

Soulful new film proves good for some heartwarming laughs



"Heart and Souls"



"Heart and Souls" (Cinema Twin, 13th and P Streets) is quite a feel-good movie, and it throws in some laughs along the way as well.

Charles Grodin (Harrison), Kyra Sedgwick (Julia), Tom Sizemore (Milo), and Alfre Woodard (Penny) are a group of people from 1959 San Francisco who have one thing in common; they all die in the same bus crash. When the bus passengers die, their souls are drawn into a baby being born near the crash site.

The child, Thomas, is the only person who can see or hear this family of souls, and it inevitably causes problems for him. In order for Thomas to grow up a normal child, they decide to fade from his view as well.

The years pass, and as Thomas (Robert Downey Jr., "Chaplin") grows, he loses his compassion for others. He also has discovered materialism and he lacks commitment to his girlfriend Anne (Elisabeth Shue). He has managed to block the existence of Harrison, Penny, Milo, and Julia from his mind.

Meanwhile, the souls have discovered the reason they were attached to



Courtesy of Universal Pictures

His body inhabited by a soul, Thomas (Robert Downey Jr.) hustles his way backstage at a concert. Harrison (Charles Grodin) and Julia (Kyra Sedgwick) look on.

Thomas. He is to finish one task for each of them, and he must do so before they are called to their final destination.

The souls force their way back into Thomas' world, and the results are chaotic and hilarious, especially when the souls realize they can take over his body at any time.

Director Ron Underwood ("City Slickers") keeps the movie going at a good pace, with a nice balance of drama and comedy, and he even throws in a few surprises to keep things more interesting.

Downey is superb, particularly when a soul takes over his body or when he flies in and out of one perso-

na into another. While Downey is the key to making this film work, he does get some help from a strong supporting cast.

Other hilarious moments from the film include when the group — with Downey — does a rendition of "Walk Like A Man", complete with choreography, after the group completes their first task. It also is funny when the group works to fulfill Harrison's wish to sing in front of a huge group of people.

Lots of heartwarming stuff, with enough laughs to keep it from being too smarmy, "Heart and Souls" hits the mark.

—Gerry Beltz

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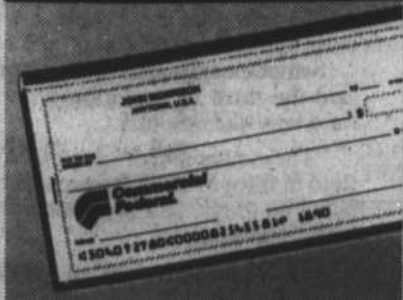
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