

Entertainment

"127 Hours" promises novel perspective, carefully derives insight from authenticity

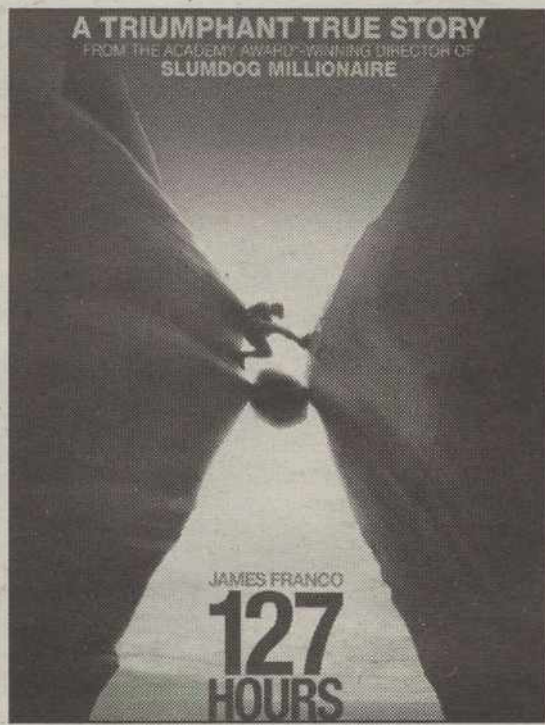
JACK LAMMERS

Excruciation, deficiency, regret and despair don't even begin to define Aron Ralston's encounter with the abyss or give meaning to the catharsis following his journey. But with a devoted cast and director, "127 Hours" takes the audience partway there.

The film reconstructs the real-life ordeal befalling Aron Ralston, played by James Franco as the a hardworking engineer turned outdoor recreation enthusiast who embarks on a solo outdoor adventure in Utah's Canyonlands National Park. In the middle of Blue John Canyon, he tries to use a chalkstone boulder as a hold while making his way to the canyon floor but the boulder dislodges and crushes his hand, pinning him near the bottom.

With two days worth of food, he begins to problem solve using climbing equipment and his pocketknife in an attempt to move the chalkstone, but to no avail. After five

days in the canyon, Ralston decides to amputate his arm and despite blood loss and dehydration manages to scale



a 100 foot cliff before being rescued.

Franco gives an incredible performance which reflects the power of an abyss of delirium and disparity. He demonstrates the weight of Ralston's spiritual rebirth as a mechanism akin to adrenaline in its power to overcome the unthinkable.

This film may have advanced him to a new tier of actors and may have possibly been a step towards achieving

the status of best actor of his generation. Instead of overplaying certain emotions as we might expect, primarily fear and anger, Franco deepens his performance by reflecting Ralston's background as a successful outdoorsman and his fall from invincibility.

Throughout the feature, I found myself asking why we aren't exposed to the lives of his family members with respect to his disappearance. This is when I just began to trust director Danny Boyle, also the director of "Slumdog Millionaire," and by the end of the film, I found that the omission of other perspectives added to the emphasis on isolation and self-reliance.

The simplicity of the film is subtly belied by details from Ralston's book, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place" which I unfortunately failed to read beforehand. Still, after watching an NBC interview with Tom Brokaw, conducted just six months after the tribulation, I found that I was able to pick up on some subtle

nuances because of the film's realism and communicative power.

From the burritos that Ralston rations throughout his struggle to the raven that soars overhead and upon which I will not elaborate, I found myself focusing less on the time and more on his routine. These are only a few of the examples of the ability of the cast and production crew to draw the viewer in and to communicate the surface of Ralston's emotion.

The varied filming and editing techniques add another layer of distinction to the film. As expected, the production team uses a digital camcorder mock-shot as Ralston actually did, but they also incorporate smooth transitions between reality and Ralston's delusion throughout the film. This blurs the lines of reality and recreates a feeling of disorientation and confusion. The sound department was very impressive in its incorporation of effects including well timed and emotionally riveting sounds that stand alone. The production team included an editing technique called

a triptych view of three columns in which each piece being shot builds on one another, drawing the viewer's attention subconsciously to the frame of interest.

A great movie can stand alone without advertisements or outrageous budgets. What sets Boyle's filmmaking apart is his attention to the premise and the passion he has to effectively translate meaning without directly handing it to the viewer. The movie itself feels a lot like a mixture between the rite of passage concept of the adapted film of John Krakauer's "Into the Wild" and Boyle's "Slumdog Millionaire," but takes on a feeling all its own.

Ralston approved of the movie's depiction and even worked with the crew to ensure accuracy, implanting his own reactions into the storyline. "(127 Hours) has given me new perspectives and on the other hand they tell it so authentically that it is still my story," Ralston said.

