

# REVIEWS

PULSE EDITOR: REBECCA WILSON

## New Connery film a so-so mix of old concepts

■ Newcomer Rob Brown makes a stellar performance as a street-wise genius



### MOVIE REVIEW

'Finding Forrester'

Columbia Tristar

★★★☆☆

By Mason West  
Oregon Daily Emerald

If you took "Scent of a Woman," "Good Will Hunting," and "The Basketball Diaries" — minus the drugs — and mixed them all together with Sean Connery and a young kid from Brooklyn, you would come out with something similar to Columbia's new film, "Finding Forrester."

Jamal Wallace is a kid growing up in the Bronx who likes to play basketball with his "homies" and read and write in his spare time. William Forrester is a famous writer who disappeared after writing a single book people haven't stopped talking about for 50 years. He also, for unknown reasons, likes to watch the neighborhood kids play basketball from his third-story window.

To Jamal and his friends, "The Window," as they have dubbed their unknown voyeur, has become a mythic figure, which leads to a dare to sneak into his apartment. Jamal, always eager to be accepted by his peers, volunteers but ends up leaving his backpack of diaries in the apartment when Forrester frightens him off. Thus begins the relationship between our two protagonists, who eventually become friends and help each other with their lives.

Yada yada yada.

Let's face it, the components that make up this new film aren't anything new, but this story hasn't gotten old yet.

There are two reasons for this:

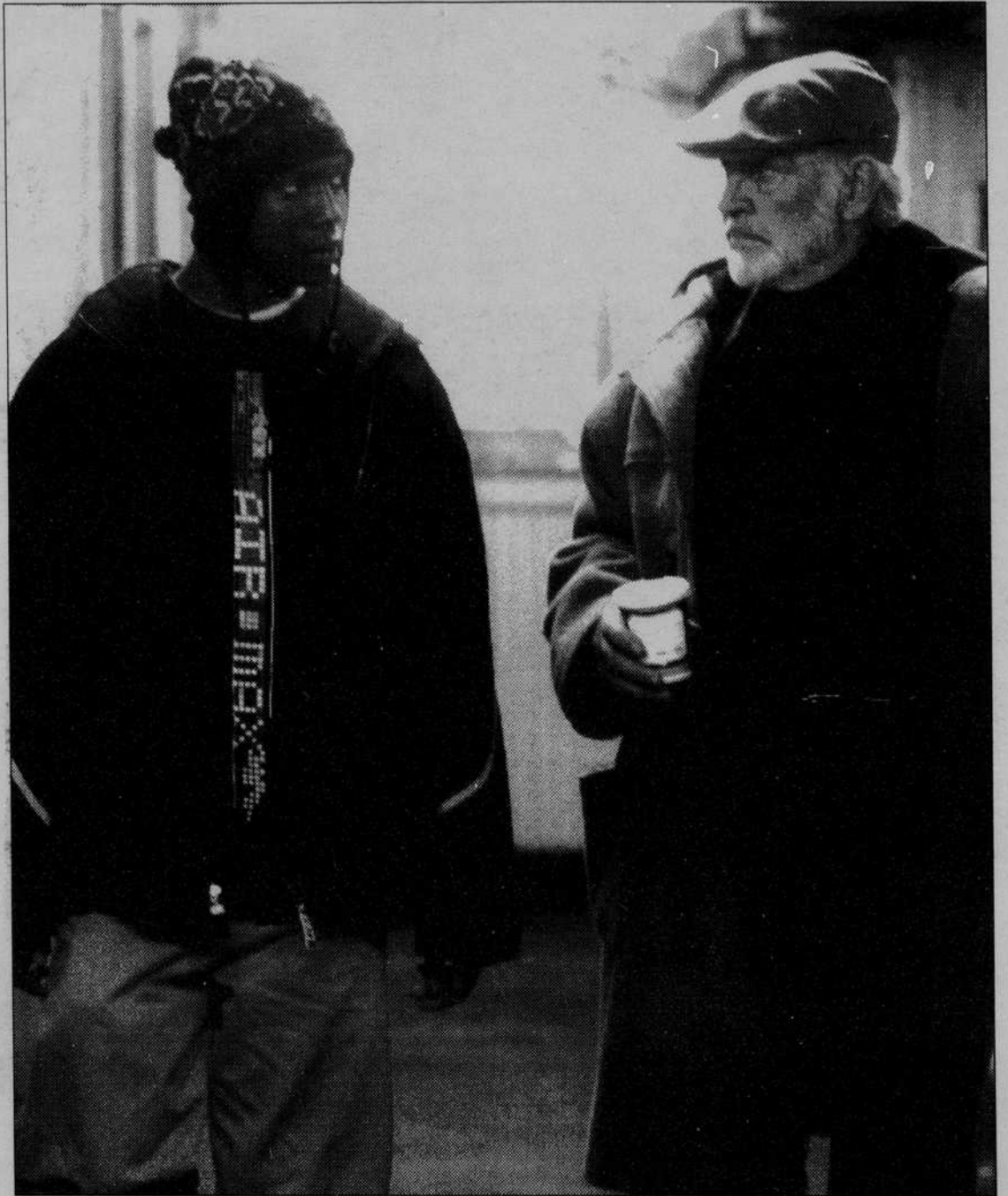
1. Jamal is played astonishingly well by first-time actor Rob Brown. Brown, currently a junior in high school, didn't have any acting experience before this film. His experience was mostly in playing football and basketball.

