

dive

recommends

By Jenise Hudson

■ "Kingdom Come," If you want to see movie about a real black family struggling to get along with God, then you have got to rent this movie. All the elements needed for a good laugh at the antics of church folk are included. Even those who can't relate to the movie's comedy can enjoy the all-star cast that includes Vivica Fox and Whoopi Goldberg.

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'Mulholland Drive' Winds Down Haunting, Creepy Path

By JEREMY FISHER
Staff Writer

When it comes to making films that view the world through the darkest pitch imaginable, nobody beats David Lynch.

The iconoclastic director's latest trip down the cinematic rabbit hole is "Mulholland Drive," a dark and enthralling mystery of identity that just might be his most engaging film since "Blue Velvet."

The film follows Betty (Naomi Watts), an aspiring actress who lands bright-eyed in Hollywood, only to find a mysterious amnesiac hiding in her rented house. The girl, who calls herself Rita (Laura Harring), is the lone sur-

vivor of a car crash, but she can't remember who she is or where she was going. All she recalls is where the crash happened - Mulholland Drive.

Betty takes pity on Rita and decides it would be fun to solve the puzzle, since "it'll be just like a movie." What Betty finds, and how her discoveries connect with a second plot involving a brash young director and a malevolent casting syndicate, fuels a sense of dread that unfolds into a surrealistic nightmare.

All of the keystone Lynch visual cues make an appearance - the camera slides creepily down hallways, the night is

filmed with an intoxicating noirish intensity and every lingering close-up seems to suggest something that the audience can't quite grasp. It's one of those rare films that scares you without explanation. It seems that any second, something horrible could happen.

The film actually shares a lot in common with "Lost Highway," Lynch's controversial and perplexing film that examined the duality of identity and the nature of evil in an otherworldly Los Angeles. The biggest gripe with "Lost Highway" was that it didn't make sense. Lynch handed the audience the pieces

of the puzzle and never put them together.

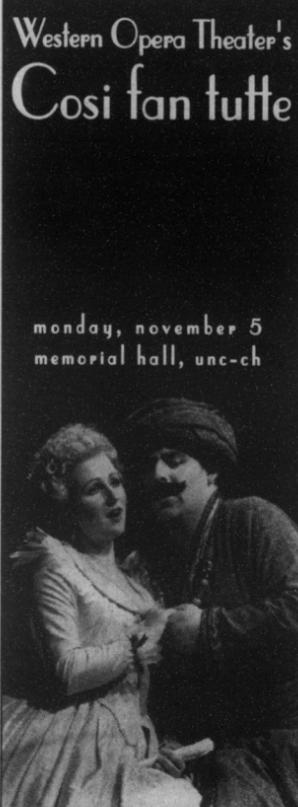
Well, the same might be said of the relentlessly unnerving "Mulholland Drive." Characters that seem important pop up once and never show themselves again, and there are scenes that don't seem to have anything to do with the main action. There are tons of suggestion but very little exposition. In its last half-hour, the film completely dissolves into a terrifying celluloid kaleidoscope, where nothing - and no one - appears as it is.

Whether you find the film's spectacularly ambiguous denouement enthralling or infuriating depends on your weirdness threshold. It's obvious that Lynch wants the audience to draw their own conclusions from this psychological labyrinth. But although Lynch is keeping all the secrets to himself, this only makes his spellbinding journey through the nocturnal hell of Hollywood all the more compelling.

The Arts & Entertainment Editor can be reached at artsdesk@unc.edu.



"Mulholland Drive" ★★★★★



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