

STRONG LANGUAGE

UK press cuttings

OTHER FILMS

Philip French

Strong Language (76 mins, no cert) Directed by Simon Rumley

Fast Food (99 mins, 18) Directed by Stuart Sugg; starring Douglas Henshall, Emily Woof

Simpatico (106 mins, 15) Directed by Matthew Warchus; starring Nick Nolte, Jeff Bridges, Sharon Stone, Albert Finney

Double Jeopardy (105 mins, 15) Directed by Bruce Beresford; starring Ashley Judd, Tommy Lee Jones, Bruce Greenwood

The Wood (116 mins, 15) Directed by Rick Famuyiwa; starring Omar Epps, Taye Diggs, Richard T. Jones

THE MOST STRIKING British movie for several months (the best since Christopher Nolan's shoe-string thriller *Following*, last October), Simon Rumley's directorial debut **Strong Language**, is getting a week at the National Film Theatre before going to video in March. It's a film of considerable promise and worth looking out for.

If I hadn't been told, I'd have thought this was a vox-pop documentary with 15 assorted Londoners in their twenties standing around, each on his or her own - in a pub, outside a lock-up garage, across the river from Parliament, in shabby digs and so on - talking straight to camera about pop music, sex, racism, cynicism, money, their jobs, the club scene. The talk is vivid, convincing, revealing. But in fact they're all actors, and as

the movie progresses through its clusters of comment, one gradually notes a direction indicated by one of them, who begins not in three-quarter shot like the others but in the distance and is gradually approached by the camera across a dank basement. He is telling us, in fragmentary form, a rambling story that concludes with an act of violence in a Soho club, witnessed by all the people in the film, the only time their paths cross. Fascinating.

Strong Language cost £30,000. The week's other British picture, **Fast Food**, cost £48,736.17, its producers claim, exactly £1,263.83 under budget. But as Billy Wilder remarked: 'No man ever said to his wife, "Let's go and see this picture, the director brought it in under budget"'.



Strong Language: a debut film worth seeking out.

'Strong Language is like a vox-pop documentary'

OBSERVER

30.1.00