[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

Comic Evangelists

Bottom Line: Kalamazoo, Mich., comedy troupe Crawlspace Eviction attempts to mine the collision of the secular and Christian with this mockumentary, not quite hitting gold.

By Sheri Linden

Nov 7, 2006

Blanket Statement Prods.

Kalamazoo, Mich., comedy troupe Crawlspace Eviction attempts to mine the collision of the secular and Christian in the mockumentary "Comic Evangelists," not quite hitting gold. Playing a group of unsophisticated entertainer-proselytizers, the group turned its 2005 road trip to the Toronto International Improv Festival into an extended improvisation piece. The resulting film is not without well-turned character observations, but it is disappointingly low on laughs, even within its brief 75-minute running time. Directors Daniel Jones and Crawlspace founder-member Dann Sytsma don't fully exploit the material's potential satire, and the movie, which had its world premiere at AFI Fest, often feels as flat as its digital video images.

Branching out from church gigs, the evangelists head north not certain they'll get onstage because leader Rick (Sytsma) is too clueless and arrogant to fill out an application. But rather than setting the pagan world on fire with love of God, they wind up barely tolerating one another, a bunch of very unhappy Jesus campers.

The chief running joke is the group's blindness to the ultra-obvious gayness of colleague Nigel (the very good Adam Carter), who sees their arrival in the big city as a golden opportunity for "self-exploration," which includes copious use of lip gloss. Particularly upset by these developments is the abstinence-obsessed, banality-spouting Noah (another standout, Eli Rix).

The only troupe member to understand what's going on with Nigel -- everyone else thinks he's got a weird problem with shopping -- is the sole black performer, Boniva (Jennifer K. Moubray), who gets scant stage time and must continually correct manglings of her name. Watching from an amused distance is guest traveler Blane (Steve Petersen), a divorced atheist whom the group has taken on as an unwitting, unwilling project.

The performers effectively tap into the smugness of would-be soul-savers: "If Jesus were alive today," they sing, "he'd want to hang out with us." But the thin plot strands aren't enough to sustain the journey, and the film devotes too much time to talking-head interviews that reiterate what's already apparent. An epilogue offers some of the funniest moments.

Comic Evangelists


MPAA rating: G

Links referenced within this article

Comic Evangelists
http://loqin.vnuemedia.com/hr/tools_data/projects/project_display.jsp?JSESSIONID=FhNtLWGYx2TM96C4JbXWKNBphQxXBwJ0nNLbylJinGzwPvX6QwtjI-1994221974&&pid=168486

Find this article at:

http://login.vnuemedia.com/hr/film/reviews/article_display.jsp?JSESSIONID=FWTI8KShvMd32wkm5JZQTLRqk4Z7J2zgLQp3CB3bzksLhJxBTPFxI667654019&&rid=7036

 [Click to Print](#)

[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

Uncheck the box to remove the list of links referenced in the article.

© 2006 VNU eMedia Inc. All rights reserved.