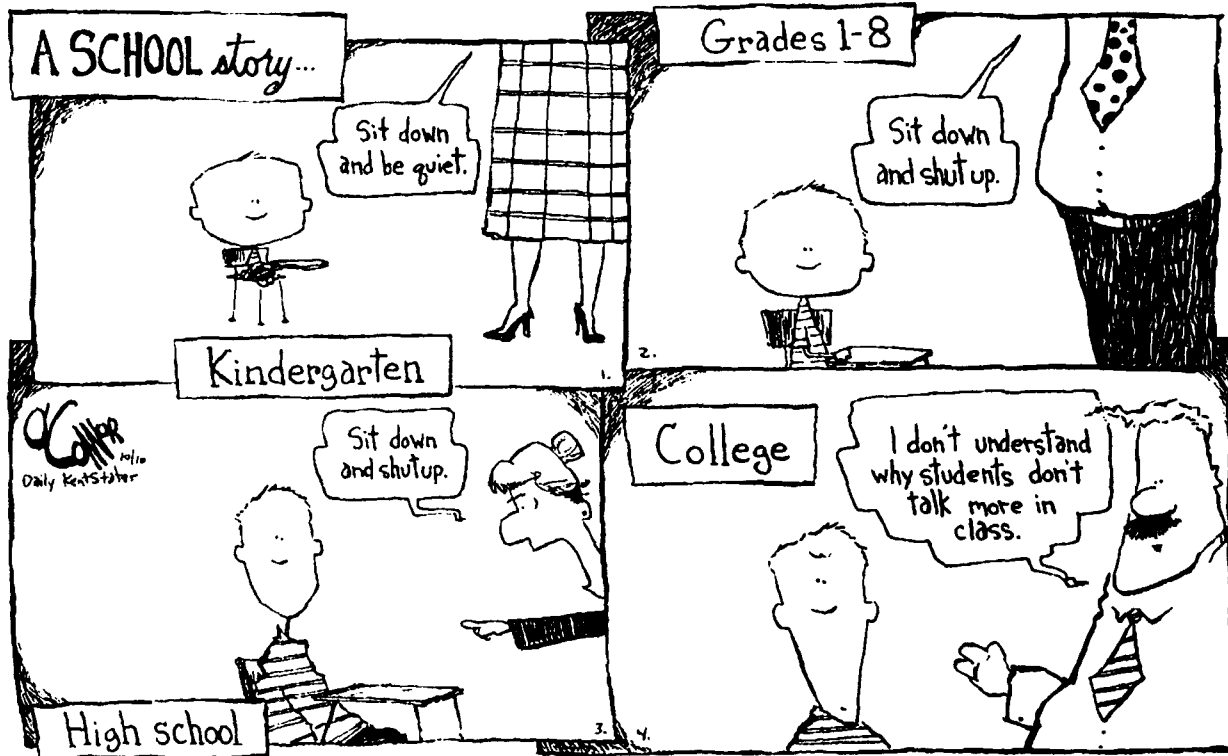




The Big Voice, played by Dave Reynolds, offers firm advice to (l. to r.) Leo (Bond Davis), Bo (Joe Getway), Heather (Amanda Pieper), Eddie (Michael Lechner), and Miriam (Jennifer Quadri) in *Only You*, a contemporary comedy to be presented by the Studio Theatre at Penn State-Behrend. Tickets are currently available for purchase or reservation. Evening performance dates are November 7, 8, 12, 13, 14 and 15 at 8 P.M.; Matinees will be performed November 9 and 16 at 2:30 P.M. Tickets cost \$3 for students, \$5 for adults. A free student preview of *Only You* will be performed Thursday, November 6. For reservations or more information, please call 898-6016.



Film review: A Life Less Ordinary

Jon Stubbs
Collegian staff

The director/producer/writer trio of Danny Boyle, Andrew Macdonald, and John Hodge teamed up for a third time to create the black romantic comedy *A Life Less Ordinary*.

After tremendous successes such as *Shallow Grave* and *Trainspotting*, Boyle, Macdonald and Hodge should certainly be disappointed with the outcome of this film.

Ewan McGregor, another *Trainspotting* and *Shallow Grave* alumni, stars as Robert, a janitor/wannabe romance novelist. Robert becomes distraught when he loses his cleaning job to a robot and goes to complain to his boss, millionaire executive Mr. Naville (Ian Holm). Things get hairy in Naville's office when Robert steals a gun from a se-

curity guard and shoots Naville in the leg. Scared, Robert takes Naville's daughter, Celine (Cameron Diaz) hostage.

Of course Celine doesn't mind being kidnaped, she wants to escape her father and his financial obsessions. She wants someone to pay attention to her, so she helps Robert through the kidnaping process, suggesting ways to compose threat letters and to collect ransom.

Screenwriter John Hodge must have decided that a simple kidnap plot was not involved enough so he decided to add divine intervention to the script. Two angels, Jackson and O'Reilly (Delroy Lindo and Holly Hunter) are sent to make sure that Robert and Celine do indeed fall in love, or else they will be condemned to be mortals forever.

A Life Less Ordinary is teeming

with talent. Danny Boyle is undoubtedly one of today's most imaginative directors. Boyle and director of photography Brian Tufano create brilliant transitions between scenes and unlike many directors, shoot useful close-ups.

