

REEL REVIEWS

★★★★ Dance With A Stranger *Royal Park*

It begins with a voice. A voice singing a wistful tune titled "Dance With A Stranger," as the credits roll. The voice is not very good—it's limited and rather thin on the high notes. But, though it seems to be aware of this, the voice blithely continues singing, and eventually develops a somewhat coy charm.

The voice belongs to Ruth Ellis (Miranda Richardson) and is the key to her powerful attraction: she knows her place, but refuses to accept it. Ruth is a platinum-blond Marilyn Monroe look-alike and the manager of a seedy tavern called "The Little Club."

Dance With A Stranger tells of her tumultuous relationship with David Blakely (Rupert Everett of *Another Country*), an upper-crust race-car driver who frequents the club. They lived in England during the 50's and

Poor					★
Fair				★	★
Good			★	★	★
Very Good	★	★	★	★	★
Excellent	★	★	★	★	★

their story is true.

When Ruth and David meet, they both feel an immediate attraction, but it seems more a case of lust than love. Still, they desperately need each other—but never at the same time. Their affair, like this film, balances precariously between passion and violence, and the one is inevitably followed by the other.

Complicating matters is the presence of Desmond Cussen (masterfully played by Ian Holm), an ineffectual man who loves Ruth. He follows her around like a lost puppy and pays for her son's tuition at boarding school. He even drives her around to meet (or, more often, confront) David.

Dance With A Stranger is a cold dissection of a relationship: it's clear, thoughtful, and calmly presented. And yet, there's something obsessive about it.

We, as much as Ruth and David, hope they'll get together. And they do, for they're inexorably drawn to each other. But, as soon as they come within arm's reach of each other, they scratch and claw and fight until they break apart.

And we hope they'll get together again, thinking that this time they'll work it out. And they do get back together. And they scratch and claw and fight until they break apart. And we *still* hope they'll get together again. And they do. Again and again, until the final, logical, desperate end.

Perhaps they would have been better off remaining strangers. But then, we wouldn't have this movie.

By Michael Giltz

applause

EDITORS

Laura Farrell

Tom Nordlie

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Power—Richard Gere again fails to turn in a credible performance in this muddled mixture of political corruption, redemption and a "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous"-type glamour. He plays a high-priced image consultant who becomes involved in political intrigue after one of his clients is blackmailed into retirement. Unfortunately, the same fate has not befallen this film.

Down and Out in Beverly Hills—Richard Dreyfuss is David Whiteman, a Beverly Hills coat hanger magnate with a ridiculously twisted home life. His problems really go haywire after a freeloading, sycophantic bum named Jerry (Nick Nolte) tries to drown himself in Whiteman's pool and subsequently moves in. Director Paul Mazursky takes some good jabs at Americans' skewed ideas of spirituality and gets plenty of laughs, too.