

STUDENT LIFE

Smokin' Aces deals the audience a bad hand

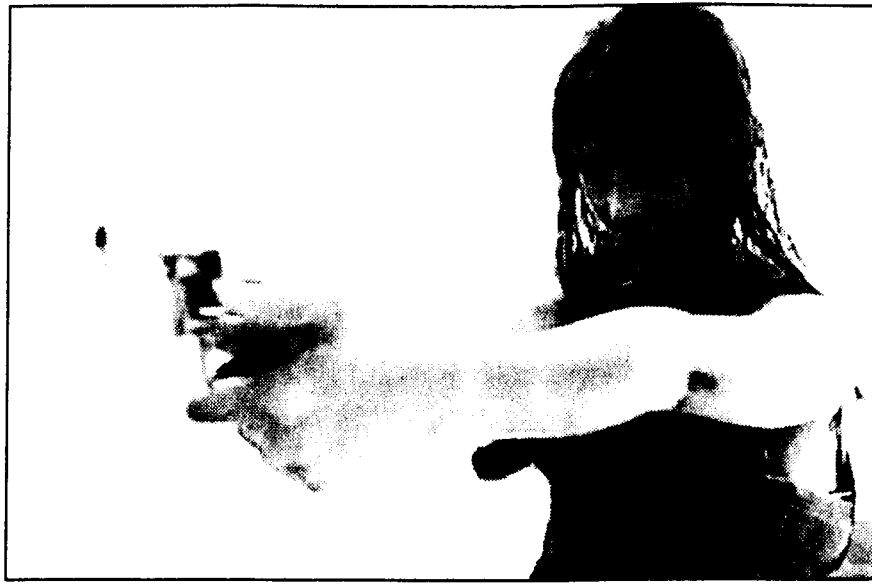
By Joshua Lane
student life editor

To say we've seen this type of movie before would be a gross understatement. *Smokin' Aces* does everything in its power to look like it's a Quentin Tarantino movie from over a decade ago. And for the first 20 minutes it's a good try. There are hired hit men that are all trying to kill the same guy and get a bounty that's worth a million dollars. It even sounds like it could be a Tarantino film. There's blood, gore, violence, crazy camera angles, and some funny dialogue. The only difference is that Tarantino movies don't suck.

Jeremy Piven plays Buddy 'Aces' Israel, a Las Vegas magician and local celebrity that gets involved with the mob. He ends up trying to climb the power ladder too fast and rats too many people out and now the mob wants his heart...literally. The mob puts a \$1 million dollar bounty is put out on him. The FBI gets word of this and they offer to put Israel in the witness protection program as long as he rats out his remaining mobster friends.

A slew of contract killers and psychopaths get wind of the bounty and all converge on the penthouse suite of the hotel Israel is staying at. The killers range from a squad of three ex-cop bounty hunters (including Ben Affleck), a torture loving serial killer, three suicidal boaters that look like they are out of *Mad Max*, and lesbian assassins (including Alicia Keys). This still sounds like the makings of a great movie, but something happens in the second act. The movie falls flat on its face, and never recovers.

It seems that after the first twenty minutes, the writers got tired of writing and they just didn't care



Alicia Keys shows she's not bad with a gun, and not too bad with an acting gig.

anymore. You will find yourself asking a lot of questions. Questions like, "Wait, why can't they use the stairwell if the elevator is broken?" or "Why would you want to steal an already stolen car that the FBI is looking for?" or my favorite, "Do life-support machines really shut off by physically pulling the plug? And if so, what would happen during a power outage?" This happens a lot. For example, a group of officers were chasing a man into a room. The man was wearing a mask, and when he entered the room he threw off his mask and hid it under the bed. When the officers entered the room he was screaming, "Oh my God! He went that way!" One of the officers then said, "Don't shoot him, he's the butler." He's the butler!? There was never a butler there before, and even so that butler is now wearing the clothes of the man they were just chasing into that room. The officers then entered the bathroom where the "butler" pointed and there was no one to be found. The scene ends and they never bring it up again. Not one time do they mention that a man vanished into thin air.

