

Missed Target

Predictable plot kills *Broken Arrow*

MOVIE REVIEW

Broken Arrow
Starring John Travolta, Christian Slater
and Samantha Mathis
Directed by John Woo
Rated R
Playing at Hollywood 16
★ 1/2 (out of five)

gives each character their own theme song. Whatever effect Woo is going for falls short. The only effect is annoying. The only two redeeming qualities of the movie are that the word "cluster-k" is used, and for all you Volvo lovers

By Kristina Buffin
THE BATTALION

The trailers lie. Twentieth Century Fox is promoting *Broken Arrow* as a movie where two friends are U.S. Air Force pilots that fight some kind of evil threatening the United States.

Instead, what audiences get is a trite storyline about two friends, one turns out to be twisted and evil and the other teams up with an innocent bystander, usually a woman, to fight this evil force.

Vic Deakins (John Travolta) is an Air Force major who has been passed up for promotion several times.

Capt. Riley Hale (Christian Slater) is his friend and partner on a mission to fly the top secret B-3 Stealth bomber with two nuclear warheads in tow.

This is supposed to be a routine assignment to test the aircraft. However, Deakins has other plans.

Deakins is a little bitter about the fact that he has been in the Air Force for 20 years and is still a major.

Instead of handling his problems like most other normal people, Deakins decides to make money off the U.S. government by hijacking the nuclear warheads and bribing the government into buying them back for the low, low price of \$250 million.

What ensues is the typical storyline of most action movies these days. Hale decides it is his duty to save the world and find the nuclear weapons before Deakins.

Hale employs Park Ranger Terry Carmichael (Samantha Mathis) in his quest, and the movie quickly becomes a cat and mouse game.

Director John Woo has been critically acclaimed for his work in action films after he made his Hollywood debut with *Hard Target* in 1992.

Woo tries to differentiate *Broken Arrow* from the other action films with the use of slow motion at what he deems climactic parts of the movie, and



out there, Deakins said he would take the \$250 million and invest it in Volvo stock so he could live off of the dividends for the rest of his life.

He feels he is making a contribution to the world by investing in the safest cars on the planet.

Travolta and Slater give good performances, considering their characters have absolutely no depth.

Mathis does a good job portraying the hard role that seems common these days in action films — the woman who follows the man around hoping to help him save the world.

Howie Long's acting debut is just as equally impressive, considering all he does is stand around, look pretty and fire his automatic weapon.

It's not hard to do a bad job when you don't have any lines.

The government uses the term "broken arrow" when it loses a nuclear weapon.

It is an appropriate title for the movie because the whole sense of purpose for the movie is lost.



John Travolta plays Vic Deakins and Christian Slater plays Riley Hale in *Broken Arrow*.

Story of Albatross disaster lacks depth, emotion in *White Squall*

By Wes Swift
THE BATTALION

The truth is often much more amazing than fiction. Look in the annals of history and you will find wars filled with more violence than a Tarantino film; more debauchery than a porn flick; or, in the case of the fall of 1960, more tragedy than *Romeo and Juliet*.

In the fall of 1960, 13 boys boarded the Albatross, an ocean-going prep school, to explore the South Pacific and the Caribbean in addition to the traditional study of English and biology.

The ship was led by Christopher Sheldon (Jeff Bridges), a hard-as-nails sea dog whose aim was to turn the rag-tag youngsters into a crew.

As the vessel cut across the waves, the boys bonded and discovered their true selves. Everything was fine until the ship, on its homeward journey, ran into a white squall, a mythic storm of destructive force.

When the storm passed, four boys and two of the crew had died, trapped in a watery grave.

Now, director Ridley Scott chronicles the Albatross' demise and its aftermath in *White Squall*, a solid film reminiscent of *Dead Poets' Society*.

The premise is similar. A group of well-to-do youths follow a charismatic leader and discover themselves. Along the way, tragedy engulfs them, and the entire lot must come to grips with their fate.

But the innocence, charm and emotion that marked *Poets*, unfortunately, is lost in *White Squall*.



Members of a floating prep school find disaster in *White Squall*.

The viewers are only given snippets of each character, not enough to get interested in their lives or their fates.

MOVIE REVIEW
White Squall
Starring Jeff Bridges and Scott Wolf
Directed by Ridley Scott
Rated PG-13
Playing at Post Oak Mall
*** (out of five)

Bridges' performance draws mixed reactions. His character seems to sway too much between rigid seafarer and sensitive father figure.

The boys, led by Scott Wolf as Chuck Gieg, who narrates the

story, tend to get jumbled up.

Halfway through the film, the names don't always match with the faces. Each character is mentioned, gets a chance to tell his problem and then fades anonymously into the background.

The only emotion comes in the latter scenes, especially during the storm, when the chaos reaches a climax. Few scenes

are as powerful as watching someone trapped in a boat as it sinks to the ocean's floor.

Such moments don't happen enough in *White Squall*, a shame considering Scott's excellent sea footage makes viewers seasick.

Fizzy less than refreshing

By John LeBas
THE BATTALION

Mediocrity in music sells. Pop culture will often pick up on a catchy-if-meritless tune, propel it to the top of the charts and move on to something else when boredom sets in.

The cycle repeats. Less fortunate bands get left by the wayside in the process, usually due to piecing their sounds together from worn-out acts, instead of keeping up with the times or developing a unique style.

The Refreshments are bound to be one of these less-fortunate bands.

The Refreshments sometimes sound like The Presidents of the United States. The Refreshments sometimes sound like *The Heights* (that cheesy Fox Television creation that spawned the horrible ballad "How Do You Talk to an Angel?").

ALBUM REVIEW
The Refreshments
Fizzy Fuzzy
Big & Buzzy
Mercury Records
** (out of five)



for the band to develop a consistent, unique style through practice, practice, practice. Consequently, *Fizzy Fuzzy Big & Buzzy* seems to have been infected by recent mediocre rock.

The album is often cluttered with unnecessary and boring percussion and overlaid Bon Jovi-esque guitar licks. The 12 tunes are rhythmic and guitar riff-driven, and they lose their potential power through overproduction.

The lyrics are better than average, but simple and angst-ridden (the legacy and "lyrical genius" of Kurt Cobain lingers). Often, as is the case with much pop rock, the words don't complement or seem appropriate with the mood of a song.

A few things do lend *Fizzy Fuzzy Big & Buzzy* a bit of credibility. Although not very inventive, guitarists Brian Blush and Roger Clyne and bassist Buddy Edwards can play their instruments, and they are actually pretty tight. The melodies are good, albeit original.

Clyne's vocals are raw and respectable. His voice is probably The Refreshments' best asset.

Fizzy Fuzzy Big & Buzzy showcases The Refreshments' honest attempt at making likeable, unique music.

However, it is incohesive and annoying, stumbling through too many contrasting and worn-out ideas, and falling far short of impressive.

It looks like The Refreshments will have to settle for the wayside.



The Refreshments are debuting on the music scene with *Fizzy Fuzzy Big & Buzzy* from Mercury Records.

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