

Big budget 'Supernova' not worthy of time, money

By Samuel McKewon

Senior editor

There were four different directors of the movie "Supernova," and the one with final credit may or may not exist. I am leaning toward the idea that he does not.

First, it was a big budget action film. Then it turned into a cold, quiet thriller. Then it morphed into a humorous space journey. And then, the mysterious Thomas Lee took over.

Let's talk about Mr. Lee. Mr. Lee, as far as anyone can tell, is a hybrid of the first three directors. He is not an actual person. What Mr. Lee did was combine

REVIEW Supernova

STARS: James Spader, Angela Bassett
DIRECTOR: Thomas Lee
RATING: R (language, cheap space violence)
GRADE: F
FIVE WORDS: Four different directors. Uh, no.

elements of the first three films, edit them together, put Sugar Ray's "Fly" song on the soundtrack and turn in what can best be described as a reasonably incoherent picture, which, if

you're still around by the time it occurs, has an ending that actually ends nothing at all. It cost \$70 million to complete this film.

"Supernova," on its outer shell, is about a crew of six people on the Nightingale 229, a medical ship that answers distress signal calls. All but two of these crew members eventually die. If you find this a startling fact to reveal in a review of a science fiction movie, you have not seen a science fiction movie.

James Spader is the captain. Lou Diamond Phillips is the tech guy. Robin Tunney is his girlfriend. Angela Bassett is a doctor. There are two others, but they have roles that are specifically designed for them to eventually die, so they are wholly

unimportant. Others die too, but their roles were meant for them to do something stupid directly before they die.

So Spader, Phillips, Bassett and the eventually dead folks trek off to answer a distress signal. They meet a space miner (Peter Facinelli), a man who, among other things, must have channeled Tom Cruise's voice into his own as a young child. When he makes his entrance, he strips down naked to prove that, though he may have Cruise's voice, he is much, much taller.

A space artifact brought aboard the ship by Señor Cruise might be a bomb or something. In fact, it is a bomb. Soon it will blow up. And the whole universe will be destroyed.

And this is the film.

Among the more fascinating things in "Supernova:" Phillips has graying hair, and he makes love to the foreign space object. Spader speaks in a deadpan, droll voice during the entire movie. Bassett wears tight-fitting T-shirts. And a female computer talks through the whole movie.

There is no reason to go on. The movie is bad in the sense that it is bad. It never reaches the realm of being laughable. No, it's a serious film, though the trailer is comedic in nature and the poster says "All Hell is about to break loose."

This is the worst of the worst of the worst. Like acid in the eyes.

Thank you, Thomas Lee, whoever you aren't.

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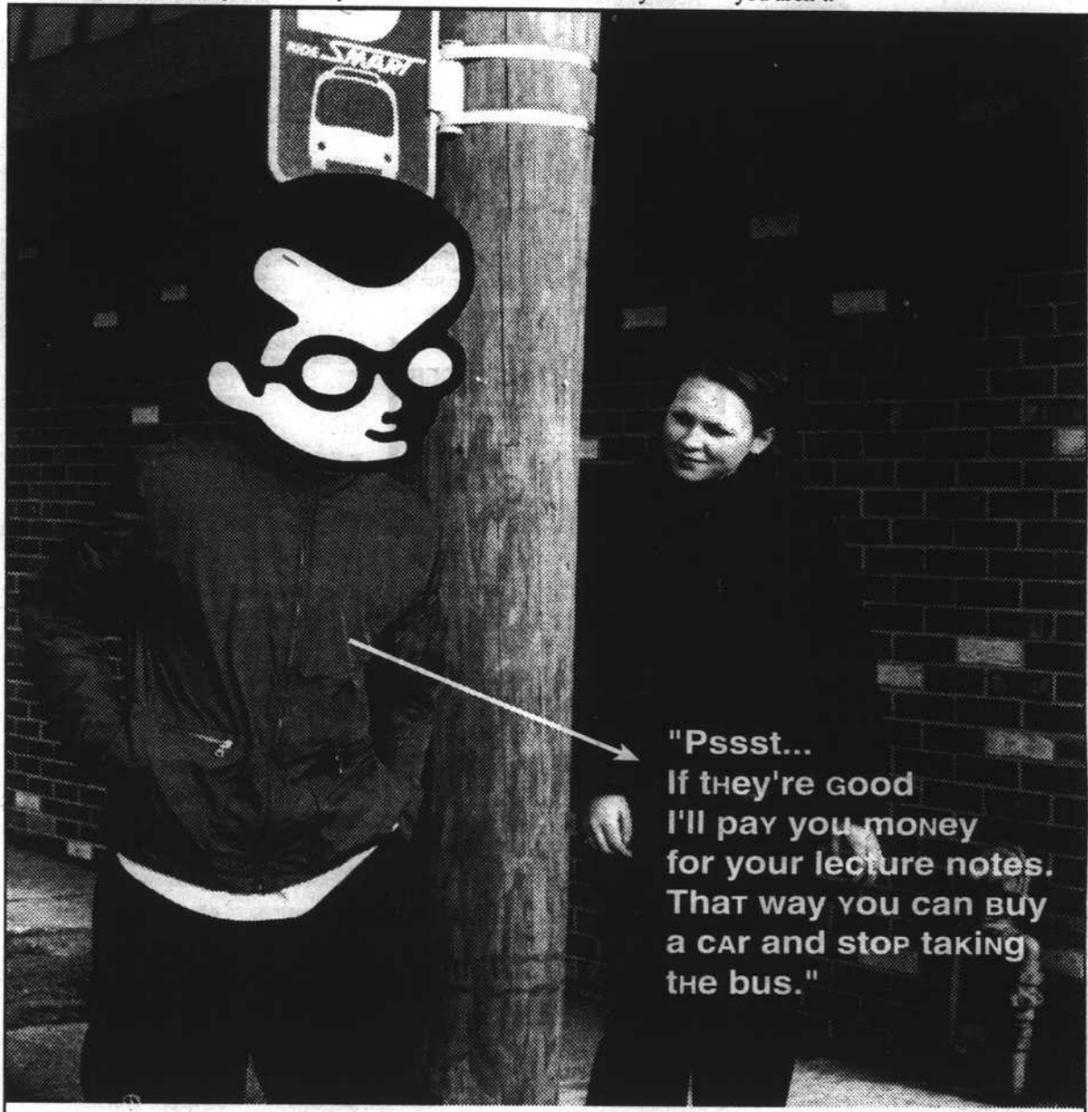
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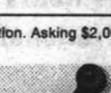
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