

EIFF 2015: Narcopolis (Justin Trefgarne, 2014)



In 2024, a copper walks the streets of London fighting crime following the legalisation of all types of recreational drugs. But, when he is removed from a case in which he tries to identify an unclaimed corpse, he begins a quick and unstable descent into a conspiracy that rules the city.

To be referred to as a poor man's Jason Statham would be one hell of a disappointing comment for an actor to hear. Unfortunately, Elliot Cowan leads *Narcopolis* with a Statham style performance and little dramatic effect. His breathy, painfully emphasised dialogue is poorly written, which doesn't really help either. For writer/director Justin Trefgarne, this is a broad vision in terms of plot, but he's done very little with it. What could have been a simple, smart vision of drug filled dystopia winds up being a modern day, overlong episode of *The Bill* with eye-piercing body incinerator guns. Oh, and apparently in 2044 we're still using the headsets you could buy for your PC for £12.99 in Gamestation in 2002. You read that right.

Taking a quick look at *Narcopolis*' iMDB page, we can see that it has been sitting in stasis for close to a year. Why? Because there's next to no passion in its creation. A guddled crime sci fi, it races through its plot with such a lack of clarity its impossible to engage with. Mix in some rather crass dialogue and far fetched scenarios and you are given an embarrassingly awkward mix of *Blade Runner* and *Drive*; without any sort of emphatic pay off.

On paper, *Narcopolis* sounds like it could have the enjoyment factor cranked up to 100 whilst all of the artsy important

stuff came a very distant second. In reality, it's totally different. A cheap, boring sci-fi; Narcopolis will leave you with the worst emotive reaction of all: indifference.



Narcopolis played as part of the Edinburgh International Film Festival 2015