



Love is Tommy Wiseau Assaulting your Eyes Until You Go Blind

The Room puts itself, Casablanca to shame

THE ROOM: Written and Directed by Tommy Wiseau. Starring Tommy Wiseau, Greg Sestero, Juliette Danielle. Wiseau Films, 2003. R. 99 minutes. ★★★★★

The way I see it, there are four types of movies: those good, those enjoyably bad, those so bad they are no longer enjoyable, and those so much worse than that they become enjoyable again. This last category is reserved for only the most devilishly atrocious, crusty, moth-bitten movies — the ones that, far from receiving the label “film” or “art,” are so terrible they transcend the realm of human expression and launch the audience into a cosmic state of disbelief. In short, such films deserve to dwell permanently in one of two places: for those that don’t get it, the landfill; for those that do, the DVD player.

Insane Clown Posse’s *Big Money Rustlas* (2010) comes to mind, as does pretty much anything made by the production company The Asylum. But at the end of the day, the paste-jewel-encrusted crown of rust and dust belongs to *The Room*.

There are dualing schools of thought regarding the tired-faced, ambiguously European-accented celebrity behind *The Room*: One declares that Tommy Wiseau

(star, director, writer and producer) is worth no more than a chocolate frying pan full of fecal matter when it comes to talent, while the other considers him an absolute comic genius.

I happen to be of a third school of thought that claims Wiseau as an accidental success: a man with enough sprezzatura to realize that his surreal work of fiction is a flop, re-label it as a “black comedy” and start counting the Benjamins.

So what is this atrocity? This bizarre freakshow of a midnight movie that Wiseau calls a comedy? Most people are surprised to find that the film contains no gore, no vampire slaying, no zombie horde, no anything remotely related to the B-horror stuff that regularly finds its name in flashing lights at late-night art cinemas.

In fact, *The Room* is a melodrama of the worst variety — the characters aren’t likeable, the acting is god-awful, and the storyline trundles along as smoothly and swiftly as a tricycle with a broken wheel.

All in all, Wiseau’s movie is like a deranged, disjointed psychedelic trip through a hall of horribly misused idioms, failed wordplay and general phantasmagoria — but it’s not a bad trip. *Au contraire*: This

is the most fun you’ll ever have watching a flick.

On paper, the plot *should* read simply and concisely as follows: The character Johnny is engaged to the character Lisa. Lisa is cheating on Johnny with the character Mark.

In reality, the plot reads like this: Johnny (Wiseau) is a banker (or something; no one really knows, just another ambiguous characteristic) who is engaged to Lisa (Juliette Danielle). Together, they sponsor a victim of extremely malnourished character development named Denny (Philip Haldiman).

Denny is involved with drugs, it turns out, and owes money to a beanie-sporting hoodlum named Chris-R (Dan Janjigian). Their friend Peter (Kyle Vogt) is a psychologist who, apparently, gets fed up with the friend-group contradicting itself all the time, so he up and vanishes midway through the movie.

Lisa’s mother, Claudette (Carolyn Minnott), is the worst mother ever and coaches her daughter to stop cheating on Johnny with his best friend Mark (Greg Sestero), because — and only because — Johnny is fiscally capable of supporting her.

While this is happening, two characters named Mike and Michelle (Mike Holmes, Robyn Paris) find themselves needlessly included in the storyline; in actuality, they are just a college couple that use Johnny and Lisa’s living room to do blowies in.

The plot’s true power is in the barbaric chemistry between the dimwitted Mark and the ever-“sexy” Lisa. Oh, and football and tuxedos might have something to do with it too. I’m not sure.

They say time flies when you’re having fun — this movie proves “they” wrong. *The Room* is the only movie in history that is incredibly entertaining from start to finish while still emanating a palpable sluggishness. One can only imagine what the confusing dialogue (“the barbeque chicken was delicious rice, was cool”), unraveled-and-then-never-fully woven yarns (“I got the test results back; I definitely have breast cancer”) and visually assaulting

and oh-so-wrenchingly arduous sex scenes (of which there are fucking FOUR) must be like to watch while actually tripping on psychedelics. Thankfully, Wiseau has made it so you don’t have to endure that — it’s a placebo entirely by mistake.

