

Comedy 'Devine' is one of year's best

BY PATRICK MINER
Staff writer

From the title, "Waking Ned Devine" sounds like something critics call "the feel-good movie of the year."

That depends on your personal taste, but it certainly is the most hilarious and twisted movie of the year by any standard.

"Waking Ned Devine" is set in a suburban Irish town where two long-time friends, played by veterans Ian Bannen and David Kelly, try to cash in on the lottery winnings of another townsman, Ned Devine. When the two Irishmen find that Devine died of shock from the announcement of the winnings, they scheme to recover the winnings for themselves.

The audience soon discovers not to underestimate these aging fellows, as they are extremely shifty in their later years and will go to any length to get the dough. The plot centers on how and if the two con

The Facts

Title: "Waking Ned Devine"
Stars: Ian Bannen, David Kelly, Fionulla Flanagan, James Nesbitt, Brendan Dempsey
Director: Kirk Jones
Rating: PG
Grade: A
Five Words: "Devine" one of year's best



men can pull off the tremendous fraud.

Other than possibly "There's Something About Mary," this is the funniest movie of the past year. Unlike "Mary," however, "Waking Ned Devine" utilizes strange twists in the story line to get the jokes across, which keeps the film flowing quickly through the latter parts of the picture.

While there is the share of solid performances, it is mainly the well-written plot by writer/director Kirk Jones that deserves most of the

acclaim. The film displays a full spectrum of characters, from the smelly Pig Finn (James Nesbitt), the sneezy lotto man (Brendan Dempsey) and the penny-pinching old woman (Maura O'Malley).

Each character is put into the well-rounded story, making the adventure ahead of the two main characters much more difficult. Scenes from the meeting with the lotto man and Ned's funeral only add to the script's building momentum, which starts off a little slow but finishes unbelievably strong.

This is the sort of film where the less the audience knows about the plot, the better the movie experience is. Therefore, it's important to save the suspense for the film itself by not giving away too much of the plot.

There are some disclaimers that need to be made here though. While the film earned a PG rating, there is some nudity that may scare off weak-stomached filmgoers.

However, the film deserves a second trip to the theater.

A&E Briefs

'Xena' star blasts anorexics
NEW YORK (AP) — Lucy Lawless, who battles evildoers in the show "Xena: Warrior Princess," has a blunt message for anorexics.

"To any girls out there who are thinking of it, or are just getting into it, just quit your bloody nonsense," the New Zealander tells the upcoming issue of USA Weekend.

Lawless says she is actually tired of hearing about the eating disorder.

"I've got to say anorexia sort of bores me," she said. "You think you're going to get respect, attention, blah blah blah, and it's quite the opposite."

Lawless says she speaks from experience.

"I used to quite like bulimia. I used to think that was fun."

Anorexics tend to starve themselves and exercise obsessively, while

bulimics typically binge on food, then vomit or use laxatives to purge themselves.

Danza returns to Broadway

NEW YORK (AP) — Tony Danza's absence from Broadway was short-lived.

The actor is returning to the Great White Way as Rocky the bartender in the revival of Eugene O'Neill's "The Iceman Cometh."

Danza, whose work in the shows "Taxi" and "Who's The Boss?" is well known to television audiences, played the lead role in Arthur Miller's "A View from the Bridge" on Broadway during the summer.

Joining Danza in the run of "The Iceman Cometh" will be Kevin Spacey, who appeared in the play's London productions. The play opens in April.

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