

Forgotten Film

TRANSFORMERS: THE MOVIE

Two reporters banter about the films you may not remember or are trying to forget you ever saw

Featuring voices of: Judd Nelson, Leonard Nimoy, Eric Idle and Orson Welles

★★★☆☆

In life, there are certain universal truths: Gravity will make things fall at the same speed, the sun sets in the west, and if you were a little boy in the mid-'80s you watched the Transformers. If for some reason, you didn't watch the Transformers, you are obviously breaking the laws of physics and shouldn't exist.

COMMENTARY

Mason West & Josh Ryneal

Now that we've gotten rid of any people who won't have a clue what we're talking about, on to the review: "Transformers: The Movie," is the culmination of the epic battle between the heroic Autobots and the evil Decepticons.

In the movie, the Autobots have been forced off their home planet of Cybertron by the Decepticons and they are staging a rebellion from several moon bases and a base here on Earth. In possibly the coolest battle of the movie, Optimus Prime, the Autobot leader, is killed by Megatron, the Decepticon leader.

Mason: It was very sad.

Josh: As a kid, I always wondered: when Optimus Prime changed from the trailer truck into the robot, where did his trailer go? That kept me up

nights because I couldn't figure it out.

But Megatron doesn't get away unscathed; he is one small step from death's door himself. In a rebellion by his subordinates, he is jettisoned into space and left for dead.

But Unicron, a giant robot of

thing capable of destroying Unicron.

Through all of this, there is our young hero, Hot Rod, voiced by Judd Nelson, who is destined to save the day. He is the embodiment of the American spirit. He's a hot rod, for cryin' out loud.

Other vocal talent in the film includes Leonard Nimoy as Galvatron, Eric Idle as Wreck-Gar, and Orson Welles as Unicron.

Mason: A little-known fact is that while Unicron is dying, if you turn the volume up really high, you can hear him saying "Rosebud."

Josh: Mason, the depths to which you will sink for a bad joke continue to surprise me.

This movie is terrible in that really great way. There is hardly an original thought in the movie. Galvatron is a direct rip-off of Marvel Comics' Galactus, there are many parallels with "Star Wars," and even though it was released more than 15 years later, we are convinced that they got the whole matrix thing from 1999's "The Matrix."

The plot and dialogue are also so bad that it's painfully funny. Just look: "Now all we need is a little energy, and a lot of luck." — Optimus

"I've got better things to do



Bryan Dixon Emerald

enormous power who eats planets, summons Megatron and gives him a new body with new powers. Megatron is reborn as Galvatron and goes on a mission to capture the matrix, a relic possessed by the leader of the Autobots that is passed down through generations, and it's the only

Bad taste overpowers book's humor

■ 'Mall' lacks tact in attempt to add comedy to a plot involving a public shooting



BOOK REVIEW

Eric Bogosian 'Mall'

Simon & Schuster

★★★☆☆

By Josh Ryneal
Oregon Daily Emerald

It seems inevitable with the rash of incidents involving gunmen shooting up a public place, be it a post office or a school, that someone would write a novel about it. Eric Bogosian, with his first novel, "Mall," takes on this sticky subject but tries to infuse a little humor into the situation.

Not a good idea.

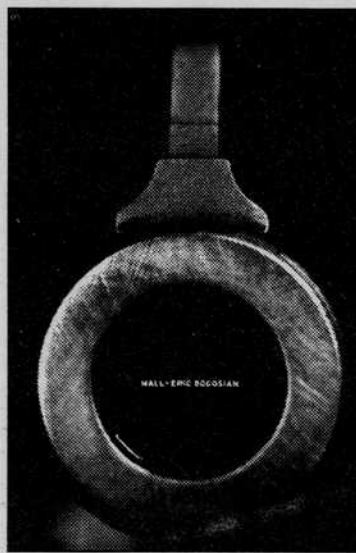
You would think that a plot yanked from those kinds of headlines would either be a satire or a pot-boiler thriller, but Bogosian chooses to take the middle ground between them and comes up with a sticky, superficial mess.

The story revolves around five obsessive characters who collide at a local suburban mall: Mal, the speed freak who kills his mother, sets his house on fire and travels to the most populated place he can find with a bag of automatic weapons in tow; Danny, a successful middle-age businessman with a frigid wife and a penchant for Sears lingerie catalogs; Jeff, a wannabe suburban Rastafarian who embarks on a disastrous acid trip; Donna, a

hungry, oversexed housewife with a "dead trout" for a husband and a flair for exhibitionism; and Michel, a Haitian immigrant who takes his job as a mall security guard to the extreme in an attempt to block out the pain of his wife's death.

Bogosian tries to manipulate his characters into situations that illustrate the hollow and spiritually empty underside of suburbia but really only succeeds in exposing the shallowness of his characters. He takes the easy road with Mal, who comes off as a one-note lunatic whose motivations for going on his rampage are never really clear (except for the drugs). Jeff and Donna don't really resonate well as believable denizens of Bogosian's world, and Michel is a mere skeleton, fleshed out only by a few flashbacks to give the reader any clue why he pursues Mal with such dogged intensity. Danny is the only one who comes off as having any kind of complexity, but that's only in comparison to the others.

The humor in "Mall" leaves something to be desired, especially after the wake of recent school shootings. A madman's shooting up a mall is not the most effective stage for comedy of any sort, but Bogosian brushes by this consideration by giving us the most ludicrous situations at the most inopportune times. Look, it's Danny handcuffed in the back of an abandoned police cruiser as a sociopathic teenager attempts to rape him! Oh my, Jeff is picked up by Donna and carted off to a Best Western, where he proceeds to have a psychedelic freakout during a sweaty intercourse session! It's



moments like these that undermine Bogosian's attempts to make any real social commentary and reduce his book to the equivalent of an auto accident.

Parts of "Mall" exhibit some flair. Bogosian turns an occasional lyrical phrase and manages to mine a bit of genuine human emotion, but these parts are scattered throughout the book. You would think that the winner of numerous playwright awards could come up with something a little better than this.

While the book isn't totally irredeemable, Bogosian can't quite pull off his sweeping critique of suburbia, the media and consumer culture in general. While trying to make his characters' respective emptiness stand for something, he only succeeds in hollowing out the emotional core of his book.

tonight than die." — Springer, one of Hot Rod's Autobot friends.

"I'll rip out your optics!" — Megatron

"Tell my son I'm coming home as soon as we kick Megatron's tail across the galaxy." — Spike, a human friend of the Autobots.

Even though the movie has all these things going against it, we still loved it. Something about that childhood bond makes us forgive any shortcomings. If the new Pokémon generation were to see this movie, they would probably gag from boredom.

Not to mention that half the audience would start having seizures because of the fast cuts and flashing lights that permeate the film.

Josh: I just don't have the short attention span I had when I was 8. I really needed a huge box of candy

for a sugar rush.

But the Transformers represent such mythic characters in the minds that they helped shape. It will take much more than these things to turn us away. Plus, we love that Transforming sound. You know, the sound they make when they change shape. Man, that takes you back.

Mason: Yeah.

Josh: (making the noise) Chur chur chur! Kind of like the \$6 million man.

We give this movie three stars. However if you still don't know who the Transformers are, you shouldn't have read this far and you shouldn't see this movie. Your puny minds would probably collapse.

Mason West and Josh Ryneal are Pulse reporters for the Emerald.

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