



'Falling Down' doesn't stumble

by Hollywood Rob

Falling Down is a tale of urban hell set in contemporary Los Angeles. Michael Douglas plays Bill, a middle-age man who is having the mid-life crisis to end all. Those of you who thought Douglas' film *War of the Roses* was *Monsieur La Trine* you will want to steer clear of this festival of darkness. In fact, this is probably the darkest mainstream fare to come out of Hollywood since the aforementioned Douglas pic.

Douglas works for the Defense Department, is divorced and is the most anal retentive man alive. He wants everything to go his way and when it doesn't he snaps. This movie documents his downfall.


Everything you've thought you wanted to do to strike out at the things and people putting a lump of coal in your stocking Douglas does with varying degrees of provocation. One of the confrontations

Douglas makes early in the film has met with a bit of controversy. This is nothing new to the star who has weathered the protests against his other films *Basic Instinct* and *Fatal Attraction*. The scene involves a Korean convenience store owner.

Anyway Chuck Bronson, er...Douglas is on his way "home" i.e. his ex-wife's house for his daughter's birthday. After abandoning his vehicle in a traffic jam, he goes through every bad neighborhood in L.A. Actually from the text of this film there are only two kinds of neighborhoods in L.A.—bad neighborhoods and worse neighborhoods. Douglas in turn confronts every threat as if it were minor from the Latino gang members who try to enforce their territorial rights to the burger-flippers at the local Whammy Burger who won't serve him breakfast because it's one minute after the time they stop serving it.

Falling Down

Starring Michael Douglas and Robert Duvall.
Directed by Joel Schumacher.



While Douglas is up to all his mayhem there is a side story about Robert Duvall's character, a cop who is on his last day before retirement. Duvall and Douglas' paths finally converge near the end of the film, but I won't spoil it because all the fun is in getting there.

My biggest complaint about this movie is it tries to be heavier than it is. There is a message, but it's handled too lightly to bear any significance. *A Few Good Men* has this same kind of self importance—trying to be more than just entertainment—making the audience view it as a real-

istic portrayal of life. It's not, it's just entertainment.


At least the filmmakers didn't sugar coat it. Director Joel Schumacher gives us a less MTV-like visual style than his last effort *Flatliners*. His styling was necessary in raising that film from the mire of a plain bad movie and at least made it fun to watch. In this one he was working with a solid story so he didn't have to go over the top to lend the movie value. Unfortunately, it still plays a little too episodically as the aforementioned did. Schumacher's films could benefit from a more linear storytelling style.

All in all, this movie is an action movie with less banality than that genre usually involves. This vigilante is self serving. He is not trying to cure society's ills, he's trying to solve his problems in a last resort effort. *Falling Down* delivers less bang, but more brain for the buck.


Ratings Scale

8


•The Goods•
Smooth and Satisfying like a 40 of 8 Ball




•Solid Flick•
Cherry, like a '76 Econoline



•Tame•
Have a Day



•Cheesy•
Like Fromage



Monsieur La Trine says aaah sheet!

Tomatos

Missing Children and Lunchmeat, and appeared as Patricia in *Fatal Instinct*.

Not from UNLV but a member of the company is Joe Latona, who moved to Los Angeles last summer after six years in New York City where he appeared with the Riverside Shakespeare Company. He is currently filming Mel Brooks' *Robin Hood: Men in Tights*.

The company is presenting a series of workshops on campus that began Monday and continue every day through Friday at the Black Box Theatre from 5p.m. to 7 p.m. These are open to anyone interested in learning more about the process of auditioning for film, TV and commercial work.

Tjaden said the company will be back next fall for another residency and will perform two more plays. He said they want to provide a link for

LA-based alumni of UNLV, and also work with the MFA playwrights program here. Plans for this are being set up through the Theatre Arts department and he said it would benefit both Studebaker Studios and the university.

All the members of the troupe have had successful careers in show business and Tjaden said they "owe a lot (to UNLV)—we'd like to give something back."

"Theatre is and always has been an ensemble concept. We stress that," he said.

For many actors in LA, Tjaden said it's all about waiting for the phone to ring.

"We're trying to forge new ground and create opportunities for ourselves. Eventually we would like to get celebrity film actors to do a residency at UNLV," he said.

"Actors are always saying they want to get back to the stage."

This company is actually doing that.

Sonic

extreme. *The Vegans* viciously mosh to everything and go especially wild during the Sonic Youth set. Moore even chided the youngsters for dangerously pushing their friends up against the barrier.

The show is tight. Moore and Gordon are in fine form, generously switching the spotlight. The concert starts featuring Gordon, who quickly turns it over to Moore for "100%." The audience is out of control as the band pummels through its set, much of it off *Dirty* and *Goo*, saving the older stuff for last. Gordon's cool persona, mixed with Rinaldo's no-nonsense distortion, and the giant Moore flailing about crazily on stage makes for appealing visuals.

The band finishes the night with its trademark guitar tricks, throwing in "Teenage Riot" during the encore. The crowd cheers.

The show is over.

Outside the venue, a group of kids await their heroes. After 20 minutes or so, Rinaldo, Gordon and Shelley pile into a

van (their own this time) to head to their hotel. Kindly, enough, they stop shortly to sign autographs for the star-starved group from the cramped van windows.

As he leaves, Moore is nice enough to answer a question about Las Vegas. The towering man said to me "Can you tell me where everybody lives?" as he looked over at the kids. "I drive around Las Vegas, and I see all the tourists and people running around. It's kind of a mysterious place."

And with that, he hops in his van and drives away.

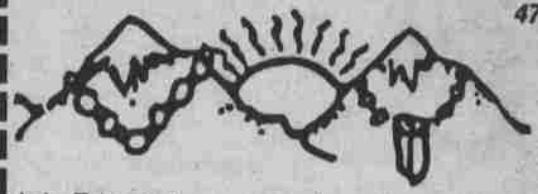


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