

IN CINEMAS REVIEWS

## Weekender

Posted on September 1, 2011 by Ben



It's great to see a British film that isn't all about gangsters and crime, instead takes a substantial cultural movement and creates an enjoyably, engaging film. The cultural movement in question are Raves. The first documented raves happened in 1970, but it wasn't until the late 1980s where the prominence of Acid House began to take shape. This developed throughout the UK, Europe and USA. The whole subject of *Weekender* would've made a great documentary, but director Karl Golden and screenwriter Chris Coghill have got other ideas.

Our heroes Matt (Henry Lloyd Hughes) and Dylan (Jack O'Connell) are young adults stealing old vending machines to fund their love of Acid house parties in Manchester. But, they realize they've got the perfect business opportunity to set up their own rave parties in Manchester parties. However, the local gangsters begin to interfere to use it for their own gain.

Unfortunately, the film doesn't go into the great detail of the history of the rave parties – no cultural relevance about how they shaped the youth culture for later decades. The way the film plays out is hardly revolutionary, and it's rather disappointing to see the film slowly turn into the dreaded British gangster flick you didn't want it to be, as drugs and weapons get into the mix. The drama is very melodramatic and doesn't have any weight to make it substantial.

But at a brisk 90 minutes, *Weekender* does have a lot of infectious energy to offer and you'll be swept up with the character's enthusiasm for Acid House-style music. Henry Lloyd Hughes and Jack O'Connell make a great double

Release Date: Friday 2nd September

Director: Karl Golden

Starring: Henry Lloyd Hughes, Jack O'Connell, Stephan Wright, Zawe Ashton and Emily Barclay

Certificate: 15

Running Time: 90 mins

act as you believe in their friendship and their mutual love for rave. Stephan Wright does an effective job playing Gary Mac, a supposedly threatening figure that will make you twice about double-crossing him.

Director Karl Golden makes the lacklustre drama move along at a pace. Golden excels by creating exhilarating clubbing sequences. He doesn't resort Hollywood quick-cut musical sequences, there is a rhythm to the clubbing and the music. He puts the clubbing experience in the cinema – a psychedelic wonderland of music and drugs. We feel we're there and that creates believability the film needed for the audience and for its characters.

The music used in the film is top-notch; the period detail is spot-on – the clothes and sets are brilliantly realised giving anyone who was around a great nostalgic feel which will warm many hearts.

Although it's lacking in dramatic substance, *Weekender* is a fun, Friday night mood setter for a long night's partying. You'll want to set up your own Acid House rave.



### By Ben McCarthy

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*Born in Northern Ireland. My first cinematic experience was Tom And Jerry: The Movie in 1992. But moved onto Ace Ventura: Pet Detective and Batman Forever in 1995. But my love for films really kicked into high gear when my mother bought me a film magazine when I was 13 and never looked back since. My favourite directors are Christopher Nolan, Martin Scorsese, Michael Mann, Paul Greengrass and Terrance Malick – even Roland Emmerich.*

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