

Cinema: *Dreamscape* a nightmare

By Kathy Amen

Dreamscape. Directed by Joseph Ruben; written by David Loughery, Chuck Russell and Joseph Ruben; produced by Bruce John Curtis for Twentieth Century Fox. Starring Dennis Quaid, Max Von Sydow, and Kate Capshaw. Rated PG-13 (violence, language and sex, but no nudity). Showing at the Wonder, Ingram Mall, Century South and Galaxy Theaters.

Movies are the stuff that dreams are made of. And *Dreamscape* is certainly the stuff of nightmares. It shows several terrifying dreams in vivid detail, using state-of-the-art special effects. But the "walking" segments of the story are hardly less chilling. It's an exciting thriller, with a fascinating science fiction premise and a good cast.

Dr. Novotny (Von Sydow) has a machine that enables psychics to enter and influence the dreams of others. He recruits Alex (Quaid) for his team. At first Alex is reluctant, but later he becomes enthusiastic about the project. The sensations involved are exciting, and there is great potential for helping troubled dreamers. The fly in the ointment is government agent Blair (Christopher Plummer) who wants to use the technique for his own nefarious purposes.

Alex is the center of the action, waking and sleeping. And Quaid does a good job with the character.

With his incredibly engaging raffish grin and cocked eyebrow, his best scenes are those requiring kidding, flirting or sarcasm. He doesn't fare as well in serious conversation. But he handles the action sequences admirably.

Capshaw, as Novotny's assistant, is less dingy than in *Temple of Doom*, but just as appealing. She and Quaid generate as much romantic excitement walking down a corridor, discussing dream research, as some on-screen couples manage in a full-blown love scene.

The rest of the cast is fine, too. Plummer is unbearably creepy and Von Sydow is the very picture of scientific rectitude.

Dreamscape clearly benefits from the new PG-13 rating. It would surely be R otherwise. But in addition to the R-rated language and some pretty graphic violence, the dream sequences would probably scare younger children sleepless for weeks. They did a pretty good job on me! The content of the dreams and the effects used to depict them combine to create some eerie, unusual, and truly frightening images. Beware if you're somewhat faint of heart!

My biggest complaint about *Dreamscape* involves their

newspaper ad. For some reason, it tries to make this movie look like *Temple of Doom*, when they're not alike at all. (The two movies do share one horrific image, perhaps more shocking here than in Spielberg's movie.) The little kid pictured with Quaid and Capshaw, stand on its own.



(Courtesy Photo)

On the beam

Alex Gardner (Dennis Quaid) enters the nightmare of a construction worker who dreams he is falling from a great height. *Dreamscape* is currently playing at the Wonder, Ingram Mall, Century South and Galaxy Theaters.