

Film Review: Zoe Kazan Illuminates Fascinating Fable of ‘Ruby Sparks’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on July 24, 2012 - 9:46am

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CHICAGO – Jonathan Dayton & Valerie Faris return to the spotlight this week with their first film since the award-winning “Little Miss