

New Genre-Busting Comedy, "The Misadventures of Mistress Maneater" Defies Rom-Com Genre's Misogyny

Algorithms direct viewers to Rom-Coms that may depict women in a negative or unsavory light. This film does the opposite, with genuine laughs & deeper insights.

SCOTTSDALE, AZ, UNITED STATES, February 25, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Recently, I trolled my own video carousel, having entered the query "[romantic comedy](#)." As it was nearing Valentine's Day, my wife and I were looking for a seasonal film. We found nothing that appealed to us, in fact, we found a disturbing pattern in the algorithm that had nothing to do with us, but what the system thought we would like.



Ava Moriarty (Lorrissa Julianus) discovers a lost masterpiece in "The Misadventures of Mistress Maneater"

It apparently thought we would like rom-coms where the female protagonist is a loser in love, or, a bit of a loser in general. In other words, intentionally or not, the algorithm was offering veiled misogyny. Over and over again, we found the same three tired concepts in studio rom-coms: a woman who has a history of lousy selection in men, a woman who's a wallflower, or a workaholic with too little time for a relationship, as seen in "The Proposal" and "Longshot" which is quite frankly, one of the movies that drove me from theaters.

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Todd Bennett

I recently reviewed an original romantic comedy that didn't follow this toxic trend, and I met producer/director C.J. Julianus and writer/star Lorrissa Julianus. Their film, "The

Misadventures of [Mistress Maneater](#)" is about a woman with high intellect, beauty, and talent, forced into a world not of her choosing, and in trying to break free, she finds a surprising

connection with Radovan Markovic, an Episcopal priest originally from Eastern Europe.

Lead character Ava, or a woman of similar strength in the real world, will only end up with a man willing to take her as she is. While a man can earn being let into her tender, protected heart, he can't alter her personality or affect her life's goals. Ava cannot be edited. So, after screening the film and finding for once, a female protagonist in a romantic comedy that is not "brought to life" by her male love interest, as if she were being re-animated, I took the time to ask the duo about their goals and inspiration for the characters.

Q. How did you hope Ava's character would be perceived?

Mr. Julianus: "Ava is a composite, as are many of the male characters that display toxic traits toward women. We wanted to create a character that served as a reflection of society's assumptions toward women, while also making a statement that often women can be forced into a situation where they must use their looks and physical attributes - rightly or wrongly - to get ahead in a male-dominated world. While writing the script, Lorrissa decided that if Ava is a dominatrix, though reluctantly, that she would serve as a commentary on how women are viewed, particularly attractive women with overlooked intelligence. We also wanted to portray a self-assured women confident in her own sexual identity while defying any man who'd reduce her to a sexual object."

Ms. Julianus: "Ava resists being placed into a box, and she is outwardly confident, yet continually battles deep-seated insecurities. Yet, she has no interest in constricting her growth to make interactions with her more convenient. There's a very real struggle women face in the quest for



Radovan (Mickey O'Sullivan) gets a make-up tutorial from Ava (Lorrissa Julianus) in "The Misadventures of Mistress Maneater"



Lorrissa Julianus and Mickey O'Sullivan star in the hit RomCom, "The Misadventures of Mistress Maneater".

life success—do I prioritize authenticity or likeability? Ava has chosen authenticity, which makes her a loner and judged. And doing her best to stay strong doesn't mean she's avoided the inner wounds inflicted on the hard road of earning that strength. At the same time, it's not Radovan who will "fix" Ava. It's his acceptance and empathy that inspires her to heal and fully embrace herself on all levels. To paraphrase a great quote, 'I hope you find somebody whose love is so loud it silences your insecurities. And I hope you can be that for yourself.'"

Q. What element of Radovan's personality allows him to emotionally connect with Ava?

Ms. Julianus: "Radovan never approaches Ava with an agenda. Initially, he avoids her and does not even seem to take her seriously. As we learn later, it is hard for him to trust anyone, even himself at times. Despite this, he does not allow the meaningful relationships in his life to become transactional. Unlike other characters interacting with her in the film, Radovan treats Ava as a whole person without harboring assumptions. His compassion and nobility earns Ava's affections."

I was left greatly impressed by this dynamic couple and their cinematic creation. I also found within myself, after speaking with them, a renewed hope for character-driven filmmaking to retake center stage in popular culture. Seemingly gone were the days where the script and character developments were the central elements of the film. It is good to know that there are still creators focused on the words, and not just action.

More to the point, what this talented duo shows is that the real action of the movie, when done correctly, comes from the words.

-TB

Todd Bennett is a movie buff and founder of the progressive online newsletter "The Claw News." To learn more about his fresh takes on current events, go to <https://theclawnews.com>. Check out "The Misadventures of Mistress Maneater" free on Tubi: <https://bit.ly/tubimmm> or with your Amazon Prime membership: <https://bit.ly/mistressmaneater>.

Todd Bennett

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