones that poke fun of the awful, but lucrative, *Prince of Thieves*. Yet even these jokes are not worth the price of a ticket because you probably made them yourself as you were walking out the theater two summers ago.

One of the worst parts of the movie, however, was not even on the screen. Many parents seem to think that this is a children's film and so they pack up their little tykes and bring them along. Who in their right mind thinks of a Mel Brooks' film as a good place to bring kids? Even when Brooks is at his best, he is generally perverse, rude, bigoted and, all in all, down-right mean. Just because a film is overtly silly does not mean that it's for kids.

Finally, if you don't want to waste six bucks on yourself or your kids, I suggest that you put the rug-rats to bed and rent *Blazing Saddles* or *Young Frankenstein* and save yourself two hours of grief.

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Pettis' newest release piercing

Many people find certain songs touching enough to produce tears. I, on the other hand, have the emotional drive equal to that of a rock. Well, this rock happened to be touched — and, yes, a few tears fell — when I began to listen to Pierce Pettis' new release *Chase the Buffalo*.

The term "modern storyteller" best describes Pettis' talent for song writing. His song writing, combined with his talent for guitar playing and singing, allows this album to convey more than beautiful music.

The song "You're Not There" is a song that anyone can relate to — it describes the emotions one feels when a relationship ends. "I Will Be There" is a wonderful piece that illustrates the strong, never-ending bond of

a true friendship.

Pierce Pettis was exposed to many different types of music growing up — blue grass, gospel, rhythm and blues, rock 'n' roll, and country. Pettis also studied music at Florida State

By Meredith Hansen

University for a while before he began writing music at the famous Muscle Shoals Sound Studios. Joan Baez and the late Alex Taylor were among those who covered his songs.

Chase the Buffalo features many talented artists. Some of the artists included on this album are, drummer Jim Keitner, David Hidalgo from Los Lobos, John Jorgenson of the Desert Rose Band, and key-

boardist Booker T. Jones.

Pierce Pettis' two former releases *While the Serpent Lies* and *Tinseltown* were big hits among his fans. *Chase the Buffalo* is the album that will make him well known to all listeners.

I found this album intriguing and was touched by many of the songs. Pettis possesses a power that clearly comes out in his ability to write songs. Listening carefully to him, I can find deep meaning to his songs. "Stickman" is a story about an individual with AIDS. Throughout this song, we see life through this individual, which shows the fear and horror this disease holds.

When this album finished, this rock was a sponge.

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