All that Jazz looks behind the curtains

All That Jazz, directed by Bob Fosse. Starring Roy Scheider. Opens Friday at several Sack Theaters.

I can't remember ever having been so thoroughly awed by a film before. Bob Fosse's semi-autobiographical new movie, All That Jazz, gives some incredible insight into part of what goes on behind the scenes of a Broadway musical - the electricity, the sweat, the glitter, the deceptions, the total devotion to the art of dancing and the exhilaration derived therefrom.

It gladdens dance not only through its plot, but because it is a technically beautiful film. The costumes, the sets, the editing are all magnificent by themselves, but it is Fosse's brilliant direction and choreography which demonstrate the incredible love for the theater of which this film speaks.

All That Jazz revolves around Joe Gideon, a top-notch Broadway director and choreographer who is obsessed by his work to the point where he can no longer separate his private life from his career. The theater is the only environment in which he can function - a phony, flaky lifestyle wherein everything is an adventure. Joe's problem is that he's been a part of these artistic, required surroundings for too long, becoming jaded and tired of the usual hedonistic pleasures, he is compelled to look for something new. No experience on earth will satisfy his desires for excitement any longer, so he toys with the idea of death as the ultimate adventure. Joe contemplates his death in terms of surreal musical sequences.

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