

Film Review: 'RoboCop' Reboot Lacks Fun Factor, Fearful Villain

Submitted by [HollywoodChicago.com](http://www.hollywoodchicago.com) [1] on February 14, 2014 - 1:15am

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CHICAGO – You get the sense that a writer for the new “**RoboCop**” felt very proud of himself when he coined the cheeky word “robophobic” as a play on a current cultural hot button. The Samuel L. Jackson moment of self-fulfilled glory reminded me of the rest of the plot that was missing.



Rating: **2.5/5.0**

Following their 1987 screenplay, writers **Edward Neumeier** and **Michael Miner** live a fourth time since their trilogy ended in 1993. The reimagined Alex Murphy – a nearly dead man who’s left with no choice but to bind his remaining organic flesh to Gary Oldman’s newly invented exoskeletal machine – got a head start on the weekend by opening on Wednesday in competition to two other 1980s remakes: “About Last Night” and “Endless Love”.



[Read Adam Fendelman's full review of "RoboCop".](#) [18]

2014’s “RoboCop,” which unsurprisingly has already opened to a disappointing Wednesday box office, is the second time Sony/Columbia has tried to cash in on a **Paul Verhoeven** sci-fi remake.

The studio tried it just two years ago with “Total Recall” and it bombed domestically. For only half the budget, 1990’s “**Total Recall**” earned more than twice as much as 2012’s in the U.S. The new “RoboCop” has a production budget nearly eight times as much as it did in 1987 – and you can tell by the VFX today – but it’s missing most of the heart.

I geek out on technology, but I hate tech for tech’s sake. At its very core, the “RoboCop” films offer us compelling moral questions. This “RoboCop,” though, feels like Hollywood’s attempt to up the ante and use its latest special-effects technology to cash in on a beloved story.

“RoboCop” stars Joel Kinnaman, Gary Oldman, Samuel L. Jackson, Michael Keaton, Abbie Cornish, Jackie Earle Haley, Jay Baruchel, Jennifer Ehle, Michael K. Williams, Aimee Garcia and Marianne Jean-Baptiste from director José Padilha and writer Joshua Zetumer based on the 1987 screenplay from Edward Neumeier and Michael Miner. The film, which has a running time of 108 minutes and opened on Feb. 12, 2014, is rated “PG-13” for intense sequences of action including frenetic gun violence throughout, brief strong language, sensuality and some drug material.



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Joel Kinnaman in “RoboCop”.
Image credit: Kerry Hayes, Columbia Pictures

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