

Broadway Danny Rose (1984)

This is one of 3 films from VP's archives recommended for Thanksgiving viewing.

(Also see [Avalon](#) & [What's Cooking?](#))

Rated PG. Running time: 1 hour 24 min.

Our content ratings (1-10): Violence 2; Language 1; Sex/Nudity 3.

Our star rating (1-5): 5

*...he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire
him.*

Isaiah 53:2b

*Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or
boastful or arrogant or rude.*

*It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or
resentful...*

1 Corinthians 13:4-5

*Then people will come from east and west, from north and
south, and will eat in the kingdom of God.*

Luke 13:29

Despite its having been nominated for two Oscars— Best Director and Best Original Screenplay—this is not as well

known a film as the others by Woody Allen. I have found that those who "hate" Woody Allen films are surprised that it is so funny and charming that they find themselves liking it despite their opinion of Woody Allen the man and his unsavory life. And well they might, for to me it is Allen at his wittiest and, compared to much of his other work, most upbeat. The story of a down-on-his-heels Broadway talent agent, it presents us with a very intriguing bespectacled Christ figure and a cruciform lifestyle.

Danny Rose handles the acts that no one else will touch – a wooden legged tap dancer, a blind xylophone player, a one-armed juggler, a balloon folder a trainer whose parakeet pecks out on a toy piano "I Gotta Be Me ". Danny helps them in every aspect of their performance, and even becomes involved in their personal lives. Occasionally, when Danny finds a performer with real talent and helps him perfect his act, the entertainer leaves Danny for the services of a more upscale agent. Once the act has become a success, the performer no longer wants to be associated with the other bottom of the barrel acts going no where. Will this happen again with Lou, the singer whom Danny has rescued from his alcoholism and is now beginning to attract attention?

When Danny manages to convince Milton Burle to come by the club where Lou is singing, it appears that this could well be Lou's big break. At that time Burle's variety show was the top program on TV. Lou is married and a father, but wants to have his mistress Tina present that night. Danny very reluctantly, after arguing with his client, agrees to be the "beard," bringing Tina as his own date.

However, Tina, widow of a slain mobster, is sought after by the weak son of another mobster, so when they learn that she is going out with Danny, goons are sent out to eliminate Danny from the picture, none of them knowing that it is actually Lou who is the rival for Tina's affections. There follows a madcap chase sequence that is a combination of danger and slapstick.

(I have shown this film to junior high kids, and they loved it as much as adults. There is a madcap chase scene in the huge room where the Mace Day Thanksgiving Parade balloons are stored that is hilarious.)

The ensuing incidents include a type of "crucifixion" when Lou tells Danny he is changing to a more prestigious manager, and much later, a gathering with similarities to the Last Supper. This is on Thanksgiving Day when Danny invites all his lowly clients to dinner—TV turkey dinners, of course, the mashed potatoes being so bland that the blind xylophone player thinks they are tasteless cranberry sauce. There is even a reconciliation that is sort of a secular Easter moment.

Mia Farrow as Tina is wonderful, this brash, abrasive character being her most uncharacteristic role! Suitable for both youth and adults, the film's relative short running time makes it easy to fit into an evening schedule. A great visual parable with a comical rendition of the venerable Christ Figure tradition!

Good for teaching/preaching. Sequence in which Tina and Danny exchange their philosophies of life: Danny and Tina are on the run from gangsters out to do them in. Intending to go into hiding, they stop by his apartment so he can pack a few personal things. Unimpressed with his untidy lodgings, Tina says it looks like a dump and that he is a loser. Danny disagrees, and as they talk he learns of her old ambition of being an interior designer (though we learn she has no real taste for good design—nor for that matter, does Danny). As he has supported his small-talent clients, he encourages her, even when she says it is too late for her. They also share philosophies of life, hers being to grab all you can while you can. Danny sums his up in three words, passed on to him by his Uncle Sidney, "Acceptance, forgiveness, and love."

http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0087003/?ref_=nv_sr_3