

# Romantic comedies offer sweet story lines for all tastes

By Geri Pare  
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — "The Paper Wedding" (Capitol) is a no-frills French-Canadian version of the recent Hollywood hit "Green Card."

Genevieve Bujold stars as 39-year-old Claire, a drably dressed university professor from Montreal, whose life is empty save for her teaching job, cat and a dragged-out, dead-end affair with a married man (Teo Spychalski).

One day over lunch, her attorney sister (Dorothee Berryman) suggests that Claire marry the sister's client lest he be deported to Chile, where he faces political persecution and imprisonment. Claire generously agrees to a marriage in name only with Pablo (Manuel Aranguiz), who turns out to be a quietly dignified dishwasher.

Once the ceremony is over, the mismatched newlyweds return to their separate lives. Soon, however, a wily immigration official suspects their marriage is a charade, and they are forced to live together to bone up for a crucial interview.

Under Michel Brault's unpretentious direction, "The Paper Wedding" is a sweet if rather slight love story. The plot details are nearly identical to "Green Card," but the treatment is darker and ultimately more human.

The movie, with subtitles, only marginally reminds viewers of the abuse of human rights that occurs in many countries and, as such, is more of a personal drama than a political film.

Because of an extramarital affair and a flash of nudity, the U.S. Catholic Conference classification is A-III — adults. Not

rated by the Motion Picture Association of America.

## 'Don Juan, My Love'

A case of mistaken identity complicates Don Juan's return to earth to do good and earn a heavenly reward in "Don Juan, My Love" (IFEX).

It's Halloween 1990, and 16th-century legendary lover Don Juan (Juan Luis Galiardo in a dual role) is released from purgatory for 24 hours on earth to earn his angel's stripes.

The first people he encounters are the cast rehearsing for a Seville production of "Don Juan." The actors assume the real Don Juan is the lead actor in their troupe, and Don Juan obligingly fills in for him while the actor is elsewhere conducting an illegal drug deal.

Unassuming Don Juan quickly learns that the women around him think he is a real cad — as indeed the actor is. Don Juan sets about correcting this situation with infinite kindness and loving behavior that startles the cast.

Galiardo is splendid in the lead roles, never losing the devilish gleam in his eye. He manages the dual roles by using subtle nuances — a kindly expression as opposed to an arrogant walk — to make clear which character he is playing at a given time.

Pacing is everything in this screwball story by Spanish director Antonio Mercero, and it is right on target here with an amiable cast to keep the confusion humorous. Such technical aspects as cinematography, staging, lighting and a dusting of ghostly special effects contribute to the funny farce.



Bob Akester-Orion Pictures  
Teri Polo and Ethan Hawke star in Orion Pictures' *Mystery Date*.

Because of some bawdy humor, frequent sexual innuendo and brief rear nudity, the USCC classification is A-III — adults. Not rated by the MPAA.

## 'Mystery Date'

Dead bodies keep popping up the first time a young couple goes out for dinner in Orion's "Mystery Date."

For months timid Tom (Ethan Hawke) has been watching the movements of new neighbor Geena (Teri Polo), but doesn't have the gumption to ask her out.

All that changes when his suave, smug older brother Craig (Brian McNamara) returns home for a visit in a sleek classic convertible. Craig promptly phones Geena and, in Tom's name, arranges a date for that night. He also supplies Tom with his

trendy clothes, similar haircut and Craig's credit card.

Tom and Geena head off in Craig's '59 De Soto. Soon everyone assumes Tom is Craig — a bad omen, since Craig is not really a law student but a double-crossing art thief being chased by the police and Chinese gangsters.

While Geena's in the ladies room, Tom begins to discover his predicament, when a cop collars him and is accidentally killed. Scared that he will be blamed for the policeman's death, Tom stuffs him in the trunk, only to find another dead body already in residence. A third corpse shows up nearby with Craig's name written in blood.

From then on, Tom struggles to balance two goals — to avoid getting killed and, more importantly, to be a great date for Geena.

Naive and cynical attitudes clash in director Jonathan Wacks' humdrum attempt at a comedy-thriller. The comedy is limp enough but once it becomes a killer-thriller it's time to head for the hills.

Overstuffed with cardboard figures and choppy developments, the unwieldy script ignores its inconsistencies and falls back on tired cliches. Such devices might be new to young viewers, but the film certainly isn't wholesome entertainment for kids. In fact, this is one date that is best stood up.

Due to recurring nasty menace with some violence and dead bodies, the USCC classification is A-III — adults. The MPAA rating is PG-13 — parents are strongly cautioned that some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

## College offers information on programs for degrees

ROCHESTER — Empire State College of the State University of New York will hold public-information sessions throughout September at its Genesee Valley Center in Rochester.

College representatives will be on hand to answer questions about individualized study programs for associate or bachelor degrees.

The information sessions will take place Sept. 4 at 7:30 p.m.; Sept 6 at 12 p.m.;

Sept. 10 at 7:30 p.m.; Sept. 16 at 7:30 p.m.; and Sept. 26 at 5:30 p.m. All sessions will be held at the college, 8 Prince St.

The sessions are free and open to the public. For reservations or information, call 716/244-3641.

In addition, working adults unable to attend weekly classes can obtain information on the policy-studies master's program in business, culture and labor by calling 1-800-468-6372.

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