

"Vice Versa"
Starring Judge Reinhold and Fred Savage
Directed by Brian Gilbert
Rated PG

(AP)How do you figure it—three movies in a row with the same basic plot? Last year it was Dudley Moore and Kirk Cameron changing brains in "Like Father, Like Son." Now we have Judge Reinhold pulling a switch with his young son, Fred Savage, in "Vice Versa." Soon to come: George Burns trading identities with his college-age grandson, Charlie Schlatter, in "18 Again."

Such coincidence is unfortunate, since all three movies possess the capacity to entertain.

"Vice Versa," in fact, is a nifty comedy of the supernatural variety. It benefits from a clever script by Dick Clement and Ian LaFrenais (who also produced), lively direction by Brian Gilbert and the inspired teaming of Reinhold and young Savage as the misplaced father and son.

The role reversal is caused by a golden skull stolen from a Thai temple. In "Like Father, Like Son," it was a laboratory potion; in "18 Again," an auto crash.

Reinhold is a Chicago department store executive who is a less than adequate part-time parent. His 11-year-old son lives most of the time with his mother who is now remarried. During a brief visit, father and son touch the skull and become transformed.

The fun begins, though both victims are distressed by their new identities. Reinhold is more interested in rock music and his pet frog, but he reports to the office and tries to fake his way through matters that are as foreign to him as trigonometry.

Savage attends school, but he is bored by the childish doings and finishes his tests in a few minutes. He withers the school bullies and barks orders to his limo driver. He devises a radio transmitter so he can guide Reinhold through an all-important sales meeting with the store chief (William Prince).

Much of the hilarity is played off Reinhold's attempts to resist the advances of his sexy date, Corinne Bohrer, and to explain his bizarre behavior to his secretary, Gloria Gifford.

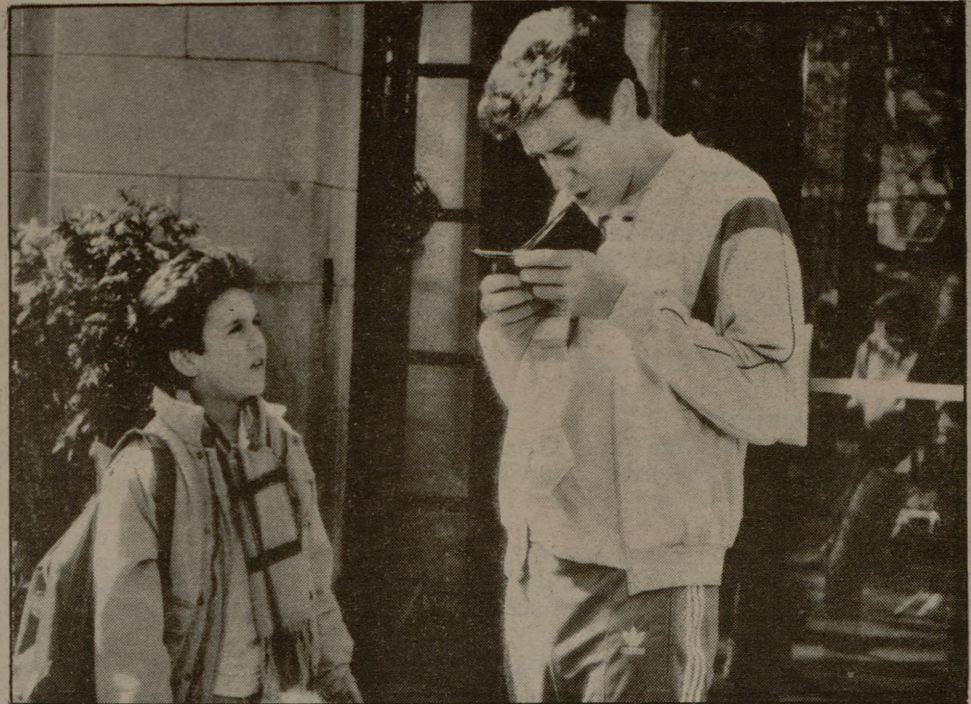
Reinhold ("Beverly Hills Cop"), with his loony face and rubbery body, is perfect for this kind of tomfoolery. Matching him all the way is Fred Savage ("The Princess Bride"), who draws big laughs by mouthing his adult dialogue. Director Gilbert and the writer-producers have devised a genuinely sweet-natured movie, with only a few swear words by Savage to warrant the PG rating.

D.O.A.
Starring Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan
Directed By Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel
Rated R

"D.O.A." stars Dennis Quaid as an English professor poisoned by a strange and deadly chemical. He was poisoned either during a bad day at work, or a wild night, and by the time he discovers he is dying, he has only twenty four hours to find his murderer.

His only connection to that night is Meg Ryan, who plays a college freshman in one of Quaid's classes. Together they retrace their steps, trying to find out why someone would murder an English professor. They cross paths with an heiress, a psychopathic chauffeur, a university benefactor straight from the twilight zone and a vindictive police force.

"D.O.A." combines talented acting with good story ideas, and integrates these to make a really great film. Quaid gives an outstanding dramatic performance that complements his talents as a rugged adventurer. Ryan has a somewhat minor part, but her portrayal of innocence is so sincere and convincing that she manages to rise above a



Judge Reinhold and Fred Savage star as a father and son who mysteriously switch bodies in the new comedy "Vice Versa," directed by Brian Gilbert.

surprisingly insignificant role.

Even though "D.O.A." is an action thriller, it scrutinizes the character Quaid plays. Instead of merely establishing a story, and then letting shallow characters get swept along conventional and predictable extremes of suspense and danger, "D.O.A." creates characters the audience can truly care about.

Quaid plays a writer who received his tenure after publishing bestselling novels. He has become afraid of failure though, and not only has he stopped writing, he has stopped living. He is an intelligent and passionate man, and unfortunately he must die to learn how easy it would have been to realize the aspects of living he had forgotten. By focusing on characterization, the excitement and suspense seem to naturally follow.

The photography of "D.O.A." is fantastic as well.

The film begins in black and white, with very grainy shots of Quaid stumbling to the police to report his murder. Then, the action of the film is in color as Quaid relates the events of the last thirty-six hours to the police. These color scenes utilize photographic techniques that are almost clichés, but somehow come together to create bright impressionism and shadow-filled surrealism that is interesting and moving.

An especially memorable scene is when Quaid finds he

only has a day to live. Sitting in a blue-lit hospital room whose walls are covered with X-rays, he runs into the bright streets, dashing through dizzy vignettes of jostling people on the sidewalk, running across busy streets, he is completely confused and upset.

"D.O.A." is a much promoted film that more than fulfills all expectations, and will set the pace for this season's action films.

Review by Matthew Stewart

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