

# STRONG LANGUAGE

## UK press cuttings

# Mind your Strong Language



The cast completely pissed on set

**Strong Language could well become the most talked about cult film of 1998. On the trail of *Trainspotting* and *Kids* comes this strident celluloid statement described by its director as "unique in cinema history"...**

So take note, a definitive work on young Britain has arrived. Director Simon Rumley thinks you should all see his film. The new-comer director told *Penthouse*: "I see *Strong Language* appealing to pretty much anyone young and living in a city. People identify with this film, and more importantly, it's great to be able to go to the cinema and have a laugh about life."

Ostensibly nothing actually happens in this film; no sex, drugs or violence. However, through 16 characters talking candidly to the camera, all this happens and more besides. On subjects ranging from Ecstasy, Brit-pop, AIDS, one-night stands and sexual fantasies, the young urbanites build up a compelling vision of Britain in 1997. You are never entirely sure whether you are watching a drama, a documentary or a cinematic vox-pop. The presentation is designed to challenge the viewer - making you laugh as well as making you a little unsure about what you're seeing.

The only link between the face-the-camera narrative is told by a man recounting the relationship with his ex-girlfriend, a

tale which threads its way throughout the other characters' lives, ultimately associating them all. Cast with relative unknowns, the biggest name being Paul Tomkinson who presents the BBC's *The Sunday Show*, the film's characters include a fetish model, a new age hippy, a biker and a snooty King's Road yuppie. The film is based on the actors' lives as much as the



**Strong Language: unapologetically British**

Director's own experiences. The script was developed through a questionnaire which asked the cast to list the last records they bought, the books they read and their likes and dislikes about London. Rumley achieved his point-blank effect partly by telling the actors to "forget the drama school training and go back to being yourselves".

Simon Rumley feels the British film industry is more receptive to his ideas in the wake of Brit-hip movies like *Small Faces* and *Trainspotting*, but stresses that *Strong Language* is unlike any other UK film: "Trainspotting is a great film, but only a relatively small amount of people can relate to it directly. I personally don't know anyone who takes heroin, most people in Britain don't lead junky lives and therefore the imagery can be a bit distant - my film is closer to home."

*Strong Language* is remarkable in that it uses the visual medium of film on the subject of speech. The 'action' is anecdotal and unseen, yet lives unfold and characters develop as the film gathers momentum and moves faster towards its unexpected conclusion. *Strong Language* is a hard edged chronicle of nineties life, made with acute observation, menace, and a very British sense of humour. *Strong Language* was previewed in London and Cannes this autumn and, pending distribution negotiations, is due for cinema release in spring 1998.

PENTHOUSE JANUARY 98