Director Gus Van Sant was wise to choose someone with the real street smarts to pull off Wallace's character, rather than some actor who might be able to fake it. The problem with this decision is the risk that there is too much street kid and not enough to back up the genius aspect. There are times in the film when Brown's credibility as a protégé is questionable. But Brown acts just as he should and keeps Wallace's talent hidden unless he needs to prove it. He comes from the same place as Wallace and performs best in the scenes where he is playing basketball or hanging out with his movie friends. These are the times when the only reason he is acting is because the words coming out of his mouth were written by someone else.

2. Sean Connery as William Forrester. We never get tired of Sean Connery. He doesn't act extraordinarily in the movie; he acts like Sean Connery. In fact, the William Forrester character is very thin. A lot of things are hinted at that just disappear rather than reach a conclusion. But does anybody really care?

The answer is "yes" for those who care about the plot, and "no" for those who care about the movie. When people go to see a Sean Connery movie, they listen intently to every word that he says, just to hear him proclaim things such as, "You're the man now, Dog!" and then laugh because Sean Connery shouldn't be saying "dog" in a sentence that isn't referring to a pet.

Also making appearances in the film are Anna Paquin and F. Murray Abraham. Paquin plays Wallace's only friend and vaguely concluded



Courtesy Columbia Pictures Industries Inc.

"Finding Forrester" traces the unique relationship that develops between eccentric, reclusive novelist William Forrester (Sean Connery, right) and a gifted scholar-athlete, Jamal Wallace (Rob Brown), who becomes Forrester's protégé.

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## Capcom, SNK make disappointing duo

■ The kings of combat video games have plenty of room to improve after this first effort



### GAME REVIEW

'Capcom vs. SNK'

Capcom

★★★☆☆

By Mason West  
Oregon Daily Emerald

In the world of fighting video games there are basically two factions: Capcom and SNK. Capcom has dominated the popular market with the many incarnations of the "Street Fighter" series, but SNK has never been too far out of the spotlight with yearly editions of "The King of Fighters" series.

In the new game "Capcom vs. SNK," the two companies have buried the hatchet and combined forces. Capcom has brought characters from the "Street Fighter" games to fight some of SNK's "Kings of Fighters." Finally, players can pit Ryu against Terry Bog-

ard, or Chun Li against Mai Shiranui. The results of these battles have been awaited by gamers such as this reporter for some time.

However, the results of this combination are disappointing. The two different gaming universes contain fundamental flaws when combined with each other. Many of the Capcom characters use projectiles such as fireballs, whereas the majority of SNK's characters don't. This leaves them at a severe disadvantage in all respects because their attacks don't cover as much distance. There isn't even an effective way for an SNK fighter to cancel out a Capcom projectile.

A further disadvantage for SNK's characters is the complexity of their moves. Some basic moves are similar to Capcom's, but the more important — meaning more damaging — moves are difficult to execute. This makes it easier for Capcom characters to do more damage and win more easily.

One area where the programmers succeeded in combining the two styles is in the "groove" selector. Capcom and SNK have distinctly different ways of executing super combos that require a certain level of power displayed on a meter be-

low the fighting screen. Capcom's style is an automatic charge that allows the user to make a choice of how much energy to use in increments. The SNK style is a manual charge that allows the user an unlimited amount of potential energy but requires time to charge, which leaves the fighter defenseless. In the game, any character can use either style regardless of company origin.

A small piece of eye candy in the game is the variation in artistic styles used to display the characters. Depending on the groove a player selects, the characters are drawn in either the Capcom or the SNK style. SNK has always drawn its characters more realistically, such as in the recent "Final Fantasy" games, whereas Capcom draws fighters much more like cartoons. But regardless of the groove, the characters appear the same when fighting.

The characters selected to be a part of the game are ample, but there will be people who disapprove of who made the cut. Capcom characters such as Mega Man or Strider were thrown out because they aren't Street

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