

Gervais and Garner co-star in atheist propaganda masquerading as sitcom

Written by Kam Williams



I'm not sure how many people are ready for a movie as iconoclastic about Jesus Christ as *The Invention of Lying*

, but you never know. Co-written and co-directed by Ricky Gervais and Matthew Robinson, the picture, at first blush, looks like a formulaic romantic comedy, but turns into something far more sinister about midway into the adventure.

At the deceptively-benign point of departure, we learn that the story is set in a parallel universe where humans can only tell the truth and thus they all innocently trust everything they hear. This state of affairs isn't good for Mark Bellison (Gervais), a struggling scriptwriter for a company called Lecture Films. Since he's overweight and not very masculine, he's always being insulted by compulsively-honest folks, such as his secretary (Tina Fey) who calls him a "fatty fat faggot" and a colleague (Rob Lowe) who refers to him as a "dumpy loser queer."

Nonetheless, he has an unrequited crush on Anna McDoogles (Jennifer Garner), a beautiful woman out of his league. So, it looks like Mark is fated to be alone until he figures out how to fib for the first time while making a bank withdrawal. After stealing some money, he decides to trick a gorgeous stranger into sleeping with him by telling her that the world will end unless they mate immediately.

Realizing that he's in a unique position as the only person capable of prevaricating, Mark soon cheats his way to fame and fortune. But he doesn't stop there, manipulating the minds of the gullible masses by selling them on the idea of heaven while setting himself up as messiah. Eventually, the megalomaniac has everything he wants, except for Anna's heart.

But while *The Invention of Lying* is busy masquerading as a light-hearted sitcom where the guy eventually gets the girl, there's certainly something subversive afoot in the flick's simultaneous

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subtle advocating of atheism. What other message are we supposed to get when Mark morphs into a reprehensible, Christ-like figure, complete with the beard and long hair?

A persuasive, comedic argument against the existence of God or a blasphemous reinvention of Jesus as a shameless con artist? You be the judge.

Fair (1 star)

Rated PG-13 for profanity, sexuality and drug use.

Running time: 100 minutes

Studio: Warner Brothers

To see a trailer for The Invention of Lying, visit: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwVjSzz7Jlk>