REVIEW

Mission accomplished as this spy film mixes suspense with comedy

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Paul Feig, director of Bridesmaids and The Heat, is back with another action-comedy starring ballsy improv comic Melissa McCarthy. His secret-agent parody, Spy, is a refreshing riot of laughs.

Self-conscious, desk-based CIA operative Susan Cooper (Melissa McCarthy) takes on her first field role when aptly named co-spy Bradley Fine (Jude Law) is killed in action. Susan's mission is a typical one - stopping the sale of nuclear weapons - but Feig builds in oodles of suspense and exciting, subversive action. Imagine McCarthy fighting a girl ninja with a baguette or chasing down terrorists on a moped and you've got the gist.

Melissa McCarthy stars in Spy

Feig's isn't the first spy pastiche to grace this year's multiplexes. Matthew Vaughn's Kingsman: The Secret Service predictably gave us male-centred action-comedy with a primitive attitude to working class people.

Spy is more progressive and sets about dismantling the genre's Bond-girl stereotypes. Susan and Nancy (a brilliantly neurotic Miranda Hart) are both battling confidence issues. Their attempt to break free from the rut of invisible office work makes Spy feel like a coming of age movie for browbeaten middle-aged women.

Feig unites a dazzling A-list ensemble but McCarthy is never better than when she's mouthing off at a bragging Jason Statham, who's done everything from driving a car while on fire to infiltrating an underground poisoning ring.

Feig wastes no time mocking the more ridiculous aspects of the spy genre and the results are hilarious.

Rating: 4/5