

Entertainment

... And Criticism



John Singleton is the writer and director of "Boyz N The Hood", a Columbia Pictures release.

In the past few years, a wave of Black films featuring Black actors, writers, directors, and producers, has swept through Hollywood's movie making machine. With Spike Lee's controversial films, Hollywood has received only a taste of many films to come. One of the latest Black films to emerge on the scene is *Boyz n the Hood*.

Directed and written by 23 year old John Singleton, the film makes a diligent effort to be a superb and unique film, but it fails in this effort. Singleton contends that this film is a drama that offers a message to the Black community. Yet, it fails to dramatize any issues that are relevant to the Black community.

The three young teenagers - Tre (Cuba Gooding, Jr.), Doughboy (Ice Cube), and Ricky (Morris Chestnut) - sit around on a porch all day. The audience is to assume they do this because they cannot get jobs. Singleton, here, places Blacks in a stereotype. He portrays Black teenagers as unintelligible, unemployable, and lazy. The purpose of a drama is to dramatize. Singleton should have shown these kids going into an unemployment office and being denied an application. Don't talk about it - SHOW IT. The dramatization of this would have

had more effect than having the characters merely talk about unemployment.

Singleton claims that he wants to present the reality of the Black urban neighborhood. If he is going to present reality, then he should present a clear reality. The character Doughboy sells drugs in the film, but Singleton fails to show how he acquired these drugs. Sure, he may have got them from someone in his Black community, but the members of the community did not actually bring them into the nation, or into the community for that matter. Tre's father, Furious Styles (Larry Fishburne), TELLS him that the white man is bringing drugs into the community. This statement would have had more effect if it had been manifested visually. Singleton should have revealed White people bringing drugs into the Black community and into the nation. He should have shown them at the dock on the California coast packing drugs into vans to be distributed throughout the community.

Singleton's failure to dramatize instead of verbalize hurt the movie. Messages are illustrated distinctly to people if one demonstrates and dramatizes. For example, if one's friend needs to know how to get to the

shopping mall from a house 4 miles away, it will be easier for one to show him how to get there rather than to tell him how to get there. Singleton, I'm sure, is aware of this, but he is getting caught up in the insatiable desire for dollar signs that so many directors use as basis for making their movies. Singleton's movie is targeted to a Black audience; an audience to which he says he wants to present reality. Black people know the reality he portrays in the movie; most live it everyday.

Singleton, if he ever wants to truly succeed in the film industry, should concentrate more on presenting solutions to problems and portraying a positive image. Black people know what the problems are in the community. If he wants to be effective, he should offer some solutions to the problem.

Blacks do not need to see all the violence, guns, sex, etc. Is Singleton aware that people usually emulate what they see - what is dramatized to them? If negativity is dramatized, then negativity is emulated. If positivity is dramatized, then positivity is emulated. Singleton should have shown more positivity or a clearer reality. If this movie portrays Singleton's view of Black reality, then the boy should stay in the hood.

- Wayne Hodges

domination. The Arab world's greatest threat is not Saddam Hussein, it is the power and exploitation of western governments and corporations. U.S. intervention ensures more decades of American dominance, and provides a warning to all non-European countries struggling against neocolonialism.

Second, the American intervention justifies the expansion of the military budget, the production of nuclear and conventional weapons, eliminating the peace dividend. Thirdly, in terms of domestic politics, it divided the Democratic party into pro-war and anti-war camps. Pro-war Democrats were manipulated to grant Bush unprecedented authority to initiate massive warfare abroad.

The only language the American political and corporate elite understand is resistance. This means conducting teach-ins, explaining why the war was unnecessary. It means civil disobedience, marches, demonstrations, and political organizing, bringing together religious groups, trade unions, civil rights, feminist and other progressive constituencies. Creative, democratic protest for peace abroad and social justice at home should be our focus.

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central role as the world's mercenary policemen, suppressing Third World nationalism and preserving western cooperate and political