Martial Arts Films

I watched a fun movie yesterday, *The Warrior's Way*, a recently released DVD that is a martial arts/western mashup. Starring Dong-gun Jang, Kate Bosworth and Geoffrey Rush this visually striking film follows Yang (Jang), a warrior assassin who goes on the run to the American West after disavowing his clan by refusing to kill a baby- the last surviving member of an enemy clan. He ends up in Lode, a ramshackle town in the Old West housing a circus. There he meets Lynne (Bosworth), a young woman who tragically lost her family and seeks vengeance against the man who killed them. Rush plays Ronald, a drunken gunman who has seen tragedy in his life as well. And Danny Huston plays Colonel, a vile villian perfect for the story. Both Rush and Huston chew up the scenery in contrast to Jang's stoic, unflappable hero. This film follows the martial arts tradition perfectly- the lone warrior must save the town, but can't settle down to a normal life without bringing danger to those he allows himself to care about. The final scene is combination old west shootout/ninja battle, great fun for martial arts/action film aficionados. I like nearly all martial arts films, even a bad one is fun for me. Here is a short list of my recent favorites:

Iron Monkey (1993)- this dazzling take on Robin Hood tells the story of the Iron Monkey who robs from the thieving governor to give to the poor.
Kung Fu Hustle (2004)- this comical film takes all things martial arts to the extreme in the war between the notorious Axe Gang and residents of a 1940s Canton slum.
Unleashed (2005)- Jet Li is Danny the dogboy, kept as prisoner his entire life to fight for his master's entertainment. When he escapes he discovers a whole new world and must fight to keep his freedom.
The Forbidden Kingdom (2008)- you can't go wrong with Jackie Chan *and* Jet Li in this fantasy in which a Kung-fu obsessed American teen finds himself in ancient China on an adventure to save the Monkey King.
Ninja Assassin (2009)- Rain, a compelling South Korean pop star, plays a ninja who turns his back on the clan at the orphanage where he was raised, leading to the grand martial arts tradition of a showdown with his former master.
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Posted by Elizabeth G. on Jul 23, 2011

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