Turbo Kid

Hello this is jake winters and today I will be giving my review of Turbo Kid.

The year is 1997. The setting a post-apocalyptic wasteland. After a brief introduction to the world we see a boy scavenging. The brutality of the film coming through early as we are shown heads impaled on poles close to where the boy searches through rubble. Music plays as the boy exits the scene on his bike.

The soundtrack of the film is perfect the second you hear the first song. It sets the mood for the various fights and conversations had by the boy and generally enhances the emotion of the story in a way that only music can. Written by the Canadian music duo Le Matos, the unique neo-80’s sound plays off the story’s background in a fitting way. The music was arguably the most enjoyable part of the film. What you are listening to right now is the song No Tomorrow by Le Matos which is one of the many great songs played in the film.

Another thing that this movie did a solid job of was costume design and props. There are 80’s toys and clothes everywhere. We see the boy fiddle with a rubik’s cube in the opening scene and when he falls into a forgotten space ship there is a tesla coil sitting and waiting for him to activate the ship. These are the times when it feels as though the movie is a representation of a child’s imagination. It brings the film to life. The characters wear stereotypical bad guy clothes from the point of view of a child as well. Bad guys with football pads and spikes. Skulls for masks while carrying saw blades and hockey sticks for weapons. It feels like middle schoolers version of mad max. The artistic direction of the film is fantastic.

With all there is good to say about this film the thing that keeps this film from going from enjoyable to enthralling is the cliché acting. It feels forced. Breaking the illusion all movies try to create. You can tell the actors are pretending. And while the job of an actor is to pretend the audience is not supposed to realize that in the middle of a film. And while I say this in a negative way there is something about this style of acting that fits. If you ever wrote a comic book when you were younger you would have been writing in dumb catch phrases for the hero too. So if this movie really was trying to capture the mindset of a child they did so even by sacrificing good acting. They movie dances on a very thin wire, and I feel they came close and fell just short. It wasn’t sarcastic enough in places where it is obvious the lines are intentionally ridiculous. Leaving behind a feeling of awkward cheesiness. I will admit that this idea is extremely hard to pull off. Make something extremely cheesy but then presenting it in a serious yet sarcastic manner is a tough job for an actor. The terrible part about the acting being off in this case is that everything else was on. The setting for the filming, the props and costumes, and the music couldn’t have been better. Even the straightforward plot fits exactly what this movie was aiming to get across.

The plot while being simple fits the style of an 80’s sci-fi action movie. The hero is presented, we see a distinct bad guy, the hero gets beat up, the hero returns and defeats the bad guy, and the end. You can see every plot turn from a mile away. There is some interesting back story thrown in, but still it is only a thin veil to the basic story arch. The reason the predictable story is forgivable, even though every movie is essentially a story and this isn’t a particularly unique or interesting story, is that the point of this film can be seen as something more than just a story. It was trying to emphasize a style. Bring back an interesting style that has long since faded out of popular culture.

This film, as it based heavily on the memories of those old enough to remember the 80’s, is hard for someone actually born in 1997 to have as deep of a connection to. I can see how it would extremely enjoyable for someone to look back into some of their memories presented in such a bizarre light. The film is a nostalgic throwback to child hood for those who grew up in the 80’s. The film is enjoyable yet annoying. I wanted to like the film so much based on the appearance of it but it just couldn’t seal the deal for me. The obvious archetypes and forced comedy threw off the strong use of costume, props, and music.

You can rent this movie on Amazon Prime and itunes and I hope that you do. Thank you for tuning in to this week’s movie review. Feel free to send any suggestions or comments to the email address public affairs at W-K-N-C DOT ORG I am always glad to hear feedback and opinions. This is Jake Winters for Eye on the Triangle have a good night.