

Desperately Seeking Susan

1985 | 105mins

Director: Susan Seidelman

Starring: Rosanna Arquette, Madonna, Laurie Metcalf



Desperately Seeking Susan is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, and as a triple F rated film, we of course must show it at Bath Film Festival 2025. It was rare, particularly in the 1980s, to make a blockbuster film that was written, produced, directed and centered on women.

Madonna plays Susan, a confident, bohemian, outspoken woman whose messages to boyfriends via personal ads intrigue bored and lonely housewife Roberta (Rosanna Arquette). This intrigue leads Roberta to find Susan, however when Roberta gets into an accident which affects her personality, she and Susan briefly switch lives. In a trail of mistaken identity, they become involved in something of an unintended heist!

Susan Seidelman's clear joy for the city shines through the narrative, as the audience are taken on a fast-paced journey of thrills and comedy alike around New York City. Immersive and winding, it's fun being wrapped up in this story.

“Given that it launched the film careers of the then little known Rosanna Arquette, the entirely unknown Aidan Quinn and some singer called Madonna, 1985’s *Desperately Seeking Susan* still stakes a good claim to be one of the canniest casting jobs of all time. And that’s before you get to the then even less known supporting actors: Laurie Metcalf as Arquette’s tacky sister-in-law! John Turturro as the cheesy club MC! John Lurie barely visible as a saxophone-playing neighbour! Giancarlo Esposito in a blink-and-you’ll-miss-it role as a street salesman!”

- The Guardian, 2022.

Excellent

Fair

Poor



What did you think of the film? Please mark or tear the number.

Please add any further comments here

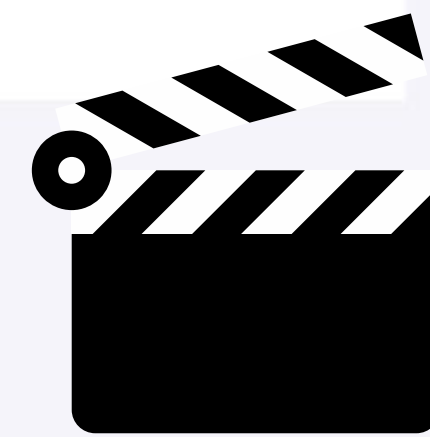
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Did You Know?

- Upon reading the script for the first time, Rosanna Arquette expressed her desire to play the role of Susan. She was surprised to discover the producers wanted her to play the lead role of Roberta.
- The producers couldn't get Kevin Costner or Dennis Quaid to read for the role of Dez. With two female leads, some actors didn't want to be third fiddle.

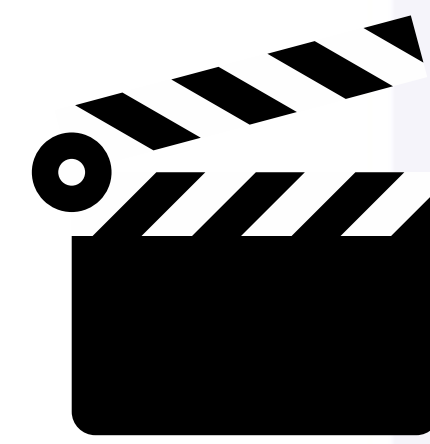
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Something Wild (1986)

Lulu (Melanie Griffith) meets nervous banker Charles (Jeff Daniels). Complete opposites of each other, the pair embark on a whirlwind courtship. It's all going well until we meet Ray (Ray Liotta), and all is not quite as it seems.



Working Girl (1988)

Another case of mistaken identity in this classic rom-com from the late 1980s. Tess McGill (Melanie Griffith) is a woman trying to make it in a business of mostly male colleagues with one very powerful boss (Sigourney Weaver).

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