The movie is well cast. Ewan McGregor is entertaining in any role, even as a character from this script. Cameron Diaz and Holly Hunter are also very fine actresses, and their talent is reflected in the film.

The script is the film's major fault. The storyline is so simple and mundane that a viewer familiar with Boyle, Macdonald and Hodge's work may become confused and think that they are missing something. The ideas seem old. Hodge started writing the script in 1993, and since then films such as *Michael and Excess Baggage* have already explored

Tunisian Film Addresses Gender and Politics

Kristi McKim
features editor

Behrend's Foreign Film Series continued this week with the screening of 1994 Tunisian film *Only You*, *Silences of the Palace*, on October 27, in Reed Lecture Hall. This internationally acclaimed film, which is the first feature film directed by a woman (Fatma Tlioua) from the Islamic countries of North Africa, addresses issues of misogyny and female empowerment.

This film consists primarily of flashbacks to the 1950s, a time leading up to Tunisia's independence from political oppression.

While politics are not the focus within the film, they serve as a context for an individual's liberation of a young woman from a system of patriarchy and oppression. This film effectively illustrates the emancipation of a young woman with the growing independence of an entire nation.

Alia's mother, Khadija, a woman who has sacrificed her own body (to her husband and father, sexually) so as to preserve the nation as a whole, attempts to provide for her daughter's education and womanhood and entire Tunisian society's liberation from the shackles of patriarchy.

Alia's mother, Khadija, a woman who has sacrificed her own body (to her husband and father, sexually) so as to preserve the nation as a whole, attempts to provide for her daughter's education and womanhood and entire Tunisian society's liberation from the shackles of patriarchy.

Alia's mother, Khadija, a woman who has sacrificed her own body (to her husband and father, sexually) so as to preserve the nation as a whole, attempts to provide for her daughter's education and womanhood and entire Tunisian society's liberation from the shackles of patriarchy.

Alia's mother, Khadija, a woman who has sacrificed her own body (to her husband and father, sexually) so as to preserve the nation as a whole, attempts to provide for her daughter's education and womanhood and entire Tunisian society's liberation from the shackles of patriarchy.

free to possess and express themselves, in terms of sexuality and voice. Through Alia's adult character's point of view, the audience glimpses fragments of a broken childhood. After having been gone for ten years, the adult Alia returns to the palace upon the death of a close friend of the family.

There, the stillness and silence of the empty rooms echo an overwhelmingly painful past which she thought [she] buried with [her]

This film effectively parallels the emancipation of one single woman with the growing independence of an entire nation.

Alia's mother, Khadija, a woman who has sacrificed her own body (to her husband and father, sexually) so as to preserve the nation as a whole, attempts to provide for her daughter's education and womanhood and entire Tunisian society's liberation from the shackles of patriarchy.

Alia's mother, Khadija, a woman who has sacrificed her own body (to her husband and father, sexually) so as to preserve the nation as a whole, attempts to provide for her daughter's education and womanhood and entire Tunisian society's liberation from the shackles of patriarchy.

Alia's mother, Khadija, a woman who has sacrificed her own body (to her husband and father, sexually) so as to preserve the nation as a whole, attempts to provide for her daughter's education and womanhood and entire Tunisian society's liberation from the shackles of patriarchy.

Alia's mother, Khadija, a woman who has sacrificed her own body (to her husband and father, sexually) so as to preserve the nation as a whole, attempts to provide for her daughter's education and womanhood and entire Tunisian society's liberation from the shackles of patriarchy.

collective perspective from which to make such a decision. In this way, Alia's past relations with her mother and other female cohorts provides an invaluable wealth of experience from which to make a life-changing decision; she literally invokes the "matriarchs" of her own life as trusted sources of wisdom. The knowledge which is shared inter-generationally among women is depicted as unique and crucial to a young woman of the present.

In addition to its critical attention to the relationship of women, the film also focuses on the power of voice, even the voice of one young girl (Alia) to break that "silence" which has for so long imprisoned these Tunisian women. As Alia's mother instructed, "[the women of the palace] were taught one rule—silence." Ironically, the central male leader of the palace recognized that "Alia's voice is a treasure." Though he was referring to her singing voice, this statement still proves significant to the film's theme; as it Alia's voice, her realizations, and her feminine pride and strength which eventually enable her to overcome the virtual imprisonment of the palace.

This film affirms the strength of women to transcend patriarchally established boundaries and reach a higher realm of freedom—where "silence" is no longer conditioned but, rather, discouraged. Prior to Alia's singing, she is told that "a new future awaits us; your voice will enchant everyone." Just as a new future, politically, awaits the people of Tunisia, so does a "new future," socially, await these women who for so long have been silenced. That one woman's voice can have the power to "enchant everyone" and thereby, symbolically, reform the women's condition as well as the state's condition serves as a testament to the film's pervasive theme of female empowerment of women.



Ewan McGregor and Cameron Diaz on their cross-country odyssey of guns, bank robbery - and karaoke - in *A Life Less Ordinary*.

themes such as tough, ass-kicking angels and romantic kidnappings.

The Boyle/Macdonald/Hodge

dream team could have produced *Trainspotting* several times with this film's \$12 million budget. It's a

shame when an independent-rooted production team wastes talent and money on a script less original.