That is just one part of a thousand things that are wrong in this movie, and not even the worst of it. Piven is great for about five minutes when he actually has great dialogue to work with.

The second half of the movie he spends the entire time doing cocaine in the bathroom, crying and contemplating suicide. Ryan Reynolds has been proving that he does the action-comedy genre very well, but he is forced to be too serious and his performance seems very forced. This is easily the worst movie of the year so far and may be one of the worst of the decade. The only glint of good in this movie is that Alicia Keys is a fairly good actress, and Common isn't so bad himself. But you should save your time and money; you have homework to do anyway. **D-**

The Sandlot trilogy comes to an end with Sandlot 90210

By Ryan Gallagher
contributing writer

The Sandlot 3. I honestly wish that I was kidding. This is an actual movie that is in its post-production stage at the moment, starring Danny Nucci and Luke Perry. Surprising as it must seem, this movie like *Sandlot 2*, is going to skip the whole theater thing and come right out onto DVD.

I think it's safe to say that the majority of us groaned heavily when we saw the advertisements on television for *The Sandlot 2*. Why ruin a great classic with a sequel that just doesn't have anywhere near the kind of potential the original had? Almost all great movies are disgraced by a sequel

that tries to be new and creative, but just ends up looking like a terrible rip-off of the first movie. So instead of leaving it at one classic, and one awful attempt at a sequel, they have decided to create a third *Sandlot*, that I imagine nobody is going to watch besides young, uneducated children whom I pray do not grow up considering it as a classic from their childhood. This is very similar to what they did with the *Home Alone* films. We all loved the first two; even as I grow older I still continue to watch Macauley take care of business every time it pops up on cable. Then they had to go and film a third one, and eventually a fourth (which I believe only aired on TV). That basically says it all.

While *Home Alone* and *The Sandlot* may not have won any major awards, I think we can all

agree that these were some of the great movies of our childhoods (in addition to *The Mighty Ducks*, obviously). After browsing the Internet Movie Database, as I do all too often, I came across a few interesting facts about the formerly famous young stars of the 90's.

Did you know...

-Five of the nine original team members from *The Sandlot* made appearances on the hit show "Boy Meets World".

-Benny "The Jet" Rodriguez was also cast as Luis Mendoza in *The Mighty Ducks: D2* and also the third of the trilogy, *The Mighty Ducks: D3*

-"Connie Moreau" from the *Ducks* trilogy can be seen as "Katie" in the strange, but hilarious *Wet Hot American Summer*, which was written by Michael Showalter and David Wain.

"Jessie Hall" from the *Ducks*, was also "Kenny DeNunez" from *The Sandlot*

-Tom Guiry played the role of "Smalls" in *The Sandlot*, and is one of the only young actors from that generation that continues to appear in new motion pictures every so often. He appears in films such as *Black Hawk Down* as Sgt. Ed Yurek, and as Brendan Harris in the Oscar winning *Mystic River*, directed by Clint Eastwood.

It would be ever-so-wonderful if these sequels would cease in their productions and never show themselves to the public. It would be even better if people would stop getting these absurd ideas that they can actually make decent films out of this crap. I swear if I hear anything about a *Little Giants 2* being made, the Icebox and I will go nuts.

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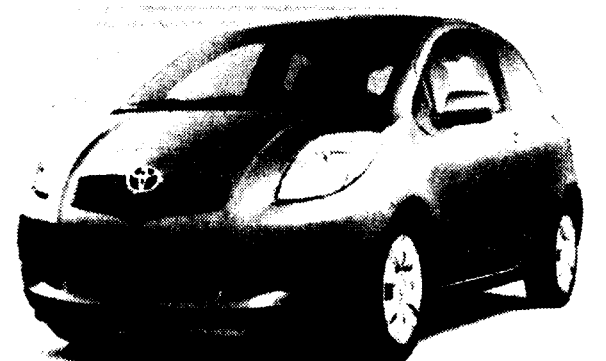
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