

# Romantic Flick Flirts With Success

By MATT MANSFIELD  
Staff Writer

Everyone grows weary of trite heterosexual romantic comedies, and as the public now slowly accepts homosexuality, it also must become accustomed to trite homosexual romantic comedies.

Jim Fall's new movie "Trick" cutely examines the tribulations of a couple desperately trying to find a place to hook up while exploring pockets of New York City's gay culture. The film delves into a delightful day in the life of aspiring musical theater writer Gabriel (Christian Campbell) who decides to shake up his social life by sauntering into a gay strip bar.

There he plays glance games with a dancer named Mark (John Paul Pitoc), and the two coincidentally meet later in a subway train and flirting ensues.

While searching for a place to

lose his sexual abandon, Campbell meets quirky characters, like his friend Katherine (Tori Spelling), who distract him from his momentary goal.

Though not intentionally typecast, Spelling's role as an obnoxiously garrulous aspiring actress reminds viewers of her traumatically superficial life on "Beverly Hills, 90210." She fits the role well, sometimes too well, grating on even the audience's nerves.

But Campbell does a good job of keeping Gabriel disquietingly deferent to Spelling and other characters, making his shy personality more dynamic.

Gabriel's roommate, Rich (Brad Breyer), takes control of their apartment to fulfill his own lustful desires, and his antics seem cruelly humorous.

The movie creates awkwardly amusing tension between the two aroused roommates, competing for the apartment, but any potentially romantic situations between the two fizzle.

Although the film possesses an interesting array of characters and roving scenes that delve into numerous aspects of gay life, it only qualifies as cute at



Tori Spelling plays aspiring actress Katherine in "Trick."

best. The cheesy flick lacks an overall deeper meaning, like the campy musical theater lifestyle Campbell lives.

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# VIDEO BRIEFS

By JUSTIN MARLOWE  
Staff Writer

## New on Video: "200 Cigarettes"

In case you missed it in theaters, go rent "200 Cigarettes" as soon as you come up with enough money to return yourself to the video store's good graces.

Featuring Ben Affleck, Casey Affleck, Christina Ricci, Courtney Love and Dave Chapelle, among others, this wonderful movie was sadly overlooked by audiences on the big screen last year.

The story follows several groups of potential partygoers as they wind their way toward a 1982 New Year's party in New York City. The plots seem unrelated at first, but as the movie progresses, so do the connections between storylines.

Movies which attempt this structure often die horrible deaths due to the fact that one or more of the sub-stories can't measure up, resulting in annoyed audi-

## VIDEO BRIEFS

### "200 Cigarettes"

★★★★

### "Dazed and Confused"

★★★★

# Love Hurts in One Stinker of a Comedy

By DANIELE EUBANKS  
Staff Writer

It's not a vile stench or fetid odor, but the new "unromantic romantic comedy" produced by Independent Artists called "Love Stinks" does, well, stink.

The premier film from the new entertainment company just doesn't deliver the dazzling blend of humor, romance and intrigue its massive advertising campaign promises.

French Stewart ("3rd Rock From the Sun") struggles in his role as Seth, a sitcom writer who bases his shows on his personal life - a life that is ravaged by super-sensuous Chelsea (Bridgette Wilson, "Mortal Combat"). This calculating temptress lures him into her clutches on the first date and proceeds to make his life a living nightmare.

Chelsea's overdone maniacal pursuit

of a marriage proposal plays on all the stereotypes of single women struck by the wedding bug. Her vile manipulating lack of concern for anything holy make her "demon-woman" character flat. Chelsea is devoid of any redeeming qualities that would provide depth and "grayness" to the black and white conflict between good and evil.

Additionally, the film is plagued by futile attempts at humor and chronic overacting by all the leading characters, including supporting actors Bill Bellamy and Tyra Banks. Banks struggles the most, projecting a sappy sweetness that becomes very valley girl-esque.

Chelsea's whining complaint during one altercation with Seth - "You are so unfunny" - offers an ironic twist in this struggling attempt to create comedy.

Tension and some genuine humor do build up toward the end of the film, and the witty banter between Bellamy and Stewart in the final scenes ultimately saves "Love Stinks" from the trash heap.

A sadistic and surprising twist at the end will leave viewers chuckling, and it almost overshadows the poor quality of the rest of the movie.

Also, there are some steamy moments that jazz up the predictable chain of events, as Wilson's character has an affinity for prancing around in sexy lingerie.

Independent Artists chose their slogan for this movie well: "Sometimes the best sex in the world just isn't worth it."

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## MOVIE REVIEW

### "Trick"

★★★★

## MOVIE REVIEW

### "Love Stinks"

★★

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ences who care to follow only the more interesting plots.

Luckily, "200 Cigarettes" is blessed with enough quality stories to maintain consistency and keep the audience interested.

And the weaving of the characters together provides a creative and surprising ending to the film. Adding to the movie's appeal is some excellent early '80s scenery and an incredible soundtrack, featuring some classic '80s pop from Blondie, the Go-Gos and Elvis Costello. A true video gem.

Pick of the Week: "Dazed and Confused"

Can't get enough of period flicks with great soundtracks featuring Ben Affleck as the requisite dumb hunk?

Try "Dazed and Confused." Though it seems inconceivable that anyone has not seen this movie, here's a quick recap of the story: On the last day of school in 1976, rising high school seniors initiate rising freshmen into the ways of post-pubescent life.

Now a cult classic, "Dazed and Confused" helped set the standard for early '90s comedy.

The film, along with "Friday" and "Mallrats" (also featuring Ben Affleck as the requisite dumb hunk), began the drift away from physical comedy and outrageous situations, two themes which dominated the '80s comedy scene. Instead, they focused on the ordinary (or even mundane) daily existence familiar to the majority of regular people.

And who can forget the music?

Although it seems that even half-hour TV sitcoms have their own box sets today, not every movie was required to have a platinum soundtrack in 1993. But the movie's music was so good that "Dazed and Confused" was the first film since "Dirty Dancing" to have a soundtrack spawn a sequel of its own - *Even More Dazed and Confused*.

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