

Letters on Kill Bill, Vol. 2, directed by Quentin Tarantino

29 June 2004

Dear Mr. Walsh, I enjoyed your review of the film *Kill Bill, Vol. 2* at WSWS.org. [“A culture at the end of its rope”] I find the line, “Indeed he makes a virtue of ... his addiction to kitsch and the B film, as well as his anti-intellectualism,” particularly telling, since it seems to reflect a growing trend within the “hip” middle class youth of Western society. It is not quite yet a mainstream trend, as say, the hip-hop or techno “cultures” are, but there seems to be a growing number of young people who view themselves as somewhat on the sides of establishment (!), while basking in the glory of ironic cultural phenomena, such as Tarantino and his somewhat quirky-“cool” style. That’s not to say that everyone who likes B films and underground music is automatically part of this culture, but an overwhelming number of such people do seem to fit into this classification. Anyway, great review. It is articles such as these which set WSWS apart from the rest, even from most printed publications.

Regards,

VAS

25 June 2004

To the editor,

It was embarrassing to read Mr. Walsh on his high horse criticizing a film for lacking the drama it wasn’t intended to have. If you don’t get it, say you don’t get it. Don’t pretend to understand what the director’s vision was just to assault a movie you didn’t like. Mr. Walsh warped the message Quentin Tarantino was trying to convey into some depraved madman’s fantasy by cleverly inserting irrelevant quotes into a negative context, only proving that he was biased against Tarantino before writing the review. He also enjoyed attacking every aspect he felt was sadistic and violent in a REVENGE movie, where context is so important. Merely because the message of this film is lost on you doesn’t mean there isn’t one.

Helpful Reviewing is Objective.

25 June 2004

So brilliantly written. Thank you.

(Please use humankind over mankind though, it’s customary now.)

RC

Sudbury, Ontario

25 June 2004

Thanks for your review of *Kill Bill*. Since I haven’t signed a contract with Hollywood to faithfully pay to see whatever they send out, I haven’t seen it and don’t intend to. The same for what you rightly call Gibson’s “deplorable” venture into theology. Would you continue these original and thoughtful reviews, based on a belief in the uplifting and betterment of humanity through constructive measures? And please consider writing about the way Hollywood has persuaded a gullible public that they are obligated to support an avaricious and unscrupulous industry by buying tickets for every product through the conviction that “you have to know what’s going on.” *Kill Bill* and the *Passion* are not what’s going on in the world.

Best,

VGS

25 June 2004

David Walsh’s review of *Kill Bill Vol. 2* rings true, as we can see the results of social decay being widely reflected in popular culture. It’s reached a level that goes far beyond the tasteless bathroom humor and gratuitous sex and violence that used to stir up controversy. Most of the shows on MTV, a prime purveyor of pop culture, are indicative. The hidden camera show “Scare Tactics” is hardly funny, in which people are made to think that they have radiation sickness and are about to die, or are told that their friend has just been shot outside the door by a government agent and that they will be the next to take a bullet. Fake blood is sometimes used to make the victim think that they are in a real life emergency situation, until the actors awkwardly reveal that “it’s just a joke.” The

accomplices themselves don't always seem to be convinced of the "humor," but the shaken victim gets the consolation that "you're going to be famous on TV."

After watching this show, the viewer can then switch to the news, and experience the eerie feeling of what it must be like to live in a Stalinist country. Those who have done independent reading know that almost everything broadcast is a lie. For instance, a man who used to carry out car bombings has been installed in power to fight "terrorists/the Iraqi people" in "liberated/conquered" Iraq. The news people are well-paid, well-educated, and well aware that their lies cause mass suffering and death. The realization dawns on the viewer that the news is just another make-believe show, and that even the President is merely an actor. His performance consists of clearing brush on his ranch (as if the pampered Bushes don't normally hire someone else to do this), while a cabal of neo-cons plot behind closed doors about how to shore up their increasingly tenuous hold on power, and in doing so, screw over the world's population.

If the world pulls through this, then in future decades people are going to look at these broadcasts and get the impression that the people of our time were crazy. People in the future may very well ask "how could this have happened?" just as we look back on preceding decades and ask the same question. Anyone who wants to know how events periodically get so "crazy," whether the year is 1933 or 2004, need only consult a graph of historical profit rates for a good starting point.

RG

25 June 2004

Dear David Walsh,

The quote you cited from Tarantino is I think quite appropriate for the rotten garbage that he has succeeded in masquerading as a film:

"I've always really believed that the audience needs to be tortured.... It's a lot better than being bored."

As I was watching the film, I felt as if I were being tortured. I began a debate with myself on whether I was demonstrating a masochistic inclination by staying and watching it to the end. Though sitting through this interminable assault on the senses and the mind was much like watching a car accident or some other disaster taking place in front of oneself, it struck me as being too horrible. I am not talking just of the images he graphically portrays, but, the film as a whole. Everything about it was worse than merely bad. It was, quite possibly—with the exception of certain technical features—the absolute worst movie I have ever seen. Everything was horrible. The

acting, the script, the plot, the story, the delivery. Even the choreography of the martial arts scenes that Tarantino so highly values was pathetic. (Though, in the first volume, they were at least done well, in this second installment, they were worse than amateurish.) From the above cited quote, I would venture to guess that he has just played the most expensive sick joke in history on society as whole.

The dialogue was so insipidly stupid, I wonder how he managed to get anyone to speak it? I have seen more than anyone's share of campy B movies, and this script was more atrocious than any of them. I remember, especially toward the end of the movie, cringing as each new line came out of the actor's mouths. What was worse was looking around the theatre and not seeing looks of disbelief on the faces of the rest of the audience.

One act of sadism you forgot to mention: the brother (Budd), being degraded and humiliated by his decrepit boss, in front of the young girl. Which, of course, had nothing to do with his character, or the rest of the film as a whole, just another gratuitous depiction of sadism, though, this one, I think, was something that many could relate to from experience.

Again, nobody can be this bad unless they are so consciously. When I saw the martial arts sequences, I knew he was purposefully creating a piece of crap. Compare Thurman's grace in the first volume with that of her choppy movements throughout the second. I can't make a similar comparison in any other respect, except to say that the second volume became even more outrageously ignorant in every possible way.

What was going through the rest of these people's minds? Was everyone who worked on this project on crack, or were they part of the joke?

You cited a few favorable reviews, though I have yet to speak to anyone who had anything favorable to say about this film, with the exception of those who haven't seen it. The fact that there are people who have favorable things to say about this film is a very sick commentary upon this society as a whole.

HR

25 June 2004



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