



WARNER BROS.

Bill Murray, Geena Davis and Randy Quaid discover that, in New York, robbing a major metropolitan bank is easier than getting to the airport on time in *Quick Change*.

★ ★ 1/2 *Quick Change*
Center, Oaks East Six

Most people either love or hate New York City. But *Quick Change* manages to love *and* hate it at the same time. Its central character, Grimm (Bill Murray), hates the town so much that he convinces two friends to help him pull off an elaborate bank robbery so they can escape to Fiji for the rest of their lives.

Grimm dresses up as a clown and enters a bank exactly at closing time. He holds everyone hostage and begins bargaining with the police, who quickly sur-

round the place. His two friends, Phyllis (Geena Davis) and the dim-witted Loomis (Randy Quaid), are among the customers held at gun-point.

They strap over a million dollars in cash to their bodies and are "released" by the clown as a token of good will. Grimm changes into another disguise and walks out the front door, pretending to be one of the hostages.

The three criminals slip away amidst the confusion — who would expect a hostage to run away, right? Grimm can continue to bargain with the police from

any pay phone in the world, giving him and his friends valuable get-away time. They'll be sunning on the sands of Fiji before anyone figures out what has happened.

It's a brilliant plan. But the only thing Grimm doesn't count on is the city. The Big Apple is a bizarre town filled with strange and unpredictable people. The would-be criminals have to deal with cabbies who don't speak English, bus drivers obsessed with following the rules, the Mob, other thugs who try to rob them and countless eccentrics. It becomes increasingly

clear that, in New York City, robbing a major metropolitan bank is a lot easier than getting to the airport on time.

Quick Change is a quirky, appealing little movie. Unfortunately, it's directed at such a lackadaisical pace by the duo of Murray and screenwriter Howard Franklin that it never develops a head of steam.

Murray is smarmy as always, but he has a believable on-screen relationship with Davis that makes him seem warmer than ever. She is also charming, though Quaid as their sidekick has a goofy role that never quite gels. The small performances from Bob Elliott, Phil Hartman and Philip Bosco as the by-the-book bus driver brim with imagination. But the pacing is too slow to let their efforts provide anything more than individual pleasure.

Only once, during an elaborate bus-stop scene in which the police, the Mob and the robbers converge hilariously does *Quick Change* create the sense of manic desperation that's needed to send this comedy into high gear.

But it's worth seeing for the odd little sidetrips that the movie takes: two men jousting on bicycles, the old woman in the barrios selling flowers for the dead and the police chief who gets excited about a lead and unconsciously grabs the hand of a lieutenant, dragging him along like a little boy.

These moments show how you can love and hate New York City at the same time. And they're good enough to make you love *Quick Change* for what it is and hate it

for not being so much more.
BY MICHAEL GILTZ