

Despite fine acting, comedies come up short

By Gerri Pare
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — When an accidental tragedy wipes out the entire British royal family, a good-natured American slob inherits the throne and becomes "King Ralph" (Universal).

When he learns of the tragedy, Ralph (John Goodman), is a floundering Las Vegas lounge singer. He takes it as a joke when two proper British gentlemen, toting a one-way ticket to London, inform him he is the sole heir to the English crown.

But life in Buckingham Palace is not an easy fit for the cranky Yankee, who is forever trying to escape the attentions of his starchy private secretary, Willingham (Peter O'Toole). King Ralph is much more at home in an exotic dance club where he's met Miranda, an impoverished shop-girl (Camille Coduri).

Duty calls, however, and Ralph's expected to give up his commoner, woo the Princess of Finland (Joely Richardson) and undo a plot by smarmy Lord Graves (John Hurt) to dethrone him. He can't quite score a tripleheader on these counts, but with a little encouragement from Willingham, he meets his obligations in a manner befitting a king.

Writer/director David S. Ward directs a clash of cultures comedy that turns out to be equal parts affable and forgettable.

Goodman's likable enough in this minor league effort, but O'Toole and Hurt are wasted in roles in which they look stifled. In addition, O'Toole's dry delivery is far funnier than the dreary dialogue.

Some sprightly moments and sight gags capitalize on Goodman's enormous physical size, but the screenplay is

soon mired in its one-joke situation. The high point of the film is the royal ball with the regally attired King Ralph breaking loose on the harpsichord with a rocking, stomping version of "Good Golly, Miss Molly."

The rest of this simpleminded diversion is lame and tame, though the overbearing musical score tries hard to make you feel emotionally touched and grandly giddy. This crowning touch makes the film's execution as oafish as King Ralph's impossible attempts to be a dignified British monarch.

Due to occasional vulgar expressions, double entendre and a flash of rear nudity, the U.S. Catholic Conference classification is A-II — adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG — parental guidance suggested.

'Scenes From a Mall'

Bette Midler and Woody Allen play a seemingly ideal couple whose marriage splinters in the course of a day's shopping in "Scenes From a Mall" (Touchstone).

The kids are off for a ski weekend, so Deborah (Bette Midler) and Nick (Woody Allen) head for the mall to pick up their 16th anniversary presents and gourmet goodies for a dinner party.

Suddenly Nick volunteers he's just ended an affair with a woman and that he's been unfaithful with a few others, too. He rationalizes his actions by saying that sex with Deborah had become routine, but says he still loves her and expects instant forgiveness.

Instead, Deborah talks divorce, even though she's just published a book on keeping marriages happy. He convinces her not



Brian Hamill-Touchstone Pictures
Bette Midler (right) and Woody Allen star as Deborah and Nick Fifer, a happily married couple for 16 years until they share the details of their mutual infidelities in 'Scenes From a Mall' (Touchstone).

to contact an attorney since — being a lawyer himself — he knows how expensive they can be.

Soon Deborah is admitting she wasn't exactly faithful either and for the rest of the day the dueling duo careen from hostility and screaming matches to hard-won insights and rekindled romance.

Better shop around before buying this marriage encounter session from co-writer, producer and director Paul Mazursky.

Fine acting and wry lines make for very realistic situations throughout the movie. But its visual interest is zilch. In fact, it would have worked better as a radio play — and a talky and eventually wearing one at that.

Mazursky picks an apt setting, where materialistic values are everything, for his look at the fragile state of contemporary marriages. Pampered by the good life for so many years, Nick and Deborah's values have become such that each can intellectually justify infidelity. But it's a different story when each learns how it feels to be the injured party.

Indeed, the apparently happy ending has a shallow ring. It seems that convenience, familiarity and fear of the singles scene will keep them together more than any genuine sense of renewal and commitment.

Because of adulterous references and minimal rough language, the USCC classification is A-III — adults. The MPAA rating is R — restricted.

Dining Around the Diocese

Avon Inn
55 East Main Street
Avon, NY 14414
(minutes off 390, exit 10)
(716) 226-8181

As spring approaches the Avon Inn welcomes all to join us to experience the warmth and charm brought forth in this 170 year old Historic Inn

Join us on Tues., Wed, and Thursday for our \$6.95 Roast Leg of Lamb dinner or our New \$9.95 Seafood Special. As always, all our dinner entrees come with choice of soup or dessert, salad, potato, vegetable and choice from our bread basket.

On Fridays, try our Fish Fry. Both Large and Small, Fried or Broiled, with New England Clam Chowder always as a soup option.

The Avon Inn also specializes in banquets, shower and anniversaries, with private room for 10-200 people. Call for information about our \$65⁰⁰ Overnight Getaway Package.

Make plans to experience the timeless elegance of the Historic Avon Inn today.

Big Apple Cafe
682 Park Avenue
271-1039

A European cafe atmosphere greets you at the Big Apple Cafe, a comfortable fun place to dine. Located in the chic Park Avenue area, the Big Apple offers foods that are prepared fresh daily. Open menu all day. On Sundays, stop by after mass for a sumptuous brunch, from omelettes to french toast. Hours: 11a.m. to 11p.m. weekdays, Friday and Saturday from 11a.m. to midnight, Sunday 11a.m. to 9p.m.

Bosdyk's Restaurant & Lounge
430 Spencerport Rd.
(corner of Longpond)
716-247-7690

Open 7 days a week for lunch and dinner, we offer a relaxing, comfortable atmosphere and reasonable prices. Whether you choose from our complete menu, or from one of our daily lunch or dinner specials, we're sure to please your palette. Our party room is available for gatherings of up to 60 people. We hope to see you here!

