

Wanted - DVD

Angelina Jolie gets her guns out, again

by Neil Queen published on 17 October 2008

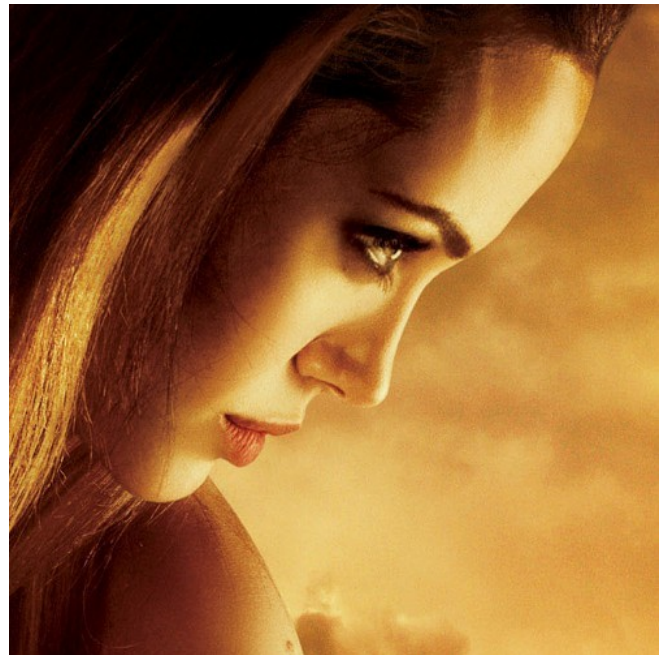
Following closely behind Daniel Craig slipstream in the Brits-do-Hollywood steeplechase, James McAvoy does his mainstream profile no harm at all in this blistering big-budget outing. Brushing over the fact that *Wanted* is adapted from a comic, let's merely note that it draws on the larger-than-life dynamism that comics have to offer, rather than the increasingly prevalent grandiose spandex freak fests we're growing ever more accustomed to.

McAvoy is at the centre of things as Wesley, a nerd ground down by every aspect of his life, from being in a dead-end job to standing by as his pal schtups his girlfriend. Into this cavalcade of blandness comes the aptly named Fox (Jolie), a memorable first meeting characterised by a ridiculously riotous yet gloriously excessive stream of assassination attempts, car chases and other near-death experiences.

Once the dust settles, it transpires that Wesley is actually the son of a grade-A assassin, a former member of an secret clique of super-human hitmen - led by Morgan Freeman's Sloan - who use their sizable skills to maintain the status quo. This they do thanks to the help of a soothsaying loom, but we'll leave that to one side, if that's cool with you. Not only that, but Wes has inherited his dear old pa's killer instincts.

Inducting him into the gang to help bring down a rogue member, they break him down physically and mentally to rebuild him as a human death factory, as the film reveals its core links to films such as *Fight Club* and *The Matrix*, not least through asides about Ikea furniture, but by seeking to overturn the tyranny of our everyday reality via extreme, super-real means. Blimey.

Luckily this is achieved via some truly ballistic adrenaline-fuelled action scenes of an incredibly stylised nature. Chances are it will give you a Red



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Bull-headache with its frenetic and enthusiastic energy, but as it's a distinctive and highly entertaining affair, that's a risk that's worth taking. McAvoy has a cultured geek vibe that works well here, accent aside, though an absence of any real tough guy persona may limit similar work further down the line that doesn't require nebbishness.

VERDICT

Oh sure, there's no real depth to it, summed up perfectly by the fact that Jolie's mere feral presence that gives it a crackle of sexuality, rather than anything she says or does, but you won't hear many people complaining - they'll be too busy wiping the CGI out of their eyes.

Rating: 18

Starring: James McAvoy, Angelina Jolie, Morgan Freeman

Directed by: Timor Bekmambetov

Extras: Behind-the-scenes, plus featurette

At a glance

What is it?

Ballistic action spectacle

Good

Bangs! whooshes! guns! violence! Angelina! Highly stylised visual approach!

Bad

It's not exactly rocket science, but what outside of (insert techie NASA space programme science discipline here) actually is?

Verdict

A dizzying headrush that falls well short of being Fellini, *Wanted* is an exhilarating, well-paced piece of mindless fluff that will keep your action movie hunger pangs sated for a decent length of time

Price 19.99 / Blu-ray & pound;24.99

Our score

7/10

Your score

?/10