

Cochran's 'New Gun' loaded for bear

By HARRY HAUN

★★★

MY NEW GUN. Diane Lane, James Le Gros, Stephen Collins, Tess Harper. Directed by Stacy Cochran. At the Angelika Film Center. Running time: 103 mins. Unrated.

BRANDISHING 'MY New Gun,' writer-director Stacy Cochran takes her first screen audience for a wild and crazy ride today at the Angelika Film Center.

Hers is a picture that operates on impulse and high-octane imagination, seemingly without a road map or a planned agenda—a go-with-the-flow fabrication that careens into dark, quirky corners of black comedy—and Cochran gamely goes the distance without once losing control.

The plot path she pursues is dangerously unpredictable, yet it passes persuasively as the logical fallout of having a new gun in the house. Far from being a "security device," it wrecks the marriage of a Teaneck pair (Stephen Collins and Diane Lane), putting the husband in the hospital with a shot foot and the wife in the bed of an obliging neighbor



Diane Lane

(James Le Gros)

Let the record show that the wife never wanted the weapon in the house in the first place.

Then there's the suspiciously solicitous kid across the street, all too willing to take the gun off her hands so he can protect his mom (Tess Harper), an addled spirit and country music queen on the lam from her estranged hubby (Bill Raymond)—or so he says.

It grows increasingly more difficult to anticipate the action—which is only for the

good and very much to Cochran's credit. Evidently, and with appropriate perverseness, the climax occurs amid much gun-waving at the wedding of the couple's best friends (Bruce Altman and Maddie Corman), it had been the groom-to-be's bright idea to seal his marriage proposal not only with a diamond ring but a personally engraved handgun for his intended as well.

Diane Lane negotiates the sharp curves of her loop-de-loop role with commendable skill, and Collins again manages to satirize the straight-arrow suburbanite he embodies a tad too perfectly. Le Gros, as noted, makes a chameleon samaritan; his ambiguity keeps the picture perking along with all kinds of possibilities.

But it is Raymond, resembling a lower-cased Gene Hackman, who scores a bull's-eye in the most bizarre role.

Listening to its own very distant drummer, 'My New Gun' emerges as an on-target sign-of-the-times satire—establishing its creator and prime-mover, Stacy Cochran, as the movies' new gun for hire.