

# BEVERLY HILLS COP 2



Directed by Tony Scott  
Axel Foley's back...where he doesn't belong! Starring: EDDIE MURPHY and JUDGE REINHOLD May 20, 1987

## 98-ton tree crashes into Moore Science

Work to enhance the engagement space plaza in front of Myers Dining Hall with more vegetation led to catastrophe Friday when a 300-year-old oak tree slipped from a crane and crashed through the roof and second floor of Moore Science, causing an explosion in a science lab.

The engagement plaza—formerly a parking lot for Village residents too lazy to haul their sorry asses over to the dining hall for dinner—had been a place of some controversy for months as the college worked out plans of how to transform the acre of asphalt into anything except a parking lot with four picnic tables.

Plans to cover the space with either a sheet of pink plastic or what would have proved to be a World Record number of red, white, and blue Lego blocks forming a giant Confederate flag proved too costly, so when an environmental group called the Forests of Uninhibited Continuous Cultivation offered to

rip up the asphalt and plant 200-year-old trees there, the college jumped at the chance.

“You wouldn’t think that trying to plant giant old-growth trees into a space the size of a football field between two buildings would be that difficult, but it sure was,” said grounds manager Lee Feator. “I’m about ready to think this might not have been the best way to transform that area.”

The first signs of trouble started early last week, as cranes moving 200-foot tuliptrees into place knocked down powerlines on campus, causing a power outage lasting six hours and ruining a “wicked” Facebook conversation junior Bacon Chee was having. “I was totally about to talk her into buggery,” said Chee.

But the real trouble came with the arrival of “Virginia,” a 300-year-old live oak being moved into place to serve as a focal point at the center of the plaza.

“They say hindsight is twenty-twenty,” Feator said. “On retrospect, maybe we should have tried putting it in first, before all the others.”

The expansive crown of the oak tree would not fit through gaps between the tuliptrees, Feator said, and so to avoid having to remove the earlier plantings, workers decided to try to lift the 300-year-old tree, estimated to weigh approximately 98 tons, over the other trees into a 60-foot-wide hole dug especially to contain the tree’s enormous rootball.

What happened next is unclear. Witnesses report that the specialty crane, normally used for building skyscrapers, seemed to buckle under the weight some 150 feet into the sky. As the crane began to inch the massive tree forward into place, the top of the tree seemed to pitch forward, then did a 180-degree pivot from its location, at which it fell out of the specially constructed “nest” and into the western-most edge of Moore Science building.

A chemistry lab class was being held at the time, but because the incident took place on a Friday, no students were actually present in the class. The lab instructor, Jake Walker, was able to escape unharmed, he said, because he had seen the movie “Avatar” more than 25 times. “That part where the tree comes down is awesome, especially in surround sound,” he said. “I’ve seen it enough times that I have memorized exactly how one should react if one should find oneself underneath a massive

falling tree.”

“In fact, I was actually kinda disappointed when the real thing happened, it wasn’t bigger, more exciting,” he said. “The effects last Friday were nowhere near as good as in the movie.”

College officials have not yet reached an estimate on the damage to the building or what it will cost to finish converting the plaza to old-growth forest. “Obviously, we still have to figure out what to do with the tree that is sticking, upside down, out of Moore Science,” said BC president Hugh Van Dorn. “For now, we’re going to leave it in place and try to work around it as best we can—much as we’ve had to do for the past few years in other ways as well.”

Students have mixed feelings about the incident. One student who is enrolled in the chemistry lab class in session at the time of the incident was pretty seriously shaken up. “I mean, think about it,” sophomore Gabe Blunderballs said. “What if I had changed my routine and actually gone to class that day? It’s a good thing I never go to that class.”

Others are finding a silver lining in the incident. An art student who asked not to be identified by name said, “That tree—it’s just so positively post-modern! I mean, look at it! How art-deco! How da-da is that?” Another art student who also asked not to be identified said, “Don’t listen to what she just said. It’s completely objet trouvé.”

The explosion caused by the 98-ton tree falling from the sky into Moore Science caused some minor damage to the lab and to classroom and office space adjacent to the affected area, as well as blowing a 15-foot gash into the second floor. One faculty member in the building noted, however, that the hole in the roof “really lets in a lot of light,” and therefore should reduce the need for electric light in the building.

The maintenance department has since trimmed most of the extraneous limbs and branches from the tree, but this too seems to have had an unexpected consequence. Students and faculty in Moore Science are reporting a large number of opossums, birds, and squirrels in the building, animals presumably living in the tree when it crashed through the roof.

“For now, we’re trying to get along with them,” said biology professor Rosa Boldfield. “However, the language barrier has proven to be a challenge.”

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