Sucker Punch – me right in the face

Zack Snyder is the Tim "The Tool Man" Taylor of filmmaking in that he can't help himself when it comes to cool gadgets and things usually end up a disaster. If you are familiar with Snyder's work and are fan of his films "300" and "Watchmen" then you will probably like his latest film "Sucker Punch." Like Snyder's films before it, Sucker Punch is super stylized and uses plenty of slow motion. We can only assume these effects are so heavily used to hide the fact that the characters are hollow and the plot is pointless nonsense masquerading as originality. The film is about "Baby Doll," who is institutionalized by her evil stepfather. While in the mental asylum she retreats into her own imagination to plan her escape, fighting along the way Nazis or zombies or robots or *something*… You can figure out the rest from there (hint: there's lots of fighting and poorly written dialogue). The concept of a character finding what they need, be it strength, knowledge, love, freedom, etc. in their own mind can be a beautiful, profound tool or storyline, but Sucker Punch butchers the idea by injecting the character into a world that means little to the viewer. It's like putting beautiful drapes in a dirty motel room, the carpet is still stained, the bed is still dirty, the vague smell of cigarette smoke still lingers pungently and the beautiful drapes are quickly forgotten in light of those other things. While watching Sucker Punch if you are not preoccupied by the extravagance on the screen, for there is plenty to see, then you will find a movie with not much else to offer. It's a perfect example that a "cool" idea is not enough to sustain a film, for Suck Punch *is* cool and it *is* fun, hell it's even entertaining to a certain extent, but who cares? It gives us no reason to care whatsoever, it just tries to distract us, lure us away from saying, "Hey, wait a minute! Was that really necessary?" The visuals are astounding, masterfully composed and clever in their deception, for when all else fails there are beautiful women to gawk at. Snyder's previous film "Watchmen," based upon the bible of comic books by Alan Moore, approached greatness, but fell short. Its greatest failure was getting as close to the source material as it did. It didn't try to capture the essence of the comic book; it tried to *be* the essence, which it could never have done. Snyder tried to put his mark on it by adding a few gallons of blood and slowing everything down to a painful halt, but alas it left you feeling disappointed. The story is the same for Sucker Punch. When the smoke clears all that remains is the question apparent to all Zack Snyder films, "Why?"