

Mr. Bean's Holiday (2007)

Rated PG. Our ratings: V- 2; L- 1; S/N-2 . Running time: 1 hour 30 min.

*In everything a prudent man acts with knowledge,
but a fool flaunts his folly.*

Proverbs 13:16 (RSV)

After a boring experience trying to stay focused on the first Mr. Bean movie, I vowed never to go to another film featuring him. So what was I doing watching Mr. Bean's Holiday? Well, it came to me, Universal having sent the DVD to critics in the hope that they would watch and comment upon it. This tactic worked with me, because I felt duty bound to view at least a portion of it. It is still as silly as ever, with most of Rowan Atkinson's comedy being very physical, often confined to close-ups of his plastic face going through all kinds of contortions, such as during an episode when he is tasting unfamiliar French cuisine.

The film is a road story, with Mr. Bean winning a trip to the south of France at a church lottery. Being thoroughly British, Mr. Bean knows only a word of French and sees no reason why he should learn any more, believing that he can make his desires known through grunts and gestures. He takes his camcorder along, making a video record of the sites he ravages along the

way. He becomes the ward of a little boy when he causes the father, a Russian film critic on his way to Cannes (also Mr. Bean's destination) to be shut out of the departing train. The two despise each other at first, but become close after several misadventures. Mr. Bean also manages to wreak havoc on a movie set presided over by pompous director Carson Clay delightfully hammed up by Willem Dafoe. On the movie set he also meets the Sabine (Emma de Caunes) in whose car he completes the final leg of his trip, and at Cannes he even manages to make waves when his DVD footage becomes mixed in with the film being shown by, guess who?—Carson Clay, of course.

Strictly escapist farce, the movie can make you forget your troubles for a while, but I won't watch another one—unless the studio sends it out also.