

MOVIE REVIEW

SIN CITY

By GABRIELLE SINCLAIR
FOR THE GAMECOCK

"SIN CITY"
★★★★ out of ☆☆☆☆

In terms of both brutal violence and cutthroat style, "Sin City," the lush, stark and disturbing retelling of Frank Miller's graphic novels, makes "Kill Bill Vol. 2" look like the first Care Bears movie. It's intense, overwhelming and, well, kicks ass. If you've ever wanted to root for the bad guy, this is your movie. In Sin City, everyone's a bad guy. It's all just a question of perspective and who's holding the gun.

The film is essentially a mix of three Miller stories, weaved together in black and white, periodically blasted with primary colors for blood, eyes, a dress, a Yellow Bastard. The stories themselves are pretty irrelevant, holding the film together at its comic-book seams. What really drives it are the crazed images. Every moment in "Sin City" is a stand-alone work of art.



The best of the three stories belongs to Rourke, who plays the homely Marv as the heart of "Sin

City." In the same manner as the makers of "Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow," director Robert Rodriguez's new nightmare was filmed entirely in front of green screens, with many of the actors never meeting each other until opening night, and virtually all the sets were digitized. But unlike "Sky Captain," which felt like two hours trapped in the back of a poorly lit zeppelin, this movie works and flows beautifully. Viewers are caught up in a place of pain, hopelessness and corruption, but it's impossible to leave because it's impossible to look away.

After the visuals, it's the maddening character studies that give "Sin City" its foundation. Three men (Bruce Willis' honest cop, Clive Owen's romantic vigilante and Mickey Rourke's torture-happy sweetheart) try to do the right thing for the women they love. But in this place, where everyone is out to get you, doing the right thing might very well mean killing a helluva lot of people, sometimes very slowly, and liking it.

A loveable hunk of poorly chiseled granite, Marv wakes up with a dead hooker in his bed and a corrupt police force on his tail. The conflicted convict immediately takes on the case to avenge his love, popping anti-psychotics along the way and making use of slow, almost comic torture only when he feels he's got the right guy. His internal monologues, sandwiched between overly cliché "Pulp Fiction" dialogues, carry the narrative flow and give the movie a sense of self.

"Sin City" isn't for everyone. The women are either angels or whores, good-natured strippers or homicidal prostitutes, broads or dames. It's shamelessly violent — pedophilia and cannibalism make cameos; traditional story lines and acts of heroism are systematically shot in the face and then gutted. But if viewers can take this as a revolutionary graphic novel brought to life, surreal and out of this world, "Sin City" is a welcome breath of fresh air in this post-Oscar purgatory. If that's not an option, however, it might be best to stick with the likes of "The Pacifier" and "Miss Congeniality 2" and keep hope alive for what summer will bring.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecockfeatures@gwm.sc.edu

PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GAMECOCK
For "Sin City," director Robert Rodriguez replicated scenes from Frank Miller's graphic novels (above).

WHAT'S WITH THE CONSTRUCTION AT THE THOMAS COOPER LIBRARY?

There's some bad news & there's some good news

The **BAD NEWS** is that Level 5 is a mess.
The **GOOD NEWS** is that there will be better study space in the building.

Level 5 is being renovated to allow for more study space on the Main Level which will be renovated this summer.

In the meantime, there's still plenty of study space on Levels 1-4 and the Mezzanine Level.

Staff members at the Reference and Circulation Desks can help you find a place to study.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE!

Pope book sales soar after pontiff's death

By HILLEL ITALIE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Sales of books by and about Pope John Paul II have soared since his death Saturday, with several quickly reaching the top 20 of Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble.com.

Leading titles include five by John Paul: "The Way to Christ," "Memory and Identity," "Pope John Paul: In My Own Words," "Rise, Let Us Be On Our Way" and "Crossing the Threshold of Hope." Another popular book has been "Witness to Hope," a biography by George Weigel, a Catholic theologian and syndicated columnist.

Because of the pope's extended illness, both publishers and booksellers had time to prepare. Within hours of his death, HarperCollins announced that a new book by Weigel, not yet titled, would come out by the end of the year and "examine the death of the pope and the Church he left behind, while also offering an unparalleled inside account of the election of the next pope."

"No writer today has a better understanding of the papacy than

George Weigel," Tim Duggan, HarperCollins' Executive Editor, said in a statement. "I'm absolutely certain that he will provide a rich, illuminating account that stands as the defining chronicle of this next phase in the Church's history."

