

'Rapture-Palooza' Makes End of the World Boring

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on June 6, 2013 - 10:12am

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Rating: **2.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – Craig Robinson has a movie coming out about the end of the world that co-stars friends and fellow comedians Seth Rogen, James Franco, Jonah Hill, and others. It's called "This is the End." Craig Robinson has another movie coming out about the end of the world that co-stars fellow comedians, including Rob Corddry, Paul Scheer, John Francis Daley, and Ana Gasteyer. It's called "Rapture-Palooza," and it opens in some markets tomorrow, June 7, 2013, while also being available On Demand. He's cornering a very specialized market. Based on the general sense that "Rapture-Palooza" is little more than an extended "SNL" sketch, he can keep it.

Written by Chris Matheson and directed by Paul Middleditch, "Rapture-Palooza" starts with a clever concept. The Rapture happens while Lindsey (Anna Kendrick) and Ben (John Francis Daley) happen to be out bowling. Over the credits, pants fall over bowling shoes and balls crash to the ground. But Lindsey and Ben aren't taken up to Heaven. They're left, stuck a world that's about to face the apocalypse. In perhaps the funniest bit, Lindsey's mom (Gasteyer) is sent back to Earth after she gets into a fight in line at the Pearly Gates, while her father (John Michael Higgins) and pothead brother (Calum Worthy) aren't even taken up in the first place. The entire family is forced to deal with flaming rocks falling from the sky, blood rain, and the truly surreal sight of locusts who scream "*Suffer!*" Don't get me started on the profanity-spewing crows or the undead neighbor (Thomas Lennon) who just wants to mow his lawn for eternity.



Rapture-Palooza

Photo credit: Lionsgate

Lindsey and Ben decide to make the best of a pretty awful situation. They decide that they're going to start a sandwich cart business, which can be difficult in an economy in which the streets are overrun with Wraiths. But they're picking it up, talking about having kids, and going on post-Rapture. The idea that even if you think the world has gone to shit now, at least it's not raining blood and dropping lava rocks on your loved ones is pretty clever room for satire — Which is then discarded in favor of the Craig Robinson Show, for better or worse.

Robinson shows up as, you guessed it, The Antichrist. Referred to more often as The Beast, the pure evil comes in the form of a

smooth-talking politician, who quickly proceeds to do whatever and whomever he pleases since if you shoot the Antichrist, it brings Satan to Earth. He gets bodyguards, a mansion, and starts nuking major cities for fun. He even buys a laser for when Jesus comes to stop him. And then he spots Lindsey and falls deep in lust. Will Lindsey give herself over to evil? Could she use this as a chance to stop The Beast?



Rapture-Palooza

Photo credit: Lionsgate

Robinson was clearly just allowed to improvise and riff as dirty and as crazy as he wanted to be for most of his scenes. While the result contains some undeniably funny lines and over-the-top exclamations like *"I bet your vagina tastes like Pistachio Mint ice cream"* and *"I kick so much ass my feet need condoms,"* it makes for a schizophrenic film. Kendrick is playing laid-back, hipster cool, a girl so chill that even the apocalypse can't faze her. Robinson is playing sexual, alpha male insanity. When he gets to the point that he's singing "Stick My Dick in Your Booty," "Rapture-Palooza" has reached a "so weird that you kind of need to see it" phase of existence.

Sadly, Middleditch doesn't develop the bizarre oil-and-blood dynamic at the center of his film and seems lost as to where to take some of his clever concepts. "Rapture-Palooza" feels nearly incomplete (it's about 75 minutes without credits) and it just doesn't work as comedy after its set-up or when Robinson is going particularly nuts. I wanted more satire, less booty humor. And the film really needed a more-engaged heroine. Kendrick goes so laid back that she looks like she's about to fall asleep. She's just not an interesting protagonist, which is a rare misstep for this typically-great star. Even she seems bored by the end of the world.

"Rapture-Palooza" stars Anna Kendrick, John Francis Daley, Craig Robinson, Rob Corddry, Thomas Lennon, and Ana Gasteyer. It was written by Chris Matheson and directed by Paul Middleditch. It is available On Demand and opens in some markets on June 7, 2013.



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