

Room for improvement with 'Lucy'

By Jeremy Miller

"Lucy" is the latest from writer/director Luc Besson ("The Family", "The Fifth Element") starring Scarlett Johansson, Morgan Freeman, and Min-sik Choi.

Lucy (Johansson) is an American girl caught on the wrong side of a deal in Japan. What starts as a menial delivery of goods to the upper echelon of the Japanese mafia suddenly turns to harboring the latest in synthetic street drugs inside her stomach. Upon arrival she's held in captivity and a disgruntled mob employee takes his day out on her, rupturing the bag inside. The drugs leak out in mass amounts and begin to unlock the potential of her mind on a gradient, ultimately hitting 100 percent.



The Miller Meter – 2 1/2 out of 5

Simultaneously Professor Norman (Freeman) is giving an eager crowd a breakdown of what exactly would take place should someone tap into a higher percentage of their brain power than 10 percent. He breaks it down on a gradient as to what the mind is capable of as the higher percentages are reached, and supplies some awesome video clips in the background so we really get it. As he narrates with the all-too-famous

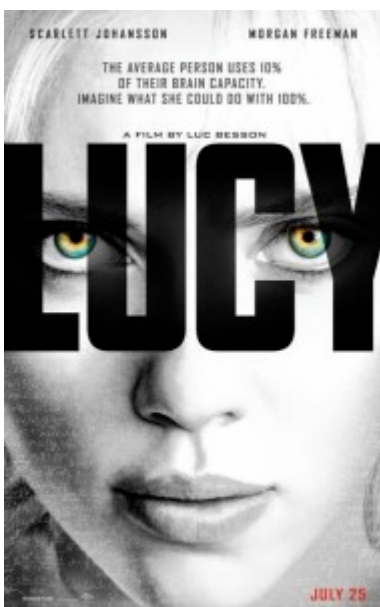


narrative voice of his, we see Lucy slowly fading further from her human self and closer toward an overly powerful being of unsaid potential.

She decides that with her new evolved abilities she's going to seek vengeance on those who put her in this pickle. She quickly discovers her abilities to control radio waves, electricity, and eventually matter. As she taps into higher percentages of brain function, she decides that she better let someone in on her little secret, so she calls the professor and showboats a bit until he believes her.

As she taps into more abilities she loses more of her persona, more of her humanity slips away and her end game moves further from vengeance and more toward how she will survive and pass on all that she's learned.

Great premise, but it sounds familiar. Oh, that's right! Neil Burger did this same thing in 2011 but with Bradley Cooper and called it "Limitless".



Lucy was fun at times, and engaging no doubt. The action scenes were short and simple, and fell short of what I would expect from a real life combination of all the Marvel heroes in a femme fatal like Scarlett Jo. The effects were as abstract as one could imagine given that no one really knows what would happen should someone use 100 percent of their brain. It tapped into all kinds of theological and spiritual themes, subtly, which was nice. I enjoyed exploring the thoughts and the

“what ifs?” of it all, but felt like the film didn't give nearly as much as it could have.

“Limitless” was just so much more fun.

Scarlett was as impressive as she usually is. I don't think

she's terrible by any means, I just think that a role with minimal dialogue suited her well. Morgan Freeman brought some heat, but he played the same role he's played a thousand times so don't expect any Oscar noms for either of them.

With a run time of 89 minutes, it's definitely not a waste of time, or money. I wasn't blown away, but I enjoyed myself. The biggest bad indicator was that rather than talking about the film I had just seen it made me want to watch its older, more entertaining antecedent with my pal Brad Cooper. But hey, it's still worth a watch.

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