

# reviews



**"Spaceballs"**  
Directed by Mel Brooks  
Starring Mel Brooks, John  
Candy and Rick Moranis  
★★½

Just as Alfred Hitchcock is considered to be the master of suspense, Mel Brooks might be considered to be the master of parody. Brooks' only problem is that he can't be as consistently brilliant as Hitchcock was.

After making a name for himself as a comedian, comic writer, actor and television producer during the '50s and '60s, Brooks turned to filmmaking in 1965 with the Oscar-winning short film, "The Critic." His first full-length film, "The Producers" (1968) won an Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay and is

considered by some to be an American classic.

For "Spaceballs," Brooks parodies the science fiction genre of film. There are elements of "The Wizard of Oz," "Star Trek," "Alien" and "The Planet of the Apes" sprinkled throughout the film but, for the most part, the "Star Wars" trilogy is Brooks' main target. "Star Wars," which wasn't meant to be taken seriously in the first place, doesn't provide good material for parody because it was so funny to begin with. "Spaceballs" could have been better if Brooks had reached out and attacked more science fiction films.

In "Spaceballs," President Skroob (Brooks) of the airless planet Spaceball wants to steal the air from the forest world of Druidia. Skroob and his right

hand bad guy, the evil Lord Dark Helmet (Rick Moranis), try to kidnap Princess Vespa (Daphne Zuniga) so that her father, King Roland of Druidia (Dick Van Patten), will surrender his planet's air. Instead, Roland calls intersteller outlaw Lone Starr (Bill Pullman) and his sidekick, Barf (John Candy), to rescue the Princess.

Starr and Barf save the Princess and her droid, Dot Matrix (Lorene Yarnell, voice by Joan Rivers), seconds before they are captured. The foursome crash land on the planet Vega and meet the great wizard Yogurt (also Brooks). Yogurt begins to teach Starr the way of the "Schwartz" before Vespa is kidnapped. Starr is forced to battle Dark Helmet, master of the dark side of the "Schwartz," so that he can save Vespa and Druidia's air.

Brooks has a strange, vulgar and somewhat childish sense of humor that is often very funny but sometimes too stupid for its own good. There are several moments in "Spaceballs" that are incredibly funny — the first appearance of the Spaceball ship, the evil Pizza the Hutt, Yogurt's helpful Dinks, the Spaceball Stormtroopers "combing" the desert for clues and John Hurt's cameo in which he reprises his role in "Alien," to name a few. But there aren't enough laughs to

justify the full price of \$4.50 for the evening show. The matinee is a better bargain.

There's one scene in the film that gives a good suggestion for getting some top quality Brooks' humor. After Starr and Barr grab Vespa from the Spaceball ship, Skroob and Dark Helmet hunt them down by renting the videocassette of "Spaceballs" and fast-forwarding to the next scene where the four crash on Vega. The video machine had only

eight other films for rent: "The Producers," "The Twelve Chairs," "Blazing Saddles," "Young Frankenstein," "Silent Movie," "High Anxiety," "History of the World, Part I" and "To Be or Not To Be." If you want a lot of laughs, rent "The Producers," "Blazing Saddles" or "Young Frankenstein." If you want a handfull of laughs, rent any of the other Brooks' films or go see "Spaceballs."—Review by Karl Pallmeyer

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## Best Bets

Howdy! Here we are again. This week was a short one and now the long weekend is ahead, waiting to be enjoyed. If you're going out of town and planning to be on the road, be extra careful. But if you decide not to take the ultimate road trip this weekend, Best Bets is here to provide you with unique entertainment opportunities which can be reached with little difficulty. If your agency or group has a unique event coming up, let us know by calling *At Ease* at 845-3312.

### Friday, July 3

**Fireworks Display:** To get you into the 4th of July spirit, Post Oak Mall will light the sky with a fireworks display. The show begins at 9 p.m. in the parking lot by Sears Automotive, so go out and take your lawn chair, or sit in the back of a pickup truck and enjoy yourself.

### Saturday, July 4

**All-Day Swim:** If you like to swim, a 4th of July celebration at Bee Creek Pool consisting

of swimming, swimming, and more swimming will make you very happy. Gates open to the general public at noon and close at 6 p.m. Admission is \$1.

**More Swimming:** Another place to consider for an afternoon swim is the Bryan Aquatic Center. The 4th of July party begins at noon and runs until 8 p.m.

**More Fireworks:** If you live on campus and are in the mood for celebrating the long weekend, head out to Olsen Field around dark for an Aggie-style fireworks display.

**Special Guest:** If you haven't bought your tickets for the Gary Morris concert, you still have plenty of time. He is performing in Brenham, July 10, at the Silver Wings Ballroom. The performance is from 8 p.m. to midnight and the Texas Unlimited Band will also appear. If you're interested, you can buy advance tickets for \$10 at all Courts Western Wear Stores. Waiting until you get to the door will cost you \$12.

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