

Pin-sized action heroes go on a harm offensive

ISLINGTON GAZETTE 3/4/08

IN OF RAMBOW (12A)

Rating: ★★★★★

FUNNY GAMES (18)

Rating: ★★☆☆☆

HOW SHE MOVE (12A)

Rating: ★★★★★

MY BROTHER IS AN ONLY CHILD (15)

Rating: ★★★★★

I'M A CYBORG

BUT THAT'S OKAY (15)

Rating: ★★★★★

Due to the film's dark examination of violence it is more relevant to English-speaking (Americans) and therefore a second pass. After watching it you won't help feeling he just likes the film on his own voice.

On the surface this is the story of two brothers who terrorise a family and, in reality it just gives space to lambast audiences that villains get their just

desserts. It doesn't happen but you do sense the director wagging his finger at us in disdain during every shot and frankly it's irritating.

The film is well made. Haneke builds tension powerfully and the performances are strong – from tortured couple Naomi Watts and Tim Roth and yobs William Pitt and Brady Corbet.

But he's not telling a story, he's lecturing us and there's a contempt for his audience here that's enough to make you wish it was Haneke was being slowly tortured on screen.

– JUSTIN MATLOCK

HOW SHE MOVE (12A) will be familiar to fans of "classics" as Save The Last Dance, Sister Act 2 and Bring It On.

The conceit of an allegedly teenage student conquering their problems of class or racial difference, bereavement and underachievement through dance or sport is not new.

When Raya's (Rutina Wesley) private school fees are spent on trying to save

her elder sister from a heroine addiction, she has no choice but to return to her local school.

While cramming for the scholarship exam that's the only way back to the high life she must deal with the animosity of her childhood friends.

Certain that she cannot pass the difficult exam, Raya looks for another way of raising the money.

Which is where the high-energy dance phenomenon "step" comes in. Raya rediscovers her competitive spirit as she steps her way in and out of various different dance "crews", all the way to the Step Monster Competition with its top prize of \$50,000.

The plot is full of holes and there are moments of clichéd dialogue, but the impressive dance routines and pumping soundtrack keep things interesting.

Anyone looking for depth will be disappointed, but the gentle exploration of the Jamaican immigrant experience, with Raya's parents' as a case study,

provides a small amount of non-dance interest. – JO CAIRD

SET during the 1960s and 1970s, touching Italian drama **MY BROTHER IS AN ONLY CHILD (15)** sweeps through Italy's turbulent political history as seen through the eyes of warring brothers who are both looking to make their mark on the world.

On the surface the pair couldn't be more different. Elder brother Manrico (Riccardo Scamarcio) is handsome, charismatic and top dog in the local Communist Party. Awkward and shy Accio (Elio Germano) is younger, rebellious and jealous of his brother's standing. He joins the Fascists almost out of spite.

But the pair's sparring is brought into sharp focus when Accio realises he's in love with Manrico's girlfriend and as the political unrest begins to turn increasingly nasty.

While politics runs through the story, this is not a political film. It offers a compelling snapshot of the times but it really comes to life as a poignant and amusing coming-of-age tale as the two brothers begin to realise they more alike than they think.

This is the kind of movie that Italy makes in its sleep and while it offers nothing new to the genre, the film looks beautiful and gets some fire in its belly from two charismatic lead performances that capture the rough and tumble of siblings who love to hate each other.

BEST known for his "revenge" movies – including the controversial Old Boy – the last film you'd expect from director Park Chan-wook is a romantic comedy.

But this being Chan-wook, his version of a rom-com is from the normal run-of-the-mill fluff – and, as its title suggests, **I'M A CYBORG BUT THAT'S OKAY (15)** is completely bonkers.

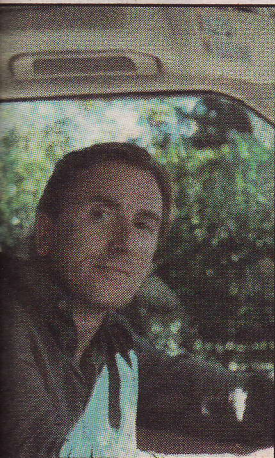
Sent to a mental asylum after slitting her wrists and shoving electrical wires into the wounds, Young-goon (Lim Su-jeong) thinks she is a cyborg, going so far as to turn down food in favour of licking batteries to recharge herself.

She comes to the attention of inmate Il-sun (Korean pop star Jeong Ji-hun) – a schizophrenic who believes he can steal people's personalities – and the pair begin to help each other come to terms with their special qualities.

The film looks beautiful. From creative opening title sequence to the numerous fantasy sequences – which run the gamut from robot killing sprees to international travel powered by yodelling – the colourful special effects are seamless and stylish.

It probably goes on too long but Chan-wook fills the screen with such magically oddness that the simple story takes flight – literally at times.

A surreal but strangely touching tale about finding your own take on the craziness of life. – JUSTIN MATLOCK



■ HOW SHE MOVE