

Director's first comedy successful

Review by Lois Wadsworth

Roxanne

Director Fred Schepisi and writer Steve Martin based this kooky comedy on Edmond Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*. It stars Martin as the man with the nose and Daryl Hannah as the gorgeous Roxanne.

Roxanne is a fun movie that gives Steve Martin a chance to show off his stupendous comic talents as C.D., the fire chief for a scenic little mountain resort town. C.D. is an easygoing boss for a bunch of bumbling volunteers, a pleasant fellow unless someone mentions his unforgettably prominent nose. Then he flares into action, and good-naturedly beats the daylight out of the offender.

Dixie (Shelley Duvall—it's great to see her again!), who runs the local cafe where C.D. hangs out, has rented her wonderful old house to an astronomer named Roxanne for the summer. Roxanne meets the chief when she locks herself out of the house, naked.

An acrobat, C.D. fearlessly vaults himself up to a third floor window and slithers into the house while Roxanne hides in the bushes. While C.D. is realizing that he's in love with her, she falls for a new hunk (Rick Rossovich) who's come to town to help the volunteer fire crew shape up their act. This guy is so incredibly inarticulate that he can't put one smart sentence together, but C.D. can.

Like Rostand's *Cyrano*, the 17th Century satirist whose large proboscis rendered him unfit for love but exceedingly well suited for words of love, C.D. becomes the mouthpiece for the lover Roxanne thinks she wants. There are some very funny moments as the mixup sorts itself out. Thanks to some fine down-to-earth acting by both Martin and Hannah, the whole dilemma resolves itself in a human and even uplifting fashion.

Roxanne is Fred Schepisi's first comedy; as part of the Australian New Wave, he directed *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* and then made *Barabarosa* (1982), *Ice Man* (1984), and *Plenty* (1985) in the

U.S. In a recent interview with *American Film*, Schepisi sums up his realistic approach to films:

"You should never settle for what you think is just good. You should drive the editors and writers and everybody nuts until it's great. And if you don't go for great, you won't end up with good. You've got to go beyond your wildest dreams because just the exigencies of filmmaking are going to smack you into ordinary."

Schepisi's attitude suggests how hard it is to make a good picture in an industry that is driven by the profit motive as exclusively as is Hollywood. *Roxanne* surely is not a great film, but it doesn't have a mean-spirited moment in it. In a nation of consumers who worship the appearance of things and people, *Roxanne* celebrates an unlikely love between two people who are able to see deeper than the surface. When was the last time you saw a movie with a happy ending you could believe in?

now showing

NEW TO TOWN

Dragnet 1987: Dan Aykroyd portrays the nephew of "Just-the-Facts" Sergeant Friday, and Tom Hanks plays his side-kick, in a spoof of the TV series. Opens Friday at Cinema World (342-6536).

Kangaroo: Judy Davis (*My Brilliant Career*) and Colin Friels (*Malcolm*) portray British emigrants to Australia during World War I. Based on the D.H. Lawrence novel, it opens Friday at Cinema 7 (687-0733).

Space Balls: Mel Brooks spoofs *Star Wars*. Brooks plays the U.S. president, and Daphne Zuniga "Her Spoiled Highness." Opened Wednesday, June 24 at Springfield Quad (726-9073) and West 11th Movieland (342-4142).

CONTINUING/RETURNING

American Ninja II: Martial arts stars Michael Dudikoff and Steve James pursue a drug pusher responsible for the deaths of four Marines. West 11th Movieland (342-4142).

The Believers: A psychiatrist finds himself drawn to the occult. With Martin Sheen and Helen Shaver, it's at Cinema World (342-6536).

Benji, The Hunted: Rated G, and filmed in Oregon, this nostalgic Disney movie pairs canine Benji with wild animals. West 11th Movieland (342-4142) and Springfield Quad (726-9073).

Beverly Hills Cop II: As off-beat cop Axel Foley, Eddie Murphy laughs again. Brigitte Nielsen plays villainess. Springfield Quad (726-9073) and West 11th Movieland (342-4142).

Care Bears Part II, in double feature with *Flight of the Navigator*, returns Friday to West 11th Movieland (342-4142).

Ernest Goes to Camp: Jim Varney has his hands full as counselor at a rowdy summer camp. Comedy by John Cherry. Double feature with *Ishtar* at Springfield Fine Arts (747-2201).

Flight of the Navigator: A young boy commands a space ship, with some extraterrestrial help. Double feature with *Care Bears Part II*, returns Friday to West 11th Movieland (342-4142).

Harry and the Hendersons: Fantasy/comedy. John Lithgow and Don Ameche are in this movie about a family that falls in love with Bigfoot. McDonald (344-4343).

Hollywood Shuffle: Robert Townsend directs and stars in this exploration of racial stereotypes through a series of comic skits. Valley River Twin (686-8633).

Ishtar: Warren Beatty and Dustin Hoffman appear in their first film roles in five years. As an unsuccessful comic duo lounge act, the two are joined by Isabelle Adjani. Music by Paul Williams. Double feature starting Friday with *Ernest Goes to Camp* at Springfield Fine Arts (747-2201).



Judy Davis and Colin Friels star in the Australian production of *Kangaroo* based on the D.H. Lawrence novel.

Predator: An unknown force pursues muscle man Arnold Schwarzenegger. Cinema World (342-6536).

Reform School Girls: Features pop/rock star Wendy O. Williams and continues as the late-night feature at the Bijou (686-2458).

River's Edge: A high school student is murdered, but the crime is hidden. Dennis Hopper and Crispin Glover are among those reacting to the events of this disturbing drama. West 11th Movieland (342-4142).

Roxanne: Steve Martin, with the longest nose since Pinocchio, and Daryl Hannah star in a modern-day comedy based on the story of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Cinema World (342-6536).

Scene of the Crime: Catherine Deneuve and Danielle Darrieux play mother and grandmother to a boy innocently involved in a crime. Mystery/thriller. Bijou (686-2458).

The Secret of My Success: Michael J. Fox is Brantley Foster, who uses his charm to get ahead in a large corporation, only to have it backfire on him in comic ways. Helen Slater plays a female executive. Double feature with *Ernest Goes to Camp* at Cinema World (342-6536).

Star Wars Trilogy, with *Star Wars*, *Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi* starts Friday at West 11th Movieland (342-4142).

The Untouchables: Robert De Niro, Kevin Costner and Sean Connery revisit the Al Capone era of Chicago in the 1930s. Brian De Palma

directs. At Valley River Twin (686-8633) and Springfield Quad (726-9073).

Witches of Eastwick: Jack Nicholson as the devil, with Cher, Michelle Pfeiffer and Susan Sarandon, star in this adaptation of a John Updike novel. National (344-3431).

Thursday, June 25 is the last date for: Man Facing Southeast at Cinema 7. Ernest Goes to Camp and Ishtar double feature at Springfield Quad. Outrageous Fortune and Tin Men double feature at Springfield Fine Arts. Ernest Goes to Camp and Secret of My Success double feature at Cinema World.



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