I would give the film five stars out of five. The film is rated R for language and some disturbing violent content including bloody images.

Cold War Kids hype gives people false image of "Mine is Yours"

DANNY MCGARRY

Cold War Kids, a Long Beach based band, has been producing funky soul for seven years now, but have they been able to stay true to their roots? Quite honestly, no.

I'll admit it; I gave into the hype. I was expecting an album with maybe more of their old stuff, a soulful blues,

tried to enlist new fans to expand their popularity and receive even more money than they already have. And sometimes, bands make albums just because they can, not because they want to. But they forget about the fans that have been there with them the whole way. This is an unnecessary risk, which almost never works.

I purchased the deluxe edition which comes with two more songs, "Don't Look Down on Me" and "Fashionable." "Don't Look Down on Me" does manage to pull off a mixture of the new and the old, which sounds pretty good—like what the album should have been. "Fashionable" is a slow, steady song that, unfortunately, last for seven minutes. My attention span has improved over the years, but this is way too slow. It drags on and on, building occasionally.

Don't get me wrong, this is still a good album, but you have to really change your perspective to appreciate it. This percussion-focused album does have some good songs, regardless of your view of the album in its entirety. Songs like "Broken Open" are

part of the new approach, but they are still good. The first part of the album is okay, but the second half is good.

In December 2009, Cold War Kids released an EP titled "Behave Yourself" with four songs. When I listened to this album, this is what I was more or less expecting for the new album. This EP—early preview—is nothing like what is on the album now, other than they have the same band members.

I really do like this band. Songs like "We Used to Vacation" and "Hospital Beds" were songs that had power and feeling, but this album leaves me hanging. If someone wanted to understand this band, start with "Robbers & Cowards," not because it's their first, but because it's their best.

I would give this album a ★★★★★ because, honestly, I was disappointed. This album is like receiving a nice sweater for Christmas. You like the sweater because it's nice, but it's not really what you wanted or expected.

Cold War Kids sells for \$9.99 on iTunes (Deluxe is \$11.99) and is sold in music stores for \$13.99.

Boys Basketball Team survives playoffs with huge fan support

Boys Basketball

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With snow threatening the practices leading up to the game, the team stayed focused through all the distractions. The Lions took an early lead, pressing the Panthers into a frenzy. At the end of the first quarter, the Lions led 24-10.

"Redmond was a great match-up for us because they're a good team, but they don't handle pressure well," Viuhkola said. "We were able to dictate the speed of the game by pressuring them up and down the floor. We played some of our best defense in that game."

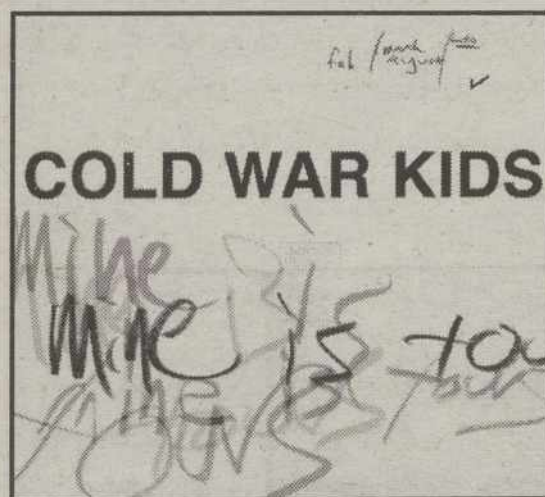
Continuing their dominance, West Linn outscored Redmond 20-12 in the second quarter. The second half of the game was fairly even score-wise, as the Lions allowed many of their starters a rest, giving some of their less-experienced players the opportunity to play. West Linn placed four

scorers in double figures including Mitchell Cokley, junior, who led the Lions with 19 points. Riley Wilkerson, senior, added 14 and Mario Shonkwiler and Ryan Shearmire each contributed 13. The Lions won the game 84-60.

The following Tuesday, they faced the David Douglas Scots, a team they lost to earlier in the season by 14 points. The Lions kept the game close until the fourth quarter, when they outscored David Douglas 40-26.

"We probably played our best game of the year against David Douglas," Viuhkola said. "Keith Baggetta did a fantastic job. In the first half he might have had his best game. He was shooting the ball really well, as well as taking it to the basket and setting up his teammates Mario and Ryan."

West Linn won the game 94-78, earning them the opportunity to move on to the second round.



but was a little disappointed with the product I was so anxiously awaiting. Now some songs, like "Louder Than Ever" and "Cold Toes on the Cold Floor" still somewhat echoed their past albums, but others like "Finally Begin" have this new, trying-too-hard-to-make-a-good-album impression. It even has a bit of a Christian rock tone.

Now this may sound hipster (something I try not to be, even though we're in Portland), but I think they've