

Insomnia 'n' espionage

Into the Night
Universal Pictures
Odeon

review by Myles Kitagawa

If there is such a thing as visual wit, then John Landis has a flair for it. The director responsible for *The Blues Brothers* and *An American Werewolf in London* artfully introduces us to many behind the scenes faces of the modern movie industry in his latest film *Into the Night*. This pseudo self-indulgent production is laced with cameo appearances made by famous, but in some cases unrecognizable, personalities like Paul Mazursky, Jim Henson, David Cronenberg and David Bowie and John Landis himself.

The film proper details the events of a forty eight hour period wherein an aerospace engineer, Ed Oaken (Jeff Goldblum), meets and aids Diana (Michelle Pfeiffer), a casual international smuggler pursued by three different death squads.

Ed's life has been, up to this point, a stale suburban existence filled with a middle class ennui which kept him up nights. To pass the night, he drives out to the L.A. International Airport where Diana is being terrorized by four Iranian hoods. She is currently in possession of six emeralds which were once a part of the Iranian crown jewels but were stolen during the Shah's exile.

In an insomnia induced stupor, Ed shuffles along from one near death encounter to another as he and Diana dodge members of the Iranian Secret Police (one of whom is

played by Landis), a suave British assassin (David Bowie) and a trio of French mobsters, while in search of a place of comparative safety.

As a result of its visual wit, much of the humour of *Into the Night* is of a more unsophisticated shock or slapstick type; the Keystone Cop-like Iranian Secret Police, for example. This is not to say that it is any less funny for it, though animal lovers may not appreciate every visual joke.

The unfolding of the plot is rather drawn out as Diana is reluctant to reveal the circumstances leading up to her predicament or to talk about the people involved in her past, but the waiting never approaches tedium because of the peppering of cameos throughout the film.

Michelle Pfeiffer is once again cast as the cool, gorgeous woman — a role she also played in *Grease II* and *Scarface*.

Jeff Goldblum delves back into his past, prior to *The Big Chill* to a character more like his post-metamorphosis Jack Bellicec of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. Ed Oaken reacts to death threats in the same way he does to the crises of his everyday life; that is, he seems too tired to care. Ed weathers the entire affair with a sedation that Bowie's character mistakes for criminal professionalism. In this sense, *Into the Night* may be deemed unrealistic, but then, it is not an exercise in psychological realism. It is John Landis having fun with, and poking fun at, his friends and himself.

"'MASK' IS GENUINELY MOVING."

— David Ansen, NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE

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They told 16 year old Rocky Dennis he could never be like everyone else

So he was determined to be better.



Sometimes the most unlikely people become heroes.

A MARTIN STARGER PRODUCTION PETER BOGDANOVICH'S "MASK"

Starring CHER · SAM ELLIOTT and ERIC STOLTZ as Rocky Dennis

Written by ANNA HAMILTON PHELAN Director of Photography LASZLO KOVACS, A.S.C.

Produced by MARTIN STARGER Directed by PETER BOGDANOVICH

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