

No Rest for the Undead in Fourth Installment of Zombie Franchise

Written by Film Review by Kam Williams



Resident Evil: Afterlife 3D

More campy than creepy, Resident Evil 4 is one of your classic “Take the Money and Run” rip-offs, being a badly-acted, poorly-scripted and sloppy-edited B-flick shot on the cheap. Even this installment’s calling card, its 3-D special effects, are a big disappointment, given that trick photography is barely employed again after being used to project the opening credits in block letters. So, you end-up sitting there wearing those clunky, plastic, power frames for no reason for the whole movie, anticipating cool optical illusions which never arrive.

Just about the only thing RE: 4 has going for it is an attractive ensemble that’s easy on the eyes, starting with supermodel Milla Jovovich. She reprises her starring role as Alice, a gun-slinging, genetically-altered mutant who represents the last hope for humanity. The cast features other accomplished models-turned-thespians in Ali Larter, Sienna Guillory and Boris Kodjoe but unfortunately, movies are not made by eye candy alone. The film also marks the return to the franchise of Ms. Jovovich’s husband, Paul W.S. Anderson, who last directed his wife in the original back in 2002.

The play-by-play of the needlessly over-plotted, sci-fi tale is narrated by Alice in a no-nonsense manner. At the outset, she reminds us, ostensibly for the benefit of the uninitiated, that mankind has been decimated in the wake of the lab accident at Tokyo’s Umbrella Corporation which unleashed a highly-contagious, lethal virus gone wild. Trouble is, the infected don’t remain dead, but reanimate as man-eating zombies, and now outnumber people a million-to-one.

Basically at fault is Albert Wesker (Shaw Roberts), Umbrella’s slimy CEO, a stock Hollywood villain now intent on killing Alice in order to harness the powers of the gene-altering T-virus for his own nefarious purposes. However, our hardy heroine eludes his grasp, traveling by propeller plane in fast order from the company headquarters in Tokyo to a safe haven in Alaska to a

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prison in Los Angeles, where she crash-lands on the roof.

There, she finds an arsenal of weapons and a motley crew of survivors to team up with. Too bad, we've seen each of these stale caricatures countless times before, from the macho black dude (Kodjoe) who usually dies first, to the Asian (Norman Yeung) afraid of his own shadow, to the backstabbing, rich snob (Kim Coates), to the brave, battle-hardened soldier (Wentworth Miller), and so forth.

Yet, more insulting than the stereotyping and the horrifying horror clichés is the fact that the formulaic tale even has the nerve to end on a cliffhanger, setting us up for yet another sequel. Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me five times? I don't think so.

Fair (1 star)

Rated R for profanity and graphic violence.

Running time: 97 Minutes

Studio: Screen Gems

To see a trailer for Resident Evil: Afterlife 3D, visit:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q2DFcdS7aVY>