

Groovin' wit da Mod Squad

TIMOTHY A. BELL
Photo Editor

A black man in painfully constricting pants. A sexy, provocatively-dressed white girl. A goofy lookin' white boy with a speech impediment bring to life a



decent modernized flick out of a 60's TV show in *The Mod Squad*.

From murder to slutty sex, this movie directed by Scott Silver (*Johns*) bears a very simple plot; three teenagers work for cops in a society overflowing with prostitution, drugs and violence. The trio ends up caught in the middle of this sea of crime, and they are forced to search for evidence in order to discover who murdered their boss.

This movie certainly has a lot of perks, such as the sleek and well-developed characters. Claire

Danes (*Romeo and Juliet*) plays the part of Julie, a self-confident gutsy woman with balls. Omar Epps (*Scream 2*) takes on the role of Linc, an elegantly defined king of coolness. Giovanni Ribisi (*The Other Sister*) plays Pete, a character with a few witty lines who just can't seem to drive a car without wrecking it.

Some movie elements really made this r e m a k e cheesy, however. One example is when Ribisi's character goes off on a tangent and uses the line "We're

INTERNET getting too old for this s***" from *The Lethal Weapon* movies, which just makes him sound stupid.

The storyline could have used a little work too, as it begins very well with the trio working undercover to bring down a prostitution ring, but then turns dumb as a group of dirty cops become the bad guys and the Squad's mission is switched into bringing them down.

The Mod Squad is definitely worth seeing for the good acting, but only once. To view it again would be a waste of money.

Portland Center Stage presents As You Like It

SHELBI WESCOTT
Associate Copy Editor

Mistaken identities, sibling rivalry, cross dressing and love at first sight. Sound like a daytime soap opera? No, no; it's just another whirlwind tour through chaos in William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, performing at Portland Center Stage March 20 through April 24.

As You Like It, one of the Bard's renowned comedies, presents a tale of love in all of its messed-up forms.

Orlando (Scott Coopwood) becomes smitten with the beautiful and witty Rosaline (Suzanne Bouchard). When Rosaline is banished from the kingdom by her envious uncle, she disguises herself as a boy and takes refuge in the Forest of Arden. Orlando, also banished, crosses paths with her while she is incognito and, not recognizing her, confides his passion for 'Rosaline.'

From that point the action races on, the lovers and forest dwellers encounter various comical disasters. It ends (as all Shakespeare's comedies do) with a happy ending and a huge wedding celebration.

Director Elizabeth Huddle used her creative license when staging and casting the show. Those changes translated well

to the stage. In one particular change a man (Mark Chambers) performs the role of Audrey (the lover to the court clown). Chambers was hilarious as he bounced along in high heels and a petticoat, emitting a shrill piggy laugh with every entrance.

Also, the scenes that mock the inconsistency of a woman's mood or the gossipy nature in which a woman discusses her love life, were entertaining and, surprisingly, honest. Exaggerated, but still honest.

The leads were superb. Each brought an individual vitality and nuance to the stage. However, it was the minor characters that stole the show. A geeky lovesick shepherd, a pigeon toed farm boy, and the rambling court fool all had the audience rolling with laughter.

As You Like It does an excellent job of catering to the needs of its varied audience. Even the Shakespeare illiterate can digest the basics of the plot and characters. Scholars of the Bard will catch the more subtle innuendoes or plays-on-words.

As a bonus, students under the age of 26 can purchase tickets for \$10. So, you can't beat the price for an excellent night of theater. Sit back, relax and watch the world of Shakespeare unfold before your eyes. It's an adventure that should not be forsaken.

McConaughey shines in EDtv



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Matthew McConaughey, left, and Woody Harrelson, right, star in Ron Howard's *EDtv*.

ANGIE DASCHIEL
Associate Editor

Do you get a strange feeling of déjà vu when you go to the movies? Do you sometimes wonder why there seems to be a rash of films centering around a common theme or plot? You're not alone. To name a few, *ANTZ* and *A Bug's Life* had similar themes, *Armageddon* and *Deep Impact* shared the threat of asteroids, and *Saving Private Ryan* and *The Thin Red Line* dealt with the horrors of war.

EDtv joins this list by sharing the main plot of *The Truman Show*. These may all be great movies, but because there are multiple films with similar plots, audiences will always compare the two. That is a shame because even though the aforementioned films are similar, they present different angles and variations

on the same plot, which sets them apart. For example, *Armageddon* was an action flick with big stars and big explosions, while *Deep Impact* focused more on human emotions.

Even though *EDtv* does have some of the same elements as *The Truman Show*, it has some major differences. Matthew McConaughey (*A Time To Kill*) plays Ed Pekurny, a video store clerk who is chosen to star in a reality television show. His life will be broadcast 24 hours a day and he will be paid handsomely for it. Ellen DeGeneres portrays a television executive who comes up with the idea of following Ed around and showing his life to the world. All goes well until Ed falls in love, on camera, with his brother's girlfriend, played by Jenna Elfman (ABC's *Dharma & Greg*). His brother (Woody Harrelson) stops speaking to

him and his family secrets come spilling out. Generally, all hell breaks loose.

This is McConaughey's best role since *Dazed and Confused*. He is delightfully cute in this movie and he carries the title role of the film well with his winning smile, Southern drawl and boy-next-door good manners and sensitivity. The rest of the famous cast (Martin Landau, Sally Kirkland, Dennis Hopper, Elizabeth Hurley) make this a great comedy by not upstaging each other.

Although at first glance *EDtv* sounds like *The Truman Show*, it is not a rip-off. An obscure 1994 French-Canadian film, *Louis XIX: Roi des Ondes* (*Louis 19: King of the Airwaves*) was the inspiration for the writers of *EDtv*, according to director Ron Howard. If you've seen *The Truman Show*, don't compare the two films. They should be judged on their own merit.

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