

'Underworld: Evolution' unevolved

Jadon Triplett

A&E Editor

"Underworld: Evolution" is a disappointing follow up to its smarter predecessor.

"Evolution" starts by showing us the first vampire (Marcus, who in the present day is one of the ruling elders of the vampire clan) and first werewolf (William, twin brother of Marcus). The opening sequence is set about 1000 years ago, when Marcus and the vampires are hunting the lycans (a term for werewolves), specifically William, who is unable to revert to human form (like most vampires and lycans) and is very dangerous. At the end of the scene William is captured and imprisoned, but not killed because Marcus will not allow him to die.

Fast forward to present day: Marcus is awakened from Dracula-style hibernation and decides he wants to free William from his prison, although the movie doesn't quite explain why Marcus decides to wait 1000 years to do it. We're just supposed to accept that he wants to free him, and that is going to be the conflict.

This brings the viewer to the next unexplained event in the movie. The vampire hero-

ine Selene (Kate Beckinsale) decides to stop Marcus and "save the world." This doesn't make a whole lot of sense because Selene is on the run with Michael (Scott Speedman), the hybrid lycan/vampire that she's in love with and helped create in the original "Underworld." He resembles a smaller Incredible Hulk, with the same dilated-looking black eyes, but without the purple pants.

She doesn't really have a good reason to go after Marcus and William, other than it is the "right thing to do." The viewer is of course expected to accept this and keep watching.

Despite its shortcomings "Evolution" does have a few things going for it. There is no shortage of action in "Evolution," just a shortage of clever writing. The twists in the story are at times completely predictable, and other times sacrifice plot consistency (or any semblance of reason) for action.

I am aware that I just used the word "reason" in connection with an action/horror flick, and how contradictory that notion is. However, after the surprisingly smart and engaging plot of the first "Underworld" I had a reason to believe this movie wouldn't be so bad.

Some of the creative ways

to kill somebody this movie makes use of are enjoyable in a "Kill Bill" meets James Bond fashion, creating the ultimate cheesy violence smoothie. The best part is when a helicopter crashes nose-first into William's prison, where Selene makes use of the still-spinning blades to chop one of the villains to pieces.

As far as the villains go, they are one of the better things "Evolution" has to offer. William as the very first werewolf is awesome, although the movie fails to explain how he survives in his prison without blood for a thousand years.

Marcus, the first vampire, is also well done, and like the lycans, not something one would want to meet in a dark alley. He looks like a cross between a gargoyle and a demonic bat. He's the only vampire in either movie to have wings.

The other saving grace of this film is Beckinsale's acting. When she should be giggling at the material she is working with she keeps a straight face. She also makes a convincing and attractive vampire.

But Beckinsale isn't enough to save this film. Don't bother with the high prices and subpar service of your local theater; wait until this one comes out on video.



Like most action-packed sequels, "Underworld: Evolution" favors ridiculously predictable action over a decent story.

Local group Electric Melanoma have potential, but need work

Tayo Stalnaker

The Clackamas Print

The Portland area has been home to many great local bands. Jollymon gave us their amazing live shows with pyrotechnics and deep bass grooves. Grindstone gave us their raw energy and powerful vocals. Now a new band is appearing in the local club scene, Electric Melanoma. They're young, but they do have potential.

Electric Melanoma started up

over the summer. They're mostly doing shows in Sandy, their hometown, but they just started getting gigs in the Portland area.

Listening to their demo songs one can tell they're new to recording. However, musically they have a lot of talent.

As far as their lyrics and music are concerned, they could use some help. Their lyrics are pretty juvenile and could use some touching up, and their lead singer Robert does need some practice. But he's not as bad as the ill-fated Implement lead

vocalist was.

With indie-rock becoming more and more popular, it's no surprise Electric Melanoma chose this route with their music. At least they're trying to make their own indie-rock sound and aren't trying to emulate another band's sound.

"You know, I can't honestly say any band directly contributes to the sounds we've created," lead singer Robert said. "I mean, you can find certain styles from certain genres, metal and punk overtones in Kris's drumming, grungy and dragged out

singing, unclear guitar sounds, and total punk bass."

At first listen it may seem that Electric Melanoma isn't really taking their music seriously. A lot of their songs are written to be funny, but it's mostly sophomoric humor. If this band wants to be taken seriously they really need to come up with better lyrics. However, at least one of them may be starting to realize that.

"In the beginning, I think we wanted to get somewhere. Then [we] kind of lost it for awhile and [we] were just mess-

ing around, but now I'm taking it serious. I take it seriously like any other thing I do musically. I love what we've created, no matter how ridiculous it is," Robert said.

Electric Melanoma unfortunately doesn't have a demo out yet, but if you want to listen to a few of their songs you can go to their website at myspace.com/electricmelanoma.

They just finished playing their first show in Portland at the Clackamas Community Center on Feb. 4. It will be at the same location on Feb. 11.

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