



● Sonja Smits in *That's My Baby* does her not-bad best

pace. Or conversely they're hammered in with far more weight than the flimsy material can bear. Visually, the best that can be said is that the compositions keep our attention on the actors; the worst is that when it tries for anything more (like the baby's p.o.v. fish-eye lens), the camera becomes as leaden as the jokes.

With nothing much going on, you have a lot of opportunity to mull over what is there and, more significantly, what isn't. There is the baby's glorious conception, for instance, and the even more glorious return from the hospital. But there's not much pregnancy, just a few shots in a scene that's really about something else altogether. There are kids, throughout, adorable, well-behaved little moppets to demonstrate the depth of Webber's desire and to cement our approval of it. But there isn't a single infant, not one screaming, colicky, shitting, nerve-slashing little bundle of endless demand to remind him, and us, of the reality of the situation – not until his own child comes along and then the business of baby care is reduced to little more than a showcase for his devotion and a montage on the subject of togetherness: first she gets up for the 6 a.m. feeding, then he does, then they do it together. The stress of the situation all falls on the wife, who weeps because she's so tired and then, at the end, throws a paranoid fit because she thinks he might be planning to take a job and some of the child-care will fall to her. Not only is the scene a transparent set-up to make her look weak and bitchy and hopelessly selfish (something she isn't until the very end), but haven't these people ever heard of babysitters?

What this all adds up to is a false, lying view of a real situation, with all the genuine conflicts and feeling (except the husband's) glossed over or removed. Yolles and Bradshaw might be inclined to claim they gutted the picture in the name of light comedy, but that isn't what comes across. What does come across is a political position, one that says a woman is selfish and shallow for preferring a career; that makes the man the sole family-leader and executor of the really important decisions and that says that having a baby will reunite and weld a broken family. Taken individually, none of these statements is necessarily 100% wrong; taken together, they form a stance only slightly less repressive than that of the Christian Right.

I don't think Yolles and Bradshaw are naive; they've too carefully and com-

pletely warped their subject for me to think they've got anything but exactly the movie they wanted (except for its being a dog). Which makes me wonder how this movie ever got made. Perhaps it looked great on paper when it came time to assemble funding and the major participants, including the NFB. Or it's that everybody in the film industry from exec producers to location caterers is suddenly having babies and it's possible that, in the totally justified delight and sentimentality of new parents and the somewhat less innocent pride of seeing one's own life directly reflected on the screen (for Webber and Smits are media professionals by trade), everybody who might have cast a critical eye on the project was too busy seeing a sentimentalized version of themselves to do any actual thinking. Which is too bad. When *That's My Baby* bombs, as it will, the next people to come along with the same idea will have a hard time getting it off the ground, even though they just might be the people to do it with the backbone and heart the subject deserves.

