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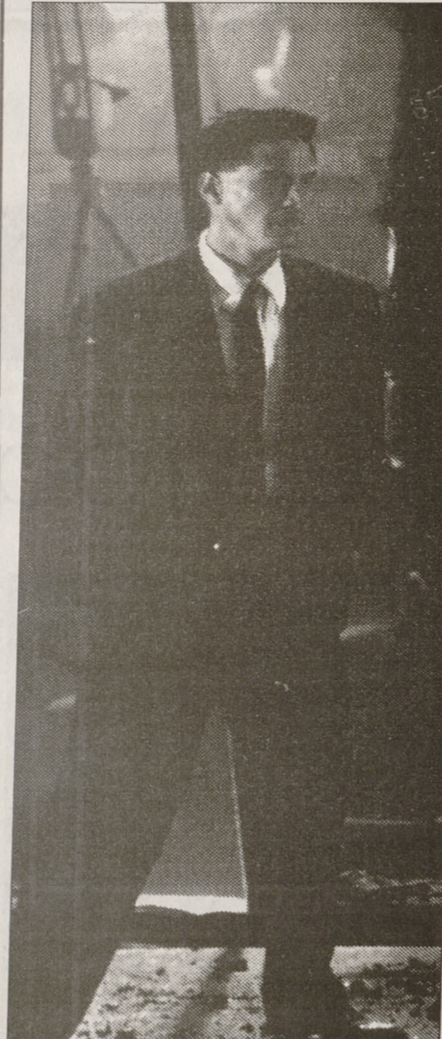
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Keanu Reeves spends his time running from bad guys as Johnny Mnemonic.

Johnny Mnemonic shows circuits with poor acting

By Libe Goad
THE BATTALION

Johnny Mnemonic
Starring Keanu Reeves, Dolph Lundgren, Ice-T and Dina Meyer
Directed by Robert Longo
Rated R
Playing at Hollywood 16
★ 1/2 (out of five)

If violence and bad acting determined a film's quality, *Johnny Mnemonic* would get a five-star rating.

Visual artist and director Robert Longo tried to bring author William Gibson's futuristic short story to the screen, but he merely brought video-game violence, complete with decapitated heads and people diced like carrots.

Perhaps the violence was meant to compensate for the bad acting.

Keanu Reeves lends a pitiful performance as Johnny, a circuit-headed courier in an advanced, information society.

Pharmaceutical bad guys download a massive amount of information into Johnny's silicone-implemented brain, and he wants to get it out.

Of course, the information locked in his head can save the world from the "black shakes," a disease caused from information overload.

Johnny says little in the film, which is fortunate for Reeves, who seems unable to shake his surfer-boy voice from *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*.

He mostly runs away from bad guys who want to decapitate him and moans in pain from his overloaded circuit. This marks Reeves' worst feature performance yet.

Karate master and action film star Dolph Lundgren delivers a testosterone-laden performance as Street Preacher, an information junkie who lives



Reeves has information stored in his head that he uses to save the world as the title character in *Johnny Mnemonic*.

on implants and carries an eerie fetish for Bible verses before killing his victims.

Ice-T gives a decent performance as J-B, an outspoken "low-tech" that fights corporate greed and aims to overcome the technological society of "Heaven," an underground information society.

But it is Dina Meyer, who also played *Twelve Monkeys*, who breaks through the weak acting trend with a good performance as the mysterious "Jane."

Her acting skills don't shine through the poor acting, but she carries a few spotlight moments with her witty comments.

Henry Rollins' performance as a sarcastic, tech doctor named Spider and the virtual segments keep the movie from slipping off the end of the ratings chart.

Longo attempts to use violence to compensate for weak performances, and the film ultimately fails to bring Gibson's dark, futuristic vision to the summer screen.

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Gibson and Braveheart get it right

By Wes Swift
THE BATTALION

Braveheart
Starring: Mel Gibson, Patrick McGoohan
Directed by Mel Gibson
Rated R
Playing at Schulman 6
★★★★ (out of five)

Mel Gibson's previous attempts at more serious films, like *Hamlet* or *The Man Without a Face* have met dismal fates, having been either slashed by critics or ignored by audiences. But his newest film, *Braveheart*, could break his losing streak with moviegoers and reviewers alike.

Gibson stars as William Wallace, a villager in English-ruled 13th century Scotland, who becomes the spirited leader of the Scottish rebellion after English soldiers murder his wife.

He leads his rag-tag clansmen against the almost invulnerable English army, winning a couple impressive victories and raising the

ire of King Edward I of England (played by Patrick McGoohan).

Wallace's story and the story of Scotland's independence are woven together with numerous subplots concerning quarrels within the English royal family, the greed and squabbling of the Scottish nobles and Wallace's own life. These disputes often make the film seem like a three-hour soap opera.

Braveheart, although a powerful film, does have a few cinematic armor. The filmmakers attempt to cram too much into the film's first hour, often sacrificing plot and character development in a series of touch-and-go, rapid-fire scenes. Also, the plots often lead to tangents that do not help the plot whatsoever.

But *Braveheart's* strong suit is its stunning battle scenes. The filmmakers recreate 13th century battles, portraying them all the grim realities and none of the romantic hogwash of ten litters similar films. Special praise goes to the film's treatment of violence, which focuses more on the fights than on the battle's gore.

Overall, *Braveheart* is a powerful film about proud people who faced incredible odds in their fight for freedom.

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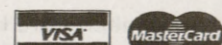
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