

'Cirque du Freak: The Vampire's Assistant' With John C. Reilly Not Freaky Enough

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on October 23, 2009 - 2:54pm

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CHICAGO – For everything that Paul Weitz's "Cirque du Freak: The Vampire's Assistant" does right, there's something about the film that just doesn't work. More manic than quirky and more cluttered than consistent, "Cirque" features a few great performances and interesting characters but they're sabotaged by the other members of this cinematic freak show.



Rating: **2.0/5.0**

With a plot that plays like what "Beetlejuice"-era Tim Burton might have done with the current vampire craze ("True Blood," "The Twilight Saga's New Moon"), "Cirque du Freak: The Vampire's Assistant" is an adaptation of the books by Darren Shan that is constantly shooting itself in the foot through bad editing, a distracting supporting cast, a super-dull lead, and far too much expository dialogue. A non-ending that tries to set up the franchise a la "The Golden Compass" doesn't help the feeling that you've just watched a tragically incomplete film.



[Read Brian Tallerico's full review of "Cirque du Freak: The Vampire's Assistant" in our reviews section.](#) [15]

Darren (newcomer Chris Massoglia) is a high-school kid with an obsession with spiders. His best friend Steve (Josh Hutcherson) is the more mischievous of the two and his goth obsession happens to be with vampires. The two are thrilled when a mysterious limo with plates that read "DES-TINY" toss them a flyer for the 'Cirque du Freak,' a travelling show stopping their town that night.

Darren and Steve head to the show and the audience is introduced to the massive supporting cast including the Wolfman (Tom Woodruff Jr.), Gertha Teeth (Kristen Schaal), Rhamus Twobellies (Frankie Faison), Alexander Ribs (Orlando Jones), Madame Truska (Salma Hayek), Corma Limbs (Jane Krakowski), Evra the Snake Boy (Patrick Fugit), and the MC of the show, Mr. Tall (Ken Watanabe). Of course, the star of the evening is a vampire named Larten Crepsley (John C. Reilly) and his magic spider named Octa.

'Cirque du Freak: The Vampire's Assistant' stars John C. Reilly, Chris Massoglia, Josh Hutcherson, Jessica Carlson, Michael Cerveris, Ray Stevenson, Patrick Fugit, Ken Watanabe, Salma Hayek, Orlando Jones, Frankie Faison, Willem Dafoe, and Jane Krakowski. It was written by Paul Weitz & Brian Helgeland and directed by Helgeland. It opens on October 23rd, 2009. It is rated PG-13.



[Continuing reading for Brian Tallerico's full "Cirque du Freak: The Vampire's Assistant" review.](#) [15]



(L to R) Crepsley (John C. Reilly) makes a curious proposal to Darren (Chris Massoglia) in Cirque Du Freak: The Vampires Assistant.

Photo credit: David Lee

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