

The Truth Game

UK Press Cuttings

Film Review
August 2001

THE TRUTH GAME

★★★★★

STARS

Paul Blackthorne,
Tania Emery, Thomas
Fisher, Selina
Giles, Stuart Lain,
Wendy Watson,
Jennifer White

DIRECTOR

Simon Rumley

SCREENPLAY

Simon Rumley

DISTRIBUTOR

NFT

CERTIFICATE

TBC

RUNNING TIME

TBC

OPENING DATE

July 20

Lie to me

It's just another London evening in a rather nice flat somewhere in the city. A group of twentysomethings are gathering to enjoy dinner. There's an immediate air of tension as one guest secretly reveals that she's about to dump her boyfriend, who's completely oblivious to her plans and is sat in the next room. And so the course is set for the movie: we all hide things from those nearest to us, be it family, lovers or friends. Rumley's refreshingly straightforward take on this is enjoyable and immediately identifiable. Don't we all do this, from lying to protect people's feelings to much darker reasons for avoiding the truth?

With the tagline being, 'When was the last time you told a lie?' it's obvious that the audience is being asked to play the truth game, too. Even if you tell the truth all the time, how much of the truth do you actually reveal? Not that this probing makes for uncomfortable viewing, far from it. The audience is privy to all the truths being withheld or distorted, even to the extent of Rumley forcing the camera not to lie, with a direction so forthright it borders on the criminally invasive. We can squirm when we know that someone is telling pork pies or betraying a trust but Rumley won't allow the audience to be any part of the deceit; his camera,

at least, doesn't lie. The set-up of friends coming around for dinner is vaguely reminiscent of *Abigail's Party* in that the participants aren't ideal together. Along with arguments and accusations, there are hints of embarrassments and social *faux-pas* and the powerful revelations will make sure this is one party that isn't forgotten in a hurry.

After director Rumley's acclaimed *Strong Language*, this is the second of three capital-centred stories. If you want to know more about his third, *Club Le Monde*, now in post-production, you are strongly advised to take a quick visit

to www.screenpro.co.uk. *The Truth Game* doesn't, aggravatingly, work as well as his debut feature for two reasons: some of the dialogue is incredibly clunky (possibly down to the semi-improvised nature of the film) and, at times, it's often difficult to believe that these people are friends and that they'd accept a dinner invitation. Nevertheless, it's difficult not to want to see his third feature now because he's a man with a mission and a message, and the determination to tell his tale. He's what film-making should be all about.

Neil Corry

Spot the liar