New books already out or coming soon include "Holy Father," by Greg Tobin, and two works by the staff of the Chicago Tribune: "A Global Pilgrim: The Journey of John Paul" and "John Paul II."

Stores around the country, from the Tattered Cover in Denver, to R.J. Julia Booksellers in Madison, Conn., were offering recommendations to customers. Nancy Brown, a buyer for R.J. Julia, said she was emphasizing books for children, including John Paul's "Every Child a Light."

"Children watch TV, they go to church, so this affects them, too," Brown said Sunday.

Borders Group Inc. anticipates interest in the conclave, the secret gathering of cardinals that chooses the next pope, and is citing such works as "Heirs of the Fisherman" by John Peter Pham, and "Conclave" by

Michael Walsh. Barnes & Noble Inc. has sent a long list of suggested titles to its stores, including Carl Bernstein's biography, "His Holiness," and the collaborative "John Paul II: A Pope for the People," with Arthur Hertzberg and Heinz Joachim Fischer among the authors.

"We've instructed our stores to tastefully pull together and display all the books (about the Pope) we currently have," said Bob Wietrak, a vice president for merchandising for Barnes & Noble.

Media coverage of John Paul's death will likely take attention from three major U.S. books scheduled to come out Tuesday: Jane Fonda's "My Life So Far," Jack Welch's "Winning" and Sue Monk Kidd's "The Mermaid Chair," her follow-up to the million-selling novel "The Secret Life of Bees."

A publicist for Fonda said both segments of a two-part interview with "60 Minutes" had been scheduled for Sunday, but the second segment was postponed until next Sunday. HarperCollins, which will release "Winning," and Kidd's publisher, Penguin Group USA, said no changes currently were planned.

WOODSMAN

Continued from page 9

that he knows exactly who it is that he can no longer see.

A day without his brother-in-law usually holds a visit from Sgt. Lucas, played by Mos Def, who seems to exist almost solely for the purpose of doubting Walter's resolve to overcome his problem. It isn't until the end of the movie when Walter beats a man he suspects of being just like him that Sgt. Lucas begins to gain some depth as a character.

With an exact description of Walter and the assault occurring not 100 feet from his apartment, Sgt. Lucas has every reason to arrest Walter, but he decides to smile and walk away from the situation entirely. It is this kind of slow-paced action that characterizes the whole movie and never allows it to fly too far off the handle.

"The Woodsman," gives an interesting perspective to the side of pedophilia that people tend to steer away from. The subject matter leads to a few awkward situations but lends itself to some equally powerful encounters that leave the audience a little rattled and not just a little uncomfortable. If the subject matter doesn't bother you, then check out "The Woodsman" to see Bacon at his best — showing society at its worst.

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UPSIDE

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unravels and experiences the frustrations that make her unmistakably human.

With the exception of Witt's minimal screen presence, Christensen, Russell and Wood all deliver praiseworthy performances as Terry's daughters. Wood especially deserves recognition, as she eloquently encapsulates the family's struggles in her opening and closing montages.

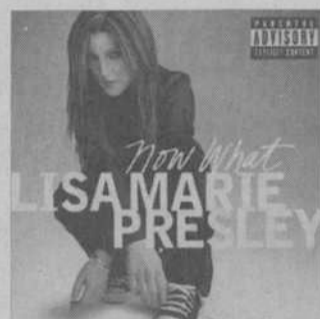
"The Upside of Anger" is one of the best films of 2005. The movie will have viewers laughing, sometimes at seemingly inappropriate times and much to the credit of Allen and Costner, but it will also impart a profound lingering sadness because of the surprise ending.

Without cheesiness, crudity or other tasteless tactics, writer/director Mike Binder successfully manages to balance comedy, drama and romance.

"The Upside of Anger" will win over audiences everywhere with its steady dose of heart and its surefire comedic wit.

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New Music for the week of April 5



"Now What"
Lisa Marie Presley



"The OC - Mix 4"
Various Artists



"The First Lady"
Faith Evans



"Elevator"
Hot Hot Heat



"We're Not Happy Till You're Happy"
Reel Big Fish



"Suspended Animation"
Fantomas



"Verve Remixed, Vol. 3"
Various Artists



"State of Trance 2005"
Armin Van Buuren

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