Silent Rage, produced by Anthony B. Unger and Topkick Studios, directed by Michael Miller, starring Chuck Norris.

After just five minutes and two graphic axe murders, eyes wander longingly toward the exit doors. But Boston-area film reviewers are a hardy lot and when the axe-murderer takes a shotgun/ketchup blast to the chest there is a general sigh of relief. He was one very annoying character.

But as luck would have it he survives the blast and the neighborhood genetic research scientist cures him with some little waffle iron and his ability to regenerate healing tissue renders him "virtually indestructible." Unfortunately he is permanently afflicted with criminal brain waves and he has the oscilloscope to prove it.

Beginning to sound a little like Frankenstein? In fact, the only redeeming aspect of this turkey is its adherence to that classic script. When you're trapped in a theater with a psychotic beast, it's comforting to know exactly who will and who won't survive. The aforementioned scientist and his dumb assistant will certainly be a combination of the two.

Thus we are treated to two genres of senseless violence, the clever-in-the-crennium school of thought and its predecessor, the karate chop to the clavicle. Norris has to rely heavily on his martial arts training because his acting only seems to invalidate the beast.

The fight scenes are carnage ad nauseum because every time the monster gets killed the interferon cures him instantly and he comes back more upset than ever. You know the type. At this point the audience usually begins rooting for the die-hard monster but when he took six shots to the chest and crushed through an upperstory window I remember thinking, "I hope he lands on a picket fence." Some axe-murders are less lovable than others.

The title Silent Rage? It might apply to the sheriff, an aspiring Clint Eastwood who favors action over conversation or it could be the monster whose only sounds emanate from other folks' vertebrae. It might even apply to the long-suffering filmmaker who gets duped into watching this bloodbath. Chuck Norris was in town last week to answer these and other important questions. Some excerpts:

Q: Don't you think that this film may be a little too gross?
CN: My first three films together have grossed over one hundred million and we expect this one to do even better.
Q: Can I have your autograph?
Peter Thompson

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