

Hot Tub Time Machine delivers blast from the past

By Josh Robinson

STAFF WRITER
JRROBINS@UNCA.EDU

With memories of *The Hangover* still fresh in our minds, *Hot Tub Time Machine* attempts to take us to a distant place we've never been before: the '80s. Well, considering the fact that a lot of the people that will be interested in this movie were not even born until the '90s, this effort is not entirely in vain.

Plenty of movies attempt to create wacky, whimsical and far-off lands with non-conventional trends and styles, but when traveling back to the '80s, it is not hard to find some of the most ridiculous fads the world has ever seen. Simply put, the Reagan years are the perfect backdrop for a comedy. After all, it worked for *National Lampoon's Vacation*.

But what is really in a name? Whoever was in charge of naming this movie must have taken a page out of the book known as *Snakes on a Plane*. With a title like *Hot Tub Time Machine*, not much is left to the imagination, but the hot tub is only slightly more original than Bill and Ted's time-traveling, George Carlin-operated telephone booth.

The cast of *Machine* consists of John Cusack (who coincidentally debuted in '80s teen movies), Craig Robinson (more commonly known as the warehouse worker, Darryl, from "The Office"), Rob Corddry (of "The Daily Show" fame) and Clark Duke, (who you may, or most likely may not, remember from *Superbad*).

After Lou (Corddry) visits to the hospital, his childhood buddies Adam (Cusack) and Nick (Robinson) decide to take him for a therapeutic trip to the winter mountain resort where they adventured as teenagers, dragging Jacob (Duke), Adam's nephew, along with them.

Significantly raunchier than the other '80s-centered, time-traveling adventure known as *Back to the Future*, *Hot Tub Time Machine* makes no attempt to explain why spilling an energy drink onto the hot tub controls transports people back in time a quarter century. Neither does the resort repairman, Chevy Chase.

The story does not revolve around the hot tub. The bubbling pool of



Photo courtesy of MGM and United Artists

The movie makes no attempt to deliver some sort of moral message or deeper meaning, which sets it apart from many of today's over-the-top comedies and allows it to simply be a good time, no strings attached.

ecstasy simply acts as the literal and figurative bridge between the past and present. The movie makes no attempt to deliver some sort of moral message or deeper meaning, which sets it apart from many of today's over-the-top comedies and allows it to simply be a good time, no strings attached.

Where some movies would have you believe the best policy is not to mess with the past, this movie poses the question, "What if?" and responds with an emphatically better answer.

Remember *The Butterfly Effect* with Ashton Kutcher? Yeah, me neither, but the but the altered future in *Hot Tub Time Machine* is much cooler.

Unless you take yourself too seriously, you will know what I mean when I ask, "You know how *Napoleon Dynamite* seemed like a dumb idea before you saw it?" Well, the same applies for this movie. It is so intentionally stupid it turns out to be funny.

If you are like me, after seeing *Hot*

Tub Time Machine, you will be thankful you never lived any conscious or self-aware years in the '80s. It was certainly not a time period marked with great strides in human accomplishment, with the exception of the rise of video games and the birth of the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*.

John Hughes surely would not want to be associated with a movie like this, and that is probably for the better. Classics like *The Breakfast Club* and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* have their place, and so does *Machine*.

I am not saying that 20 years down the road you are going to make sure you buy this movie on Mega Blu-Ray 3D IMAX Reality Experience DVD, but you will probably want to rent it.

Hot Tub Time Machine is definitely a movie worth seeing, as it is easily the funniest movie of the year. Of course, Chris Rock's remake of *Death at a Funeral* and Adam Sandler's *Grown Ups* aren't out yet.

Events Around Asheville

HATCH Asheville

Thursday - Sunday
Complete schedule available at www.hatchfest.org

ActionFest

Thursday - Sunday
Action cinema film festival and guest Chuck Norris.
Updates available at twitter.com/Actionfest

The Orange Peel
SOCIAL AND PLEASURE CLUB

GALACTIC
AGES 16+

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS CYRIL NEVILLE AND COREY HENRY (OF THE REBIRTH BRASS BAND) + CEDRIC BURNSIDE & LIGHTNIN' MALCOLM
Wed. Apr. 14th @ 9pm

Allen Toussaint
+ MIKE FARRIS
Thu. Apr. 15th @ 8pm

DRIVE-BY TRUCKERS
+ LANGHORNE SLIM
Fri. Apr. 16th & Sat. Apr. 17th @ 9pm

ACTIONFEST CLOSING NIGHT AWARDS
WITH CHUCK NORRIS & REIGNING SOUND
Sun. Apr. 18th @ 9pm

MOTION CITY SOUNDTRACK
ALL AGES + FUN... A ROCKET TO THE MOON & SING IT LOUD
Mon. Apr. 19th @ 6pm

www.theorangepeel.net

TICKETWEB

BOX OFFICE ★ WEDNESDAY - SATURDAY 12pm-5:30pm
101 BILTMORE AVE ★ ASHEVILLE, NC ★ 828.225.5851