Far from being coherent, *The Room* also fails wholly at being philosophical, meaning that it succeeds at being inane and confusing. Lines like “love is blind” and “live fast die young” weasel their way into the dialogue at completely inopportune times — the latter shows up during a scene involving quick jogging, for instance — and this fact lends itself well to conspirators attempting to disprove Tommy Wiseau’s claim that he is American.

Johnny’s accent is an enigma — a downright jawbreaker of a puzzle. Multiple words are spoken with completely conflicting emphases throughout the movie (look out for “world,” “chicken” or pretty much any other word spoken by Johnny), and then there are the incessant chuckles that serve no other purpose than to fill the gaps where, I presume, Wiseau forgets his lines. To summarize, Tommy Wiseau walks, talks, writes, directs, produces and acts like an amalgam of approximately 90 different, half-studied cultural stereotypes. The finished product ain’t pretty.

So, yeah, apart from critics completely analrapizing the movie, fans slowly learning to love it for entirely the wrong reasons, and the whole shebang probably manifesting itself as a shame-covered ulcer in the pit of Tommy Wiseau’s stomach, *The Room* is a success. What more can you expect from a movie that was advertised entirely by a single billboard?

And now for the million-dollar question: Is this movie worth watching? As Wiseau so eloquently puts it: “I’ve thought and I think that a lot of people were relate to it, so *The Room* is a place where you can go, you can have a good time, you have a bad time, and a safe place.”

Ladies and gentlemen, these are the words of an accidental genius. **EW**

The Room plays 10:30pm Friday, March 23, at Bijou Art Cinema; late-nite passes accepted.

TIX \$2 | 21 & OVER | FOOD \$5 | SUN & TUES | MENU

762-1700 | 100 E. 5TH AVE | DAVIDMINORTHEATER.COM

THURS MAR 22 - WED MAR 28

TINKER TAILOR SOLDIER SPY 5:00	THE DESCENDANTS 7:25	YOUNG ADULT 9:25
MELANCHOLIA 5:00	CARNAGE 7:25	THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO 9:25

“NO LONGER SNEAKING BEER INTO THE MOVIES SINCE 2008”

“TEXT-A-BEER” 541-913-5733
ORDER DRINKS & FOOD RIGHT FROM YOUR SEAT

Sunrise
Asian Food Market

Largest Selection of Asian Groceries
Seaweed, rice, noodles, frozen products, deli, snacks, drinks, sauces, spices, produce, housewares, and more.

We carry groceries from Holland, India, Pakistan and Polynesia
Sushi & Asian deli take-out

Woodfield Station SHOPPING CENTER
29TH AVENUE

WILLAMETTE STREET
OAK STREET

Sunrise

www.sunriseasianfood.com
M-Th 9am-7pm • F 9am-8pm • Sa 9am-7pm • Su 10am-6pm
70 W. 29th Ave. Eugene • 541-343-3295

BART CINEMAS

3/22 THU	for March 22-29	3/23 FRI	3/24 SAT	3/25 SUN	3/26 MON	3/27 TUE	3/28 WED	3/29 THU
THE DESCENDANTS ENDS TONIGHT! 7:15	PINA Homage to late choreographer Pina Bausch (1940-2009), a leading influence in the development of the Tanztheater style of dance. GLENN CLOSE	5:45 8:00	1:00 3:25 5:45 8:00 10:20	1:00 3:25 5:45 8:00	5:45 8:00	5:45 8:00	5:45 8:00	5:45 8:00
4:45	ALBERT NOBBS ACADEMY AWARD WINNER! BEST FOREIGN FILM	5:00	5:00	5:00	5:00	5:00	5:00	5:00
5:30 8:15	A SEPARATION	7:30	2:20 7:30	2:20 7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30
9:45	TIM & ERIC'S BILLION DOLLAR MOVIE LATENITE PASSES ACCEPTED!	10:10	10:10					
	THE ROOM LATENITE PASSES ACCEPTED!	10:30						

492 East 13th
686-2458
bijou-cinemas.com

*Adults—\$7 * Students w/ID—\$6 * Seniors—\$5 * Matinees—\$5 * Miser Mondays—\$3*

Wellness Centered Dentistry
Individual Care for Individual People

A Holistic Approach to Dental Care

541-868-2008
4725 Village Plaza Loop
Ste 101 • Eugene, OR

Rob Whicker DDS

wcdentistry.com