

Heads up. They're back.

Director TOMMY WIRKOLA IN PERSON at Arena Cinema 170: O&A following 8:15 show SAT. Pre-party & introduction to the 10:25 show

**DEAD SNOW 2**  
RED VS DEAD

www.deadsnow2.com

ARENA CINEMA HOLLYWOOD 1525 S Las Palmas Ave. • (323) 306-0676 www.arenacinema.com • Fri/Sat/Wed 5-10PM Sat 10:25PM • Sun 5:00PM • Tue/Thu 7:40PM

PLAYHOUSE 7 473 East Grand • (213) 475-0808 www.playhouse7.com • Fri/Sat/Wed 5-10PM Sat 10:25PM • Sun 5:00PM • Tue/Thu 7:40PM



Bill Murray, left, and Jason Lee

Film // **GRUMPY OLD MEN**

MURRAY PLAYS FOR LAUGHS UNTIL ST. VINCENT GETS MAUDLIN

BY ALAN SCHERSTUHL

**T**he big news: In its first half, before it bottoms out with the roughest feel-goodery, Theodore Melfi's too-familiar, ain't-be-irascible comedy-drama *St. Vincent* features some after scenes of Bill Murray actually trying to make you laugh. How long has it been? He plays Vincent, a drunk-driving Brooklynite whose look suggests science figured out how to grow whiskers on a half-deflated air mattress. Before the opening credits have wrapped, Vince steals from a fruit stand, gets dressed down by a bank loan officer, knocks himself out on his kitchen floor trying to break up ice with a hammer, and groggily balls with a pregnant Russian prostitute played — for some reason — by Naomi Watts, who shouts, after he can't quite pay in full, "My shit is not layaway!"

This stuff is broad and a little labored, but at least it's funny. Murray could score laughs with this material in his sleep, and here he almost does: Witness Vincent, sacked out on an easy chair, every breath a pained gurgle.

It's just that woody, checked-out quality that makes Murray's assholes so potent. They shamble through a life that hasn't worked out for them, insulting everyone who gets in their way, their hostile grossness something like the shell of a mollusk: a source

of pride, a protective coating, a made-up of their own secreted gunk.

In *Stripes* and *Ghostbusters*, all that was implied. Why else would Dr. Venkman, under the guise of science and courtship subject Sigourney Weaver's D to such unrelenting harassment and disdain? Or squander who resources his university has g his team on a torture/flirtatio study with nothing in the way reproducible results? The funniest thing about him is that can't possibly imagine the spics of his past. When did this buckle down and write a dissertation? The classic Murray has never craved or even needed love — and, with a crack or a s of those eyes, they would also find a way to spurn it.

But *St. Vincent*, like most l Murray movies, wants to dig beneath that gunk, to see wh it comes from, to strip it awy, reveal the warm heart besne it. Here that task is taken up by a kid, who actually narrat Vincent's life story to a room mate and other kids, who re our hero with terrific applau and then there's a big hug, w Vincent is totally into. Some where, Venkman pukes.

After that winningly brow opening and some fine com dust-ups between Murray a neighbor played by a sma restrained Melissa McCart writer-director Melfi cross streams that maybe should

THE INSTITUTE OF CINEMATOGRAPHY AND AUDIOVISUAL ARTS (ICAA) OF THE SPANISH MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT, THE AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE AND EGEDA PRESENT

THE 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL **Recent Spanish Cinema** FILM SERIES

STARS AND FILMMAKERS IN PERSON! 5 PREMIERES!

LOS ANGELES OCTOBER 16-19 2014

SPAIN'S OSCAR ENTRY! L.A. PREMIERE! GOYA AWARD WINNER!

**LIVING IS EASY WITH EYES CLOSED**

CARMINA AND AMEN · WITCHING AND BITCHING SPANISH AFFAIR · THREE MANY WEDDINGS FAMILY UNITED · ISMAEL

**EGYPTIAN THEATRE**  
4712 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles 90028  
FULL SCHEDULE AND DETAILS ONLINE  
www.egyptiantheatre.com • www.larecentspanishcinema.com  
tickets: www.fandango.com 323-466-FILM

STUDENTS CAN SEE THESE FILMS FOR FREE! E-mail vidyaronan@gmail.com for information. First come, first served. Put "Spanish Cinema" in subject line.

WITH THE SUPPORT OF Presented in collaboration with the Institute of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts of Spain (ICAA) of the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport and EGEDA (International Producers Rights Management Association), with the support of State Arts and Culture, Embassy of Spain in Washington, Spain USA Foundation, Consulate General of Spain in Los Angeles, Tourist Office of Spain in Los Angeles, Gran Canaria Film Commission, E.L.S.A. (Hispanic Languages and Movies in America), USC Graduate's Office and David Geffen College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, Fontana, Premier Platino, Festival de Cine de Málaga. Sponsored by Paper-Hollywood, Champagne and Robert's Lorraine.