

Short Review: “Johnny Mnemonic” (1995) by Dr. John L. Flynn



Johnny Mnemonic (1995), Tristar Pictures, color, 96 min. Director: Robert Longo. Written by William Gibson (based on his short story). Producer: Don Carmody. Cast: Keanu Reeves, Dina Meyer, Ice-T and Takeshi Kitano.

In 2021, half of humankind is threatened by Nerve Attenuation Syndrome, a disease which causes neural problems, and the geeks who actually enjoyed “Johnny Moronic” must have been similarly affected. A corporate courier (Reeves) carries electronic data in his brain to avoid its capture by unscrupulous business rivals. Unfortunately, the corporate creeps overload his brain, threatening death if he does not download within a day. While some unhappy-go-lucky yakuza chase him through urban settings (no, this is not “Bring me the Head of Alfredo Garcia”), his bodyguard (Meyer) is waiting for a payday. Ice-T is fun as a sort of Robin Hood character, and Dolph Lundgren as a psycho preacher has his moment. But that’s about all this adaptation of William Gibson’s cyberpunk story has to offer, other than to prove that Hollywood suits simply don’t get Sci-fi. Look for more promise from Keanu in “The Matrix.”

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