

# Showgirls 2: Penny's from Heaven

USA 2011

produced by

**Ford Austin, Josh Eisenstadt, Rena Riffel for Rena Riffel Films**

directed by Rena Riffel

starring Rena Riffel, Glenn Plummer, Greg Travis, Dewey Weber, Peter Stickles, Shelley Michelle, Ford Austin, Paula Da Baredas, Hoyt Richards, Blanca Blanco, Ryan Grassmeyer, Marc Wasserman, Brian Nolan, Elissa Dowling, Dylan Vox, Lenora Claire, MYC Agnew, **Jade Paris**, Steve Williams, Clinton H. Wallace, Maria Marini, Count Smokala, Bradley Laise, Benjamin Ramirez, Lotti Pharriss Knowles, John V. Knowles, Brooke Mason, Chris Saranchock, Katie Snuff, DeeDee Bigelow, Erin Affourtit, Sherill Turner, Karen Agnes, Christa Bormann, Brad Kilmer, Amber Dawn Lee, Wendi Mirabella, Mike Justice, Richard Haralace, Tim Taylor, Holly Fraser, Jonathan Harrison, Josh Eisenstadt, Robert Fraser, Tamas Birinyi, Harley Gilmore, Dan V. Weiss, Eddie Riffel, Vana Kocheryan, Scott Keith, Nomi Madness, Chae Amando, Ayesha Orange, Kristen Campbell-Taylor, Christy Cody, Male Crystal Ball, Julia Sandberg Hansson, Ted Alderman, Kelly Cubilios, Yvonne Glen, Melissa Schade  
written by Rena Riffel, music by John Collins, Kevin MacLeod, Rick Whitfield

review by

**Mike Haberfelner**

Penny Slot (Rena Riffel) is a stripper in Vegas and is well-loved ... but she wants to be more, wants to be a dancer on a popular TV show and a ballerina. Problem is, she lacks the proper training - and yet, she leaves her boyfriend (Glenn Plummer) to make it to Hollywood. Of course, the very first person she hires a ride with robs her luggage after coercing her into having sex with him, and the next person to give her a ride turns out to be a homicidal psycho bitch. Fortunately, she runs into her own knife, and ironically, that leaves Penny with a suitcase full of (possibly stolen) money ... but also with a cop on her trail.

Once in Hollywood, Penny moves into a huge mansion and buys herself a lot of really expensive things as she has never had much money before ... and before she knows it, her money has run out. But she has made a great friend, Gotthardt (Peter Stickles), a man who introduces her to all the best people in town and inducts her into the freemasons' lodge - and Penny thinks she's madly in love, but then he turns out to be engaged to be married to Russian ballerina Katya (Shelley Michelle), but he somehow coerces Penny into becoming his prostitute as he moonlights as an upper class pimp. Penny doesn't like it, but she's too naive to come to the conclusion he's exploiting her - and hey, a girl has to work ...

Penny admires Katya, but Katya is difficult to say the least, sometimes she treats Penny as if she was dirt, then again she offers to give her dancing lessons, if only Penny teaches her how to be a whore (which she doesn't mean in a negative way), and eventually they even have lesbian sex with one another. But of course, Katya also snatches the spot on the dance show Penny so desperately wanted to be on. When in her function as a prostitute, Penny has sex with the show's producer, his wife and their executive though, luck changes in Penny's favour ... or does it? And how come Penny and Katya eventually end up in San Francisco, how come Penny goes back to being a stripper, a fate she desperately tried to escape, whatever happened to the cop on her trail and to her fiancé who never gave up on her, and how does Penny's lingerie-maid (Paula LaBaredas) figure into all of this?

Despite the (massive) involvement of Rena Riffel from **Showgirls** (who even has the same character name in this film as in the older movie), this is a sequel to Paul Verhoeven's film mainly in name. Now I give you that, both films are about the ugly underbelly of showbusiness and about strippers, but **Showgirls 2: Penny's from Heaven** has a much lighter tone to it, is much more light-footed in both narrative and pacing, and plays out quite a few scenes tongue severely in cheek. Basically, the whole film is a self-consciously camp pseudo-drama full of over-dramatic situations and performances, contrived situations, and of course random dance interludes ... and all of this works totally for the movie with **Showgirls 2: Penny's from Heaven**, it just hasn't set out to be something deep or meaningful, but something fun and sexy, and this it has totally achieved. And it should also be noted that Rena Riffel really owns her role in this one.

Recommended, actually!

review © by **Mike Haberfelner**

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