

Movie Review: 'The Ten'

by David_Elliott

Winona Ryder has had embarrassments, like the film "Lost Souls," and her 2002 conviction for shoplifting. None of that rivals her attempt at comedy in "The Ten" as a woman sexually wild for a wooden dummy.

'THE TEN' - Winona Ryder is featured in one of the 10 stories in 'The Ten.' Each story is inspired by one of the Ten Commandments. CNS Photo courtesy of ThinkFilm. RATINGS

4 STARS - Excellent.

3 STARS - Worthy.

2 STARS - Mixed.

1 STAR - Poor.

0 - Forget It (a dog.) OK, give The Ryder credit for go-for-it zest. But director David Wain and co-writer Ken Marino are beyond forbearance. They've made a crunchingly awful, creepily upbeat, segmented comedy about the fabled moral commandments. Weren't those tablets glossed well enough by C.B. DeMille's epics and Krzysztof Kieslowski's "The Decalogue"?

As actors of some rep grind through painfully geezer-hip gags, trying to be ribald but cute, you might not feel part of the only ideal audience: severely lapsed Christians and Ayn Rand fanatics, at a comedy club for soused

nudists. Offensive to anyone who takes the Mosaic laws even somewhat seriously, and thuddingly pointless to everyone else, "The Ten" hovers near zero.

Paul Rudd serves as giddy host, introducing each skit piece, with linkage filler about his marital woes (boy, does that eat dust). Soon, we're watching a guy (Adam Brody) jump without parachute, landing alive but stuck in the ground, then worshipped like an Easter Island statue - this riffs on the command to have no other gods but God.

Ken Marino plays a smugly asinine doctor who leaves a surgical blade inside a patient as a "goof" (this notion defines the entire film). She dies, he is sent to prison for repetitive gags on male rape bondage. This is treated as a serial guffaw, pathetically.

Ryder does her ditzy thing with the little wooden stud (two schticks together). Liev Schreiber milks laughs from CAT scan machines, due to coveting his neighbor's goods, which leads to the jocular, radioactive death of children. Forgive him, Lord, if not the writers.

Gretchen Mol is a virginal librarian who, on Mexican holiday, finds that Jesus Christ is a steamy village handyman with Fabio hair, prone to sexual defloration. Famke Janssen, Jessica Alba, Oliver Platt, Ron Silver, Rob Corddry and others swirl in the rinse cycle of this laffomat.

Viewers juiced may have fun, yet forget why. The rest of us, soberly trapped, will not forget easily.

A ThinkFilm release. Director: David Wain. Writers: Ken Marino, David Wain. Cast: Paul Rudd, Winona Ryder, Adam Brody, Gretchen Mol, Oliver Platt, Liev Schreiber, Jessica Alba, Ron Silver. Running time: 1 hour, 33 minutes. Rated R. 0 stars.

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