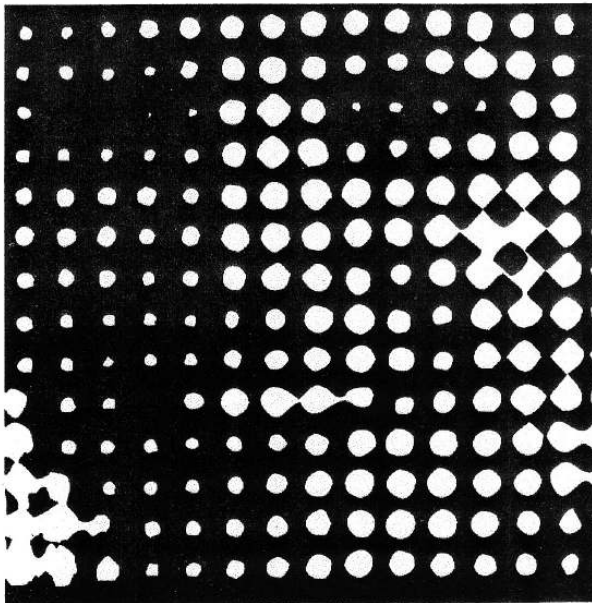


IAAN™
entertainment
&
Springboard Productions

Present:

DAVID MAMET'S

SPEED - THE - PLOW



Directed by: Andrew Lamb

The Artword Alternative: 75 Portland St
(1 Block East of Bathurst, South of King)

Oct 14th-17th, 21st-24th & 28th-30th

Thursday - Saturday: Shows at 8:00pm

Sunday: Shows at 2:30pm

SPEED-THE-PLOW ★★★☆

Featuring Ben Hunter, Paula Schultz.
Written by David Mamet. Directed by
Andrew Lamb. Presented by Springboard
Productions and IAAN Entertainment. To
Oct 30. Thu-Sat 8pm; Sun 2:30pm.
\$12/\$10 students. Artword Alternative,
75 Portland. 416-458-0059.

David Mamet is currently in production on a movie called *Joan of Bark: The Dog That Saved France*. It's a comedy. It stars Will Ferrell. It probably has a dog in it. Back in those crazy '80s, though, before Mamet became Hollywood's go-to hack for Thomas Harris adaptations, he also used to be a playwright of some renown. *Speed-the-Plow*, a typically salty Hollywood satire, isn't one of his best works — certainly it pales next to *American Buffalo* and *Glengarry Glen Ross* — but Springboard's production is tense and capable, if a little slapdash.

When *Speed-the-Plow* debuted in 1988, the play was overshadowed by the stunt casting of Madonna as Karen, the naïve temporary secretary trapped in a power struggle between two whorish movie producers, Bobby and Charlie. But the play isn't really about Karen (Mamet doesn't do women). In keeping with the rest of Mamet's oeuvre, from *Edmund* to *The Untouchables* to (presumably) *Joan of Bark*, *Speed-the-Plow* is really about guys, or more specifically, assholes — or more specific-specifically, rich dumb assholes and why they're better than poor, stupid assholes. (As Danny DeVito says in Mamet's gangster flick, *Heist*, "Everybody needs money — that's why they call it money.")

In this case, the poor stupid asshole in question is Charlie (Ben Hunter), a dirtball producer who's trying to sell a prison film to an old buddy of his, the scumbagacious rich asshole producer Bobby (Joseph Cochrane). Caught between is Karen (Paula Schultz), who has a movie pitch of her own, the adaptation of a worthy novel entitled *The Bridge, or Radiation, Half-Life and the Decay of Society*. ("It's a summer picture," Bobby explains.)

Mamet's dialogue, as ever, speaks for itself ("You fuck, you fuckin' wimp!"; "You squat to pee, you old woman!"; etc.), and although only Hunter seems to have a real handle on the Mamet-speak rhythms, Cochrane and Schultz put in creditable performances. Andrew Lamb's direction is also suitably cruel and tight. It won't be a revelatory night; but this is solid work. And there are no dogs. **PI**