REPOMAN

For this week I wanted to take a look at another famous 80’s movie that I think captures at least a couple aspects of the decade perfectly. There is a punk scene, muscle cars, aliens and girls. Not sure what else you need to peak a teenagers curiosity in a movie. This and the fact that the movie throws in cheesy but actually somewhat funny jokes throughout is what makes this movie standout to me. Instead falling apart because of the crazy combination of ideas that the movie has it was blended together well. The car don’t seem impossible and actually everything beside what happens with the aliens is actually believable action. This is where I see a lot of action movies go wrong. They do things that no one would ever do and sometimes it is just an average Joe doing them. They forget to stay within their character’s boundaries. Of course there are movies with people doing incredible things that are believable within the frame of the movie, like the 007 franchise, but some others, like Shia Labeouf’s character in transformers, have really no training and somehow survive in battles between giant robots. This movie stays within the frames of its characters. It doesn’t exceed what most people could actually do in the situations presented. There are some pretty crazy car chases but nothing that couldn’t actually happen which in my mind makes the movie work. I want fantastic and believable from a movie which is understandably hard to achieve but works so well when done right.

The movie was released in 1984 and stars what were then somewhat unknown actors. The main character, Otto, is played by Emilio Estevez who later went on to have roles in the Breakfast Club and St. Elmo’s Fire. Two iconic films of the 80’s. He does just as good of a job with this role as any other and if you have seen and liked those films I’m sure you could find something to enjoy in Repo man.

The music you have been listening to in the background of this review is repo man by Iggy Pop. It was produced specifically for this movie. Other artists in the soundtrack of this film include the Plugz, suicidal tendencies, among others which all fit well and definitely have the punk feel a lot of this movie gives off.

The filming and set choices could easily be overlooked in this film. They aren’t really too noticeable but that is something that should also be mentioned. The way it was filmed nothing felt out of place. The Repoman’s office wasn’t in some office park, the outfits fit the scenes the characters were involved in, and in general everything clicked. I was reminded of Tarantino in this film through the trunk shot. Man cracks open the trunk of a car only to find an unpleasant surprise but the shot coming from inside of the trunk brought Tarentino right to my mind. During the period where this movie would have been released Tarentino would have been in his twenties and just beginning his film career. The wacky elements of Tarentino’s movies likely come from ideas inspired by weird 80’s movies like Repo man. That is part of what makes films from the 80’s and any older generation of films for that matter. You can see how they impact how films are made today and where style choices have developed from. One funny aspect of the setting of the film that some may not even notice in the movie is the distinct lack of branded items. There are hardly any. Most of the cans and bottles have words like food and liquor on them. The most basic and reappearing aspect but it gives the movie a twilight zone feel to it that is almost subconscious. You definitely notice the different containers but may never pay close enough attention to them to catch the detail that obviously puts the scene in a fictitious movie.

Along with being done very well visually the film also has a really unique story. I wasn’t sure what to expect when watching this movie as I have only heard it in passing reference as an 80’s movie but with a title like Repoman I knew it wasn’t going to be completely conventional. Just the idea of making a main character a Repoman is kind of funny when you think about it. They are almost immediatly antiheros. They aren’t bad but they aren’t really good because they are stealing cars

The opening credits and scenes are what films try to copy when they want an 80’s feel to them. The cop’s uniform, the crazy scientist man, the disintegration, the lame super market and the list could go on. The unintentional details in old films will always stick out to me in the fact that I simply was not alive in the 80’s and I think that is part of what makes them so interesting to me. They show me of what sort of time my parents grew up in and some distorted view of the culture of that period. I’m not saying this to make anyone feel old but if you haven’t done it before try watching movies from when your parents would have been teenagers and it really is pretty interesting.

I am going to give this movie a 7/10. There is a lot to enjoy in this movie and I hope I have made that clear but there is something left to be desired from this movie. Maybe it is a more emotional plot or something along those lines but some small detail keeps this movie from being perfect. That vague criticism being said I don’t think you could change the movie very easily and keep it great so it would have been hard for it to get a much higher score.

Your best bet if you want to watch the movie is going to amazon but it is available in a few other places. Thank you for listening to this weeks edition of eye on the triangle and snowverated I hope you enjoy the rest of your night.