

Entertainment



RAK HAVIK - a new on-campus band will be playing April 15, in the Wintergreen Cafe.

Three Fugitives - Not Three Stars

by Darrell J. White
Collegian Staff Writer

★★★

Very little in the world disappoints me as much as a wasted opportunity. Francis Veber, a noted French director, is making his American debut. Nick Nolte has shown his acting talent in "48 Hours" and more recently in the highly acclaimed "Weeds", about a prison inmate who becomes a playwright. Lastly, everyone knows Martin Short's comic genius, having been greatly praised for his stints on "SCTV", "Saturday Night Live," and in "InnerSpace," to be shown soon by SPC. With all this talent, one would think that these three forces would collaborate to make a wild comic masterpiece. Alas, this is not the case.

This is not to say the movie isn't good; on the contrary, it is. The sad fact is, it could've been much better. It begins very good: bank robber Daniel Lucas (Nick Nolte) has just been freed on parole from prison, and honestly tries to start a new life, first by opening a new account at a local bank. It just so happens that Ned Perry (Martin Short) has designs on the money in this particular bank. As with all of Short's characters, this one is hilariously incompetent, from ripping his own stocking mask, to firing a warning shot directly over himself (causing a portion of the roof to fall on top of him) to getting his own knapsack full

of money stuck in the bank's chandelier- all underneath the watchful eye of the security camera. When, naturally, the police arrive and the inept robbery falls apart, Perry falls apart, almost releasing the grip on the hand grenade he is carrying. Lucas yells just before Perry lets it drop, and thus becomes the first choice when Perry decides to take a hostage. One can see the "oh-no-here-we-go-again" look on Lucas' face as he growls, "Pick somebody else." When Perry somehow drags the much bigger Lucas outside to face the police, he sees all the firepower aimed at him and faints. It is genuinely amusing to watch Lucas as he tries to help Perry keep his dignity, telling him to stand up and "hold your gun like a man!" When Perry accidentally fires a shot into the air, the police open fire, and Lucas immediately grabs Perry by the neck and literally flings him behind a nearby car. This begins a whole film-length of Lucas beating the hell out of poor Ned Perry, threatening to tear his head off unless he takes responsibility for the bungled attempt (the police naturally think Lucas was to blame). This is all perfectly usable comedy, and director Veber uses it well - in the beginning.

The problems begin when we learn the motivations behind the characters. At first, Lucas seems nothing more than a brute; Perry, a spineless jellyfish. We learn that Perry is a scared yet

kind man after he accidentally shoots Lucas in the leg and takes him to the only doctor he knows that won't file a report to the police for a gunshot wound - a senile veterinarian. Here we learn that Ned Perry has a daughter, Meg (Sarah Doroff). The mother died when she was young, and she hasn't spoken a word since. This twist in the plot is nothing new - we have all seen the stories of the hardened criminal softened by the baby. Veber runs this playbook step by predictable step. Yet little Sarah Doroff is intriguing. With her straight cut hair and dark tea-length skirt, she is shot in almost a Stanley Kubrick-ish fashion - straight on, with harsh lighting to accentuate her dark features. One wonders what's going on in that little silent brain, almost to the point that we believe she's autistic. Sarah Doroff should be an enigma seen in later films. If not, I'll be really disappointed.

Anyway, Lucas eventually flees, and (you guessed it) Meg follows. The last really notable scene comes when they are asleep in an abandoned basement, and are about to be overtaken by a couple of street thugs. They pull out a straight razor, demanding money - Lucas draws a gun (Perry's) and demands their pants.

This takes us about thirty minutes into the film and by now we are really happy. The movie has been really funny so far, and we've still got about an hour to go. The sad fact is, the movie loses momentum so fast you will

Rock News

by Vail Weller
Entertainment Editor

"Street Fighting Years", the new album by Simple Minds, is due out May 2nd. Simple Minds lead singer Jim Kerr and Pretenders vocalist Chrissie Hynde have split.

U2's single "When Love Comes to Town" with B.B.King will include U2's cover of Patti Smith's "Dancing Barefoot" on its B side.

Taylor Hackford, who directed La Bamba (the story of Richie Valens), is working on a film about Ray Charles.

Sting is concerned about Brazil's dwindling rainforests and recently filmed a public service announcement in seven languages.

On June 8th, Guns 'n Roses and six other bands will take part in "Rock and a Hard Place", a televised concert to benefit the Gay Men's Health Crisis organization. The event will take place at Radio City Music Hall.

think you're in a dropoff.

Martin Short's talents are curbed here. Veber tries to direct Ned Perry inward, as he becomes almost sappy in his devotion to his daughter. Although this is a good thing, it doesn't seem that Martin Short can prove so effective an actor that he can reverse himself immediately and go from slapstick to semi-serious acting. He gives it a good try, yet I doubt anyone can successfully achieve that. It just doesn't work. We follow them from the vet's office to a little chase on the highway, where, when Lucas tries to say goodbye, Meg intervenes and (yes) actually speaks for the first time since her mother's death. (This is spring - you wouldn't actually want a movie to think about, would you?) They go from there to a children's home to the border of Canada to life in Canada itself. The story is dotted all along with humorous little moments, such as Lucas bashing the heads of two security agents together when Perry is cornered, and Veber actually tries to show a glimmer of artistic merit. He has Perry

injure his leg somehow and then gives a profile shot of Lucas and Perry, both running, yet limping on opposite legs. This is supposed to link them together. These little moments are what make the movie watchable and what caused Siskel and Ebert to call it a romp "through the funhouse." Yet it could have been better. Short could have been let loose, like Joe Dante wisely did in "InnerSpace." Nolte's acting could have been showcased above the mundane tough-guy image he has here. And Veber could have rewritten the script to make Ned Perry a little less soul-searching.

Maybe I'm nit-picking. After all, "Three Fugitives" is a fun and funny movie. I left it in good spirits, happy with the content. But I've seen Short and Nolte in a lot better. My suggestion is to wait and see Short and Dennis Quaid in "InnerSpace," courtesy of SPC. The main reason? It only costs one dollar, and it's five times better a film. Or wait until it comes to Eastway, at least, and save some money.

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