Andrew Dowler ●

**THAT'S MY BABY** d. Edie Yolles, John Bradshaw p. Edie Yolles sc. Bradshaw, Yolles d.o.p. W.W. Reeve orig. mus. Eric N. Robertson 1st. a.d. David Hynes art d. Anne Beeton loc. sd. Gord Thompson, Marc Chiasson add. sd. Daniel Latour (mixer), Cory Siddall (boom) cont. Tannis Baker ward. mist. Annie Nikolajevich ward. assts. Leoni Wilkins, Carmel Devost McLean make-up/hair Lee Lanham asst. hair Freddie Gooden props mist. Liz Morgan props assts. Patrick Moore, David Thompson, Chris Beeton, gaffer Sandy Carroll best boy Ira Cohen elect. Dave Willetts gen. op. Adam Swica key grips Christopher Dean, Dave Zimmerman asst. grips Mark Silver, John Darakjian add. cam. Brian Hebb 1st asst. cam. Steve Deme 2nd asst. cam. Helen Henshaw 2nd a.d. Martin Weinryb 3rd a.d. Alison Till p. assts. Haim Akum, Mitch Harrison loc. man. Bruce A. Sefton p. man. Cynde Scott p. acct./cast. asst. Debra Scott p. sec. Melody Comrie craft serv. Trudy Morris stills R. Hugh McLean, Ian Murray, Sandy J. Singers sp. efx. Martin Malevoir strip choreo. Nion cast. Anne Weldon Tail, Martin Hunter extras Film Extra Services marketing cons. Bill Reser ad. Stephen Withrow, Edie Yolles ed. assts. Ron Rice, Micki Laval post. p. sec. Barbara Lawrie, Sharon Robertson post. p. coord. NFB Grace Avrih NFB admin. Marie Tonto-Donati, Tamara Lynch sd. ed. Michel B. Bordeleau Foley Andy Malcolm re-rec. Hans Peter Strobl, Adrian Croll titles Louise Overy, Serge Gaudreau graphics David Schorr post. p. studios National Film Board of Canada colour. 35mm running time: 96 mins. 35 sec p.c. Gemini Film Productions Ltd. Ip. Timothy Webber, Sonja Smits, Joann McIntyre, Lenore Zann, Derek McGrath, Daniel Buccos, Kate Trotter, Matt Craven, Les Carlson, Jack Mather, Frank Moore, Peter MacNeill, Meredith Winning, Caroline Stirk, Norma Edwards, Michael Wong, Evan Neister, Kathryn Winning, Gary T. Furlong, Pat Weaver, Mary-Ann Campanelli, Debra Scott, Lionel Percell, Charles Wong, Shawn N. Mitchell, Michele Williams, Mathew Sharp.

## William Fruet's Bedroom Eyes

Recently there was *The Surrogate*, a sexually-centred murder mystery, and now we have *Bedroom Eyes*, which bills itself as "A Sensuous Mystery" and is basically the same thing – sex, violence and whodunit. Two in a row means we've got a trend on our hands and a fairly depressing trend it is, but more of that later.

As an example of the mystery genre, or of schlock, *Bedroom Eyes* isn't really all that much like *The Surrogate*, which was a bad movie built on a good idea with a little good acting. *Bedroom Eyes* is much more pure than that: a bad movie with no ideas and no good acting. Well, maybe some okay acting. Angus MacInnes cruises easily through the hero's role, hitting all the right notes and getting what laughs he can. He's not great, but at least he's not painful to watch. As for ideas – zip. What happens is, this wimpy little stockbroker jogs at night to unwind, steps in a pile of dogshit, stumbles into the bushes to clean it off and finds himself pulling a peeping tom number on a moderately mammalian redhead. He likes it a lot, so he goes back for more and we get the sex we're paying for – nothing really heavy, though, no battery-operated devices sliding in and out of heavily lubricated orifices, no new tricks with the ever-popular mix-master – just a little light lesbianism, bondage and a threesome, all glimpsed briefly through a window. So much for "Sensuous."

What is interesting, though, is that here's a movie where the hero's a pervert. He's peeping because he's cracking from the stress of the job. He knows it and so he goes to a shrink and she tells him right away that there's no way he's a pervert. So much for "interesting." The shrink is played by Dayle Haddon and she's arguably the worst thing in the movie. On top of being hideously miscast – she looks like she just graduated high-school and has none of the calm and authority we associate with working shrinks – she can't inflect her lines to anything even approaching their content and you can almost hear her thinking, "I must move my eyebrow just... now..." to indicate concern.

Anyway, the stockbroker keeps going back – he finds the redhead fascinating in an exotic, whorish way and for this to work, so should we. But, while Barbara Law does look convincingly whorish, you get the impression she was given that look by someone who really doesn't like whores.

Eventually, he witnesses the murder we've been waiting for all along. Actually, he doesn't witness it; he's distracted at the crucial moment, and so we don't see it either. Later on, the cops find a body. So much for violence.

The cops, of course, suspect our hero, so he runs off and hides with the shrink who, in a boggling lapse of logic and professional ethics, promptly takes him to bed, thereby turning into his girlfriend, a role Haddon performs no more credibly but at least we don't have to think of her as a shrink anymore. So much for the rest of the movie.

Except for the climax, in which the redhead now revealed as the killer – and we knew it all along, so much for "Mystery" – ties our hero to the bed, strips down to her underwear and proceeds to run a scene of sexual domin-

ation on him. Since we know by now that all those things she did back when he was spying on her were part of a plan and not motivated by pleasure at all, this makes absolutely no sense, but by this time we're not expecting it to. The scene, of course, turns violent and, though there is one good shot in which the redhead, an antagonist on either side of her, tries to go in two directions at once, the rest is ludicrous, thanks to blocking and camera placement that show, with crystal clarity, that the redhead is viciously slashing the air two feet from the nearest body.

*Bedroom Eyes* is the latest in a string of dogs for director William Fruet who, like Paul Lynch, seems to be a case of a good man gone bad. It is not that I have any objection to Fruet, or anybody else, doing sex-and-violence quickies. I come equipped with the standard-issue Canadian subconscious – reeking of incest and cannibalism – and I'm quite happy to get my sub-artistic thrills at the movies. But the thrills should be there. I want a bit of style, imagination, pulse-pounding excitement, qualities that come readily when the films are made by people actually in tune with the material (think Cronenberg). Fruet, like Lynch, most assuredly is not and it shows in every frame.

As I said, I think we've got a trend toward this kind of movie on our hands. Slasher movies have finally died out (thank God), and nobody's figured out what to do next. But the demand for sex-and-violence lives on and, while they wait for guidance from the next John Carpenter, producers have fallen back on a classic form – the mystery – to fill it. This can be both a bad thing and a good. Bad, because the mystery requires actual plotting, character development and the mounting of scenes more intricate than simple stalk-and-slash. Good, because someone might actually be moved to fulfill those requirements. It's not likely, though, and, since there's no new Carpenter on the horizon, I think we can sadly conclude: so much for the next two years.

Andrew Dowler ●

**BEDROOM EYES** d. William Fruet sc. Michael Alan Eddy d.o.p. Miklos Lente mus. d. Paul Hoffer ed. Tony Lower art d. Lindsey Goddard cost. d. Julie Ganton cast. Liz Ramos p. man. Gerry Arbeid 1st a.d. Michael Zenon cont. Monique Champagne p. Robert Lantos and Stephen J. Roth asst. p. Andras Hamori post. p. sup. Jennifer Black asst. p. man. Jeff King story ed. Laura Phillips 1st. a.d. Michael Zenon 2nd a.d. Rocco Gismondi 3rd a.d. Howard Barish loc. man. Chris Danton asst. loc. man. Woody Sidarous focus puller Christopher Bonniere clapper/loader Stuart Shikatani key grip Brian Potts grip Trudel Reynald gaffer Maris Jansons best boy Ken Salah elect. Peter McAdam sd. mix. Douglas Ganton boom Gary Oppenheimer asst. art d. David Davis art trainee Norma Rose key set dresser Christine MacLean 1st asst. set dresser Barry Kemp 2nd asst. set dresser Debra Deeks props Don Miloyevich asst. cost. des. Gaye Gardiner ward. Rose Mihalyi hair. Jenny Arbour make-up Sandy Duncan sd. ed. Tony Lower 1st asst. sd. ed. Bev Neal 2nd asst. sd. ed. Michael Fruet Foley Peter McBurnie re-rec. Terry Cooke p. coord. Alison Dyer asst. p. coord. Elizabeth Young sect'y to J. Jo Anne Bates p. sec. Jennifer Scott p. acct. Dorothy Precious asst. p. acct. Marr Morgan asst. cast. Arleen Glickman extras Faces and Places unit pub. Linda Shapiro Public Relations asst. unit pub. Lori Burak press kit Barbara Righton stills Rick Porter p. assts. Dan Dunlop, David Webb, Melanie Lambertsen craft serv. Jesse Cohoon titles & opticals Film Effects colour Medallion post-p. Soundmix Ltd. p. services Otto Salammon Productions Ltd. p.c. Moviecorp VIII Inc. (RSL Entertainment Corp.) Ip. Kenneth Gilman, Dayle Haddon, Barbara Law, Christine Cattell, Angus MacInnes, Alf Humphreys, Jayne Catling, Lawrence K. Philips, Al Bernardo, Paula Barrett, James B. Douglas, Nick Nichols, Bunty Webb, James Loxley, Alan Katz, Bill Lake, Danny Higham.