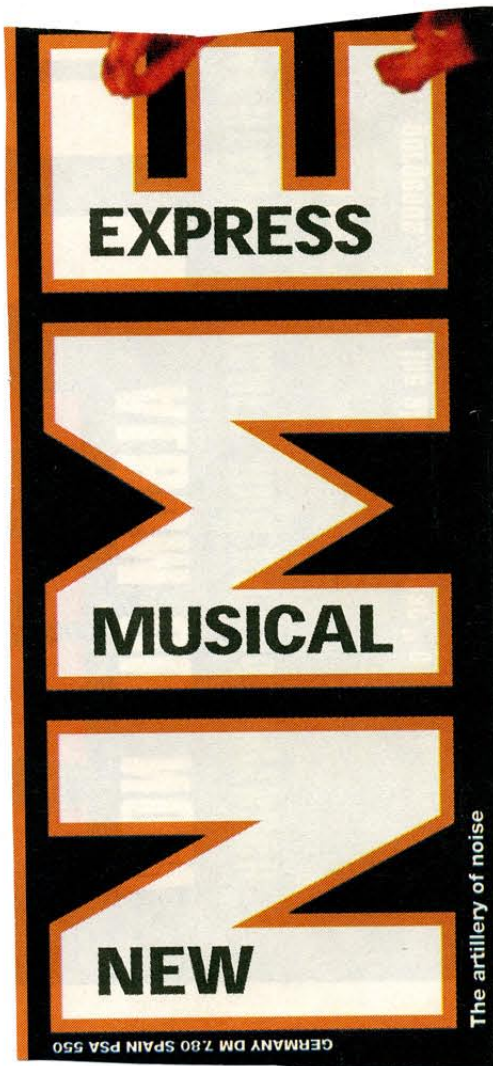


STRONG LANGUAGE

UK press cuttings



Strong Language

Director: Simon Rumley
Starring: David Groves, Al Nedjari, Paul Tonkinson, Julie Rice, Charlie De'Ath, Stuart Laing, Ruth Purser

From the coolest city on the planet," screams the promotional blurb, "comes the hippest film of the year." First-time writer and director Rumley, it seems, believes Britannia really was once cool.

Having caused a stir at Cannes three years ago, *Strong Language* features 17-20-somethings rambling straight to camera. Sometimes amusing, often vacuously pig ignorant, they talk about sex, clubbing, Britpop, racism, AIDS and Ecstasy. But Rumley has higher ambitions than making *Daily Mail* editors cream themselves at the prurient thought of gaining an insight into London's yoof. Linked by a narrator (Groves), their mutterings gradually converge on a central tale of love, violence and revenge.

So this is an edgy, imaginative and oddly constructed thriller which attempts to take Robert Altman's *Short Cuts* premise to its lo-fi extreme. However, with this many people vying for screen time – and despite some smartly scripted monologues and naturalistic acting – none of the characters really rise above their poorly defined stereotypes. So the list of wideboys, media yahoos, hippies, student grants, It girls and gurning clubbers are as two-dimensional as a style guide feature on Britain's various youth tribes.

Ultimately way too long and confusing, it's probably still destined for cult hipness. But only

if you get excited at the prospect of an hour-and-a-half of BBC2's *Video Nation*. (5)
Jim Alexander

NME
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