



TRINITY GOODHEART is a February, 2014 LVCA dvd donation to the Hugh Stoupe Memorial Library of the Heritage United Methodist Church in Ligonier, Pennsylvania. It is reviewed below by Kino Ken.

United States 2011 color live action feature teledrama 90 minutes
Reel Works Studios / Trinity Goodheart Productions LLC
Producer: Rick Elridge

10 of a possible 20 points

1/2 of a possible ***

Key: *indicates outstanding technical achievement or performance

(j) = juvenile performer

Points

- 2 Direction: Joanne Hock
- 0 Editing: Tim Vogel
- 1 Cinematography: Mark Mervis
- 1 Lighting: Randy Whiteland
- 1 Screenplay: Rhonda Baraka
- 1 Music: Rob Pottorf
- 1 Art Director: Derek Davis
- 1 Sound: Will Howard, Shaun Cardwell (mixer)
- 2 Acting
- 0 Creativity

10 total points

Cast: Eric Benet* (Jeremy Goodheart, Trinity's dad), Erica Gluck (j)* (Trinity Goodheart, age 12, Jeremy's daughter), Mark La Mura (Randolph Hawthorne, Trinity's maternal grandfather), Karen Abercrombie (Maxine Goodheart, Trinity's paternal grandmother), Willie Stratford (Jonathan Goodheart, Trinity's paternal grandfather), Jennifer Van Horn (Melinda Hawthorne, Trinity's maternal grandmother), James Hong (Mr. Kwon, Jeremy's landlord), Kellin Watson (Kim Goodheart, Trinity's mom), Matt Carlson (Rafael, an angel), Thomas Clark (Jonathan's chauffeur), Dan Preston (security guard 1), Odetta West (Jonathan's secretary), Stephen Ware (man on the street), Tim Vogel (news cameraman), Tonya Bludsworth (caterer), Mark Scarboro (Jay), Kaylee Maree Tolleson (homeless girl), Lindsay Auliffe* (Mr. Thornbull, principal), April Turner (Mrs. Cooper), Sidney Horton (bus driver), Frank Ponce (boy 1), Jeremy De Carlos (Wes), Brandon Gorman (guitarist), Koran Baraka (park volunteer), Toni Baraka (teenage girl), Jay Cohen (maître d'), Robert Crayton (bouncer), Brett Gentile (truck driver), King Hoey (homeless artist on car), Bonnie Johnson (doctor), Jerry Keys (bearded homeless man), Madison Nulty (walker), Quentin Plair (boy 2), Leon Pridgen (Lionel, Trinity's paternal uncle), James Sims (security guard 2) Michael Thomas (j) (student), Sayer Vaughn (kid), Deetta West (secretary), Emlee Vassilos (caterer waitress), Ebony Wilson (pedestrian)

TRINITY GOODHEART is a film redeemed mainly by some remarkably natural, incisive acting performances. Eric Benet, as an estranged father of an adolescent girl who waywardly plunges from one dangerous escapade to another, is wholly credible. Watch this normally mellow parent get transformed involuntarily into a conflicted, despairing seeker of a runaway child. Erica Gluck, bubbly and commandingly verbal in the title role, alternates with astonishing success between juvenile clown and precociously mature interrogator of defensive adults. Her intelligently idealist dreamer is not easy to forget. Yet a third standout is Lindsay Auliffe as a well-intentioned school principal who finds himself losing an

argument to keep Trinity in attendance at a public school specializing in socialization rather than academics.

Set mainly in downtown Boston, the film follows the adventures of twelve-year-old Trinity Goodheart, abandoned by mother Kim for reasons unknown to her. She is being raised, most liberally, by a father who survives financially on busking earnings. They live in an apartment generously provided by Mr. Kwon in return for their assistance with his store operations. It appears Trinity does occasional stock work there. Jeremy makes deliveries for the owner between gigs in jazz clubs and street corner entertainings. In a neighborhood beset by crime, indicated by frequency of sirens, these two Goodhearts blend in agreeably with homeless street people, unemployed vagrants, and immigrants struggling to climb up the economic ladder. Except that Trinity has angelic visitors, and visions, things not customary in the area. One of these celestials delivers half a locket, cautioning a drowsy recipient she must search out the missing portion for herself. If she does, the trail will lead her to missing Kim. Then the family can be joyfully reunited.

Apparently home studies are unnecessary for Trinity, who spends the majority of daylight hours creating paper angels and thumbing through metropolitan Boston phone books tracking numbers of additional Goodhearts. Through lengthy trial-and-error, she finally stumbles upon the name of attorney Jonathan Goodheart, whose law practice appears to cater solely to well-heeled clientele. This man is her father's father, whom she has not seen in years. He, however, can readily identify her by appearance. So their unlikely reunion proves acceptable to both. But a visitation to his son Jeremy results in an invitation to immediately leave, hardly presaging happy days ahead for the clan.

Trinity, only moderately fazed by initial setback, then successively ferrets out addresses and telephone numbers of her other three grandparents. Grandmother Maxine is invited to a luncheon at a local health food café. Walking through the downscale district Trinity calls home afterwards, the supercilious woman evinces disdain for homeless and unemployed people they encounter. Trinity is shocked. How could her own grandmother be so unfeeling? Is that part of the reason she is not welcomed at Jeremy's place?

Having learned nothing from previous disillusionments, the young detective pays an unannounced visit to her maternal grandparents, interrupting preparations for a formal party. Grandfather Randolph wants nothing to do with her. His wife Melinda sees Trinity's coming as a second chance to bond, one she has no intention of foregoing, irrespective of Randolph's wishes. When the unexpected guest overhears Grandfather Hawthorne's tirade against Jeremy's parents and mode of living, Trinity reluctantly departs, temporarily defeated by issues of race and poverty. Melinda vainly attempts to recall her.

However, Trinity puts Pollyanna to shame. Soon she's once again on the family reunification bandwagon, now with a dizzyheaded scheme to bring every one of her feuding, prejudiced elders together for a claimed emergency she is having. Location of said crisis: Mr. Kwon's shop. Always compliant Kwon gets the task of delivering homemade notes from Trinity to the rest of her relatives, which he executes with substantial, well-founded trepidation. Jonathan leaves a difficult negotiation session to his nephew, Randolph exits his barely-launched speech for community business leaders to follow the humiliating lead of his spouse, Maxine feels compelled to sacrifice previous appointments, and puzzled Jeremy arrives tardily at the rendezvous clueless as usual. Once all are gathered together a round of recrimination begins, with no mediation anywhere in sight. Each party accuses others of arrogance, selfishness, abdication of parental responsibilities, and neglect of family relationships. It's a hopeless encounter, as Trinity realizes to her dismay.

Like her mother, she cannot confront a welter of charge and countercharge. Slipping out a rear door, the troubled girl climbs upstairs to her home and quickly packs for a solitary trip to Buffalo. That's where she's learned her mother was residing at the time of final communication with family. It doesn't occur to Trinity that danger threatens, since the preteen believes guardian angels watch over her constantly.

They don't have an easy task. For their charge makes her way to a Boston bus terminal and tries to buy herself a one-way ticket to Mom. Being an unaccompanied minor, Trinity's request is denied. Now desperately alone and with no plan of action, the runaway meets a teenage boy who claims to be seventeen and experiencing a similar setback. The two form a bond, united by a

common problem, but warily tentative about making a joint commitment. It seems the boy is also headed to Buffalo. Amazing, isn't it?

Time for another Trinity Goodheart patented brainstorm. If the bus approach isn't working, there's always the old standby: thumbing a ride. Parents of teens be warned, onscreen behavior in these scenes is not recommended viewing for immature children.

Belatedly reaching the same conclusion, scripters gingerly characterize the trucker who befriends the pair as either a. a pedophile with particular interest in nubile teens, or b. a greedy thief attracted to the wad of bills stupidly exhibited by Trinity to travelling companions when suspicions about the route being taken begin to surface. See, this little lady can pay her own way in an crisis!

Push materially coming to shove, Angel Rafael hustles Trinity out the cab door while a flustered teamster weakly protests. This supernatural intervention precludes tragedy, guaranteeing the film stays in mainstream menaced teen territory. How the mismatched couple ever do get to Buffalo is left to viewer imaginations.

Meanwhile, adult members of the missing girl's family turn to police, mutual search assistance, and prayer to locate her. Realizing she's not lost, thanks to Jeremy's insistence Trinity is a veteran of urban jungle hikes, they eventually come to the conclusion she is Buffalo-bound. Where else could she possibly run to? Collectively, the clan decides to set off in pursuit.

Up in Buffalo, everyone finally shows up at a nightclub where jazz singer Kim has been enshrined by music-loving friends. It seems she was killed in a vehicle accident the night of Trinity's celestial visitation. Coincidentally, Raphael was at the scene and obtained half the talismanic locket, the portion that gets deposited in Trinity's sleeping quarters. The other half, recently found after fruitless years of hunting by Melinda in her personal jewelry box, was mailed to Trinity as a goodwill offering shortly before her unforeseen flight. It convinced the youngster realization of her dream of reconciliation must be imminent. For why else would the two halves have suddenly become a whole? How serendipitous!

Side stories portray an unconvincing flip-flop by real estate magnate Hawthorne, who buckles to Trinity's public chastisement, consenting to employ local job seekers in building a safer community playground, which the girl claims is

something affecting her personally, though we never see her frolicking there. Maxine is also on board to support the project. Its commitment to hire underprivileged and the deserving unemployed aligns it with her nebulous goals of advancing social justice.

All this because of the obstinacy of a girl inspired by tales of angels.

Despite some gratingly fashionable pop music inserted so listeners know the heroine is not so uncool as at first appears, TRINITY GOODHEART is a welcome antidote to the usual downbeat offerings of delinquent, defiantly stupid, or romantically challenged teens battling underdog athletic status, rejection by peers, transplanting from criminal city environment to safer and more ethical rural one, or assorted zombies, aliens, psychopaths, and / or hometown perverts with homicide on their minds. The film is not appropriate for squeamish, escapist teens merely looking for entertainment. Though its lessons are sometimes overbearingly obvious, there's plenty of charm to make them palatable, with a sequence in which Trinity passes the time in a skyscraper housing Attorney Goodheart's offices awaiting Jonathan's return from court by doing everything short of opening a new musical on Broadway. These activities include acrobatically romping over, about, and under railings, pacing in high gear back and forth across the lobby, and generally making a cheerful, bustling nuisance of herself. But she's angel-blessed Trinity. So all is forgiven.

Sound recording is not up to snuff, with too much dialogue lost to the ear. Only modestly better is the lighting standard. Unless hazy, poorly defined shots are intended to showcase an atmosphere of mystical transcendence. Photography and art direction are acceptably supportive, with an occasional superior framing and astute interior decoration of Trinity's apartment indicating imposing environs and credulity of character with powerful force.

Sometimes sluggish, at other moments draggy, editing of this film leaves much to be desired. A lot of defects are concealed, though, beneath covering chatter and preposterous muggings by Erica Gluck, a valiant and versatile actress, as well as a junior missionary.

Bonus features on the dvd include a two-minute trailer and a chapter index.

This film is absolutely worth seeing, offering a bushel basket of rich content for family discussion. Suitable for mature teens and adults.

