

reel reviews

*** F/X
Plaza

It's a horrible title, isn't it? Well, don't be fooled. *F/X* is a highly enjoyable thriller, a cat-and-mouse game where you're never quite sure who's the cat and who's the mouse. To give away too much of the plot would be a mortal sin, for most of the fun in this movie is derived from the twists and turns the script takes.

The basic premise is inventive and intriguing. Rollie Tyler (Bryan Brown) is a special effects wizard for the movies. He is approached by Lipton (Cliff Deyoung), a man from the State Department who wants to employ Rollie's special talent.

He wants Rollie to help the State Department stage a fake public assassination of Nicholas

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

DeFranco, a mobster turned stool pigeon. That way, they can guarantee DeFranco's safety and obtain his all-important testimony in an upcoming trial.

Rollie accepts their challenge, and after a fascinating look at how he stages the "murder," Rollie pulls off the job. However, Lipton immediately tries to kill him, saying, "Sorry Rollie, no loose ends."

He escapes, but the master of illusion is thrown into confusion. Was the murder an illusion? Or did Lipton use him as a fall guy by replacing the blanks in Rollie's gun with real bullets? Is the

State Department trying to kill him, or was Lipton lying all along?

Rollie is thrown into a nightmarish world of unreality, never knowing whom to trust or whom to believe. It takes all the tricks he's ever learned to evade his assailants and take his revenge.

Bryan Brown is a little too calm to make us worry for Rollie, and Martha Gehman is even less believable as his assistant, Andy. But, Brian Dennehy is terrific as the cop who suspects something has gone awry.

Overall, *F/X* simply zooms along on creative ideas and a wry sense of humor. We don't discover who's zooming who until the very end but sometimes illusion and confusion can be quite enjoyable.

by Michael Giltz

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Wildcats/Plaza — If nothing else, *Wildcats*, which stars Goldie Hawn, is timely. This football movie has its own version of William "The Refrigerator" Perry,

but, sadly, *Wildcats* is more akin to the Patriots than the Bears.

Quicksilver/Oaks Ten — The only good thing about *Quicksilver*, a bicycle-drama, is that

it helped me figure out a great way to make my snacks last longer: I simply don't eat any popcorn when they play a song from the soundtrack.