Cannon's
1551 Mt. Hope Ave.
(1 minute north of W. Henrietta Rd.
exit off Rte. 390)
(716) 461-1026

A Rochester favorite for 23 years, featuring a diverse menu including seafood, steaks, chops, veal, and Italian dishes. Dinners served Sunday, 4:30pm - 11:00pm; Monday - Thursday, 4:30 - midnight; Friday and Saturday, 4:30pm - 1:00am. Bar opens daily at 4:00pm.

Chapel's
30 West Broad St.
232-2300

Enjoy elegant dining in the former jail calls of historic city hall (circa 1873) in the heart of downtown Rochester at Chapel's. Luncheon specialties include a spicy Cajun-style Chicken breast sandwich, and a tasty B.L.T. croissant. For your evening meal, savor the special five course dinner which includes a variety of gourmet choices. Serving Lunch 11:30a.m.-2p.m. Tues.-Fri.; Dinner, 5:30-9p.m. Tues.-Fri.; & until 10p.m. on Saturday.

Conesus Inn
2170 East Lake Road
(Eastside of Beautiful
Conesus Lake)
(716) 346-6100

Now is the perfect time to take a leisurely drive to the Conesus Inn. Located on Conesus Lake, the Conesus Inn serves dinner Tuesday through Saturday from 5p.m. and Sundays beginning at 4p.m. As always you'll find the same spectacular Prime Rib, Alaskan King Crab Legs and Australian Lobster Tail that you've come to expect and enjoy from the Conesus Inn. The beautiful surroundings and atmosphere of the Conesus Inn make it an ideal spot for dinner. Whether it's an intimate evening for two or a large gathering of friends... the Conesus Inn has a perfect evening of dining waiting for you.

While you're there, remember to choose a fine wine from their extensive wine list. Re-open for yet another season of splendid dining, visit the Conesus Inn soon... "For The Prime of Your Life." Just ten minutes from exit 9 off 390. Call today for reservations.

The Holloway House
Rt. 5 & 20, E. Bloomfield
1-657-7120

Enjoy the colonial surroundings of the historic Holloway House for birthdays, anniversaries or just plain dining out! Built in 1808 as a stagecoach stop, this restaurant (with a ★★ Mobil Guide Rating) offers both a full-course and a-la-carte menu including turkey, steak & seafood. Round out your meal with their famous Sally Lunn Bread and homemade desserts. Enjoy the Saturday Prime Rib Special, or try the Early Dinner Specials from 12-3p.m. Sundays. Owned and operated by the Wayne Family for over 30 years, they welcome you for lunch from 11:30A-2P or dinner from 5:30-8:30P. Sat. til 9P, Sun. 12-7:30P. Closed Mondays.

Irondequoit Town Lounge
705 Titus Avenue
(716) 342-3465
Webster Town Lounge
10 May Street
(716) 872-3710

Serving lunches 11:30-3p.m. daily except Sunday. Featuring an Early Bird Special every night but Friday. Fish Frys every Friday. Our party room can accommodate up to 60 people for your next gathering. Clip out this ad and receive \$5.00 off two dinners (not valid on dinners under \$8.00 or Early Bird Specials), offer good Sunday thru Thursday, during the month of April. Please present ad when ordering.

Jeremiah's
1104 Monroe Avenue
(near Culver Rd.)
461-1313

Rochester's Premier Location for a fish fry for 13 years offers a delicious array of dining possibilities! Try the broiled fresh haddock, cooked in a wine, butter and garlic sauce. Or sample the seafood chowder with a broth of wine, cream and seasonings. After mass enjoy our Sunday Brunch that offers strawberry chicken, seafood dijonaise, etc. Serving Brunch, 11:30-2:30, Lunch, M-F, 11:30-2:30, Dinner, Fridays, 5-10. Visa/MC accepted. Reservations suggested.

Mr. Dominic's at the Lake
4699 Lake Avenue
(716) 865-4630

If you're planning lunch or dinner out, take a drive to Mr. Dominic's at the Lake. Noted for their fine Italian cuisine, they offer delicious appetizers, wonderful soups, 11 veal dishes, vegetarian, chicken and fish specialties, and homemade pasta. Early bird dinner specials are served Sunday-Friday. Also offered is a 10% senior discount. Delivery is available for your luncheon group of ten or more. Lunch hours from 11a.m.-1p.m., Tuesday-Friday. Dinner hours Monday-Friday 4-9:30p.m., Saturday 5-10p.m., Sunday 3-9p.m.

THE OATKA
17 Main Street
(minutes from Chili or Henrietta
on Rt. 383)
Scottsville, NY 14546
(716) 889-8220

Owner Jerry Court and Executive Chef Thomas Donovan invite you to visit the Historic Oatka for quality dining in the heart of Genesee Country. Serving travelers since 1824, we know you'll enjoy our country atmosphere, varied menu and friendly service. And we're just around the corner in nearby Scottsville. Our Daily Dinner Specials start at just \$6.95. Every Tuesday is Prime Rib Night for only \$6.95. Serving Dinners Tues.-Thurs. 4-9, Fri. 4-10, Sat. 5-10, and Sun. 1-7. Closed Mondays. Reservations are recommended.

OLYMPIA Family Restaurant
570 Stone Rd. at Dewey Ave.
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2380 Lyell Ave. at Howard Rd.
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Open 7 days a week serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, we offer homestyle cooking and full-take-out service. Dinner specials served daily. Choose from Prime Rib, Steak, Seafood, Veal, Fresh Roast Turkey or Pork, or try one of our many Greek Specialties. Homemade soups made fresh daily. Our party room accommodates up to 80 people for any occasion. Clip out this ad and receive 10% OFF your guest check during the month of April. (Not valid on Fridays or with other specials.)