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BY MICHAEL GILTZ & FRIENDS

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## "The Devil Wears Prada" -- \* \* 1/2; Streep -- \* \* \* \*

"The Devil Wears Prada" is a silly, lightweight diversion that showcases Meryl Streep giving a master class in movie comedy. Her boss-from-hell is a quietly devastating presence who can send shivers down your spine just by muttering her displeasure in the most reasonable of tones. A tilt of the head, a look in her eyes, a gentle "No, no; that wasn't a question" and you are helpless with laughter. Not surprisingly, she isn't a monster but a real character -- Streep deepens her during the movie without sacrificing the character's essential scariness. An Oscar nomination is a given and since it would be in a supporting role, she might just win, despite the movie's overall lack of substance. My God, it's been 25 years since Streep won for "Sophie's Choice" -- don't you think she's due? Anne Hathaway plays the new assistant to Streep, a legendary fashion magazine editor. She holds the screen quite well, proving her star-making turn in "The Princess Diaries" wasn't a fluke. The movie is a lot of fun -- certainly every moment with Streep is priceless. Stanley Tucci is also marvelous playing a gay editor -- he doesn't overplay it for laughs, a temptation that would have ruined the character if he had been played by most anyone else. Without giving away plot twists, the movie lost me when it pretended to depict Hathaway selling her soul to succeed in this high pressure job. Since the movie wants us to root for Hathaway, it's too afraid to actually show her turning into someone unpleasant. Hathaway's friends keep telling her she's changed, but I didn't see it. Also, Adrien Grenier of "Entourage" was a wimpy presence as her boyfriend and Simon Baker (who I normally like) oddly unconvincing as a romantic rival. But none of this matters: Meryl Streep is tremendously funny in a performance that is brilliant in its subtlety and flair. I'd work for her in a second.

POSTED BY MICHAEL IN NEW YORK AT 1:04 PM



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