

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Main Street Flops

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Main Street finally hit the screens of the newly renovated Carolina Theatre in Durham this September. After a \$1.8 million transformation, the beautiful Carolina Theatre is definitely worth a visit. But is Main Street worth watching? Not quite.

The late Horton Foote, Academy Award winner and playwright of classics such as *To Kill a Mockingbird*, tells the story of the residents of Durham, who are startled by the visit of a man who envisions changing the economy of their hometown. Dr. Alisa Johnson is an English professor at Meredith College, film enthusiast, and Durham resident. In an interview with Dr. Johnson she said, "It is funny that that's the position that the filmmaker takes, because about ten or twelve years ago, that's what most people would've thought. Durham has become a very different city. So it's a point that seems pretty outdated to me." At first, the story seems quite promising, but as the movie proceeds, it fails to live up to that promise.

Main Street has too many characters, among whom the creators fail to create any

connection. Georgiana Carr (Ellen Burstyn) is a distressed tobacco heiress who plans to rent her warehouse as a means of income. A Durham policeman (Orlando Bloom) is ready to win his girlfriend back. Mary (Amber Tamblyn) is a young and ambitious girl who, after being fired, wants to leave her home town for better opportunities in other southern states. And Gus Leroy (Colin Firth) is the businessman who enters the city of Durham with a business proposal in mind. Though the story line is weak, actors Colin Firth and Orlando Bloom have truly given performances that suit their character well. On the other hand, the lady that supposedly holds the heart of Bloom's character fails to do so, despite looking absolutely gorgeous throughout the movie. Tamblyn acted overly emotional in some scenes where it seemed utterly unnecessary. Her character is ambitious and practical, yet her performance makes Mary seem rather angry and irrational.

Poor direction and bad editing contribute equally towards the failure of the film. The movie switches scenes very often, which creates confu-



image via Google images
sion about the story line. The climax of the movie attracts attention by creating a sense of panic, but it doesn't have much of an effect on audiences still struggling to entirely understand the storyline.

However, the movie was an exciting experience for Durham residents. Dr. Johnson said, "As a Durham resident I like it, because we have had films shot before and it is often good for the city. I am looking forward

to recognizing places in the movie."

In addition, there are many parts of the movie which can be used as study tools for filmmakers. Johnson expressed, "I have a soft spot in my heart for bad movies. And I believe that there is a role for bad films in the study of films. So, when I see this film, and if it's a certain kind of bad that we can learn from, I actually will use it. One thing I have heard about this film, that is already attracting some attention, is the role of accents that the characters are portraying to represent Durham. Durham has become such a diverse city that Southern accents as they are portrayed in the movie are not actually evident in the city as they might be in other parts of Durham County. So I might look at that in terms of discussing characterization and accuracy. It can be used as a teaching tool."

Promising actors with amazing past performances probably helped land Main Street limited theatrical release. With its skilled cast and homely feel, the creators of Main Street evidently tried to give a simple story a deeper impact but have unfortunately failed miserably.

Ask Gigi

Dear Gigi,

I am new to Meredith College. I have been having a hard time finding my place in this campus and I have made few friends. I am beginning to think that Meredith College is not the place for me, but I don't want to give up without giving it a fight. If I leave Meredith, I want to be sure it is for the reasons that, after trying my best at everything, I realize that it is just not for me. I can't tell you how excited I was to get my acceptance letter when I was in high school, but I feel disappointed. What can I do?

Sincerely,
Considering a transfer

Dear considering a transfer,

I first must reassure you that what you are feeling is part of the whole college experience. You are going to have to try out multiple things and make decisions for yourself. It can be frustrating at times and you can expect to fail more than you succeed, but you gain so much from the experience. I encourage you keep persevering. Try and get involved with a few things on campus. For example, you can get involved in your residence hall with Residence Hall Association, service organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, or clubs and organizations that pertain to your major or area of interest (if you are interested come to one of the Meredith Herald meetings on Tuesdays at 5:30pm in Joyner). I recommend stopping by the Office of Student Leadership and Service on the 2nd floor of the Cate Center and visiting with the friendly staff and student workers. They will be glad to provide you with any information you may need. In addition to getting involved, you can get to know the people living on your hall at socials, attend an event hosted by CAB, MRA, MEA, etc, or you could hang out in any of the student lounges or parlors across campus. I agree with you that you should try it all out before you decide to transfer. Good luck to you and hang in there my fellow Meredith Angel.

Cheers,
Gigi