

The Truth Game

UK Press Cuttings

Time Out

London's living guide
July 18-25 2001 No.1613 £2.20



'The Truth Game'

NFT

The truth will out: hosting dinner for your friends can be a parlous practice. So, too, accepting friends' dinner invitations. As a rule, don't get people together: only monkey business will come of it.

Eddy (Stuart Laing) and Lilly (Selina Giles) are a married London couple circling 30; he's a chummy amateur writer, still drug-dealing on the side, she's plummy and brings home the bacon. That they're, in the terms of the trade, happily attached doesn't preclude certain wanderers of attention. His friend Dan (Paul Blackthorne) is an abrasive, abusive man of appetites about to put on a piss-poor show of cleaning himself up - unsurprisingly, his girlfriend Charlotte (Tania Emery) acts like she can't stand him; she's close to breaking-up point. Then there's Alex (Jennifer White), and her beau Alan (Thomas Fisher, star of this week's co-release 'The Nine Lives of Tomas Katz'). One's daffy and gregarious, the other

artistic and gauche; they're doing fine with each other, but like everyone else, they've brought a secret to the table...

Explosive dinner affairs may not be a cinematic novelty - most recently, 'Un Air de Famille' took much this same storyline - but Simon Rumley's second feature certainly has the courage of its convictions: it's a raw, frank, eminently naturalistic thumbnail snapshot of how people live with themselves and their intimates, here and now. It's certainly intimate cinema: Rumley has the measure of his minimal resources, too, opting for the talk-rich tenor of such as Stillman and Linklater, and the latter's diurnal time-frames. Indeed, rather as Linklater followed his formally experimental 'Slacker' with the more narratively conventional 'Dazed and Confused', this is a more contained, straightforward work than Rumley's 'Strong Language', one that stands (and just occasionally falters) on the vivacity and nuance of its writing and performances. Worth a bite.

Nick Bowdler