

'Godzilla' doesn't live up to expectations



By Jeremy Miller

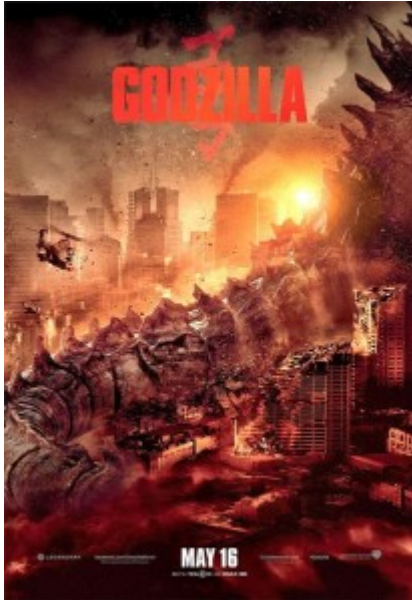
I've been dying to see "Godzilla" for the past several months. Having been very well educated by my old man, Godzilla was a household favorite for me. Mothra, Rodan, whoever, I loved it.

So, when I heard that Gareth Edwards was doing the reboot I was pumped. He wrote and directed 2010's underrated "Monsters", which I thought was unique and promising, so when he was named director of "Godzilla", I had high hopes.

It stars Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Elizabeth Olsen, Bryan Cranston and Ken Watanabe. While living in Japan working at a nuclear power plant Joe Brody (Cranston) is alarmed at unusual seismic activity. The further he investigates, the more paranormal it becomes. A freak "earthquake" of perfectly patterned shocks shakes the plant to the point of collapse causing evacuation.

In a pretty epic and suspenseful scene, Brody lost what was most dear to him. Fast forward 15 years or so and we see young Ford Brody (Johnson) all grown up and in the military. He returns home from tour to wife Elle (Olsen) and a kid. Almost

immediately upon his return he receives word from Japan that his father had been locked up in jail for trespassing. He decides to go to Japan to bail his old man out and bring him to the States to try and help him out.



Once he reunites with his father he quickly see that his father's obsession with trying to figure out what exactly happened that day at the plant hasn't subsided with time. Ford Sr. goes on and on about how it wasn't a quake, it was something else. What could it have been, I wonder?

We hop over to Dr. Ishiro Serizawa (Watanabe) who is a scientist experimenting on some sort of unknown creature. Stuff goes bad real quick (as it typically does in this scenario) and a massive winged creature takes flight from the site. It starts destroying everything around it and Ishiro's path ultimately crosses with the Ford fam's and they form an alliance.

Ford's data from way back when proves to be useful in understand this creature in the here and now. Ford Jr. takes action as the military side comes out and starts to help them search and destroy this newly freed monster. They learn that the monster feeds off nuclear energy, so they do have some ideas as to where they can look. Unfortunately for them (so we think) they start to notice some more unusual activity stemming from the depths of the sea. All of a sudden a massive reading pops up ... GODZILLA!

From here we have a battle of the monsters, with Dr. Ishiro in one corner saying that there's a natural order to things and

we should let them fight, and then there's the guys in cams saying we need to blow them all up. It proved for a pretty entertaining little three-way of who's the antagonist. Cities are leveled, bombs blow up, monsters roar, people run, and the movie ends.

What's my take? Well, to be honest, the trailers made it look absolutely epic and amazing. It wasn't. Epic? Sure, I guess, but nothing like I expected. There wasn't enough battle between Godzilla and the others. I will say that when they did fight, and when we the audience were privy to it; I was blown away by the effects and really into it. It seemed like the action stopped as quickly as it started, leaving me wanting more at every fight scene. Not good considering it's an action/epic.

I did like all the characters and I loved the story. Everyone who showed up brought his or her A-game, especially Cranston. I just love that guy. There was a time about 1:15 in where I was getting bored and just so badly wanted to see Godzilla tearing it up and didn't. Another huge problem I have is when a key scene of a trailer doesn't make the cut of the final film. One of the coolest scenes I wanted to see wasn't even in the movie. Total bummer. Overall it was fun, and Godzilla is extremely rad, I just didn't get enough of what I wanted.

South Lake Tahoe resident Jeremy Miller has more movie reviews online.