

Aeon Flux. Directed by Karyn Kusama. Starring (whoa, buddy...) Charlize Theron and Francis McDormand.

Ee yawn. Flux sux. I checked with a bunch of on-line reviews and can't find anybody who's made that connection yet, though *Army Times* says "Stuck Flux." Flux facti femina. Post tenebras flux. C'mon. About the best we could hope for was that *Aeon* would take its rightful place among the thirdrate flicks already turned over to video featuring some one of the regnant pouty lips, high cheekbones, haunchbound (and often stuffed into some kinda spaceleather suit, PETA, alas, having failed its mandate or lost it sommeres on account of everybody's wearing leather up in the year 2415 and I think Thomas More's *Utopia* supplies everybody with a single regulation leather jumpsuit per year which about end of October oughta be plenty ripe, if my socks from only last week are any index, but that's another whole 'nother...) *chipies du jour* (*Resident Evil* with Mila Jovovich; *Elektra* with Jennifer Garner; *Catwoman* with Halle Berry; *Matrix* with Carrie Anne Moss, okay a latex suit for that one; *Lara Croft* with Angelina Jolie, okay a rubber suit for that one; *Van Helsing* with Kate Beckinsdale; *Underworld* with same; *Fantastic Voyage* with Raquel Welch, who set the bar for fleshmolding bodysuits, at least the flesh part...). The whole business leaves us wondering how Tiffany over there who we took to the flick would do packed into a leather catsuit and what if...

Unnnnnnfortunately, when these things get heavy on us (clones, time travel... ouch! my head hurts) and ree-quire brainwork to figure out, it pops the bubble and we might's well be watching *Ice Age* again with that imbecile of an overweight nephew, one with the rattail and sneakers got lights on them and looks as if he's gonna schnurffle down that whole tub of extra butter popcorn and those baggy britches around of his knees not gonna be baggy much longer at that rate.

The future, aside from it's populated by nubile fee-males in tightfitting bodystockings and six-inch heels, appears to have leached all personality from its denizens by imposition of a socialized what's good for you regime (you get about the same effect by entering college... try it!). Sooooo... the sigh-reens up in 2415 don't look as if they'd be much fun at the Prom: they're all serious or martial or worse (serious *and* martial), the unhappy consequence, I suppose, of all the independence and self-reliance we hear so much about *this* century. So it is that four hundred years from now, after virtually the whole population of the planet has been wiped out by that Evian flu (yeah, yeah... I know), the one everybody says not to worry about, the remnants of (hu)mankind have walled themselves up in the futuropolis of Pregna (or something), where everything is fine on account of everything is swell. Naturally, this blissful state is a) phony and b) provoked by the misguided cloning experiments of the Leader's brother, the Leader being a spongyhaired threedaybearded (you'd think the Emperor of the flockin' planet could shave, wear a suit) Gringo named "Goodchild" (just so you don't miss anything, you dummy). Well, with one thing and another, the non-clones (or maybe it's the clones who've learnt to think), called "Monocans" (or something), launch an attack on the Goodchild brothers at the behest of a mysterious maybe there, maybe not fee-male rebel chieftess, Francis McDormand. And here falls the *real* mystery of the flick:

McDormand, Oscar™ winner for *Fargo* and Theron, Oscar™ winner for *Monster* turn up in a nightmare like this one. Vanity, thy name is...

Anyhow. The attack of the nubile but dangerous fee-males (like there's another kind)! Aeon (who receives phone messages in her head and also by taking a phone pill) and her bosom (forgive me) bud, Siddhartha (or something), squirm, writhe, stretch, arch, bulge, swell, burgeon, sashay, sidle, *pirouette* and *jeté* over the wall and through a series of ugly future obstacles (one gives a new meaning to "Lawn Darts," for instance: the "lawn" is the "darts"!) to beard the bad Goodchild in his den and unthral the good Goodchild, who turns out to be... Mr. Aeon... or Mr. Flux, if you prefer (Uh oh... sorry. Didn't mean to ruin it for you except it's not *that* clear in the movie, sooooo...). Well, (hu)mankind gets rescued and we all get to think (still not apparent if we're all clones or not, at least not to me) for ourselves. Talk about science fiction! Really spiffy visual dimension (not the least of these Charlize Theron in her escalating succession of... um, er... *uplifting* battle leotards) as befits an animé set to celluloid, but even this achievement evaporates when you remember that all this stuff is computer generated and none of it built or fabricated or made for real, even out of two-befores and chickenwire and *papier mâché* (a lot like paper mache, only, you know, classy on account of got the funny marks over the letters but could actually use one of those wiggly Spanish things for good measure) like Oz. Pregna just never was. What can you do in front of an empty screen flooded with light except wiggle your fingers? Or in this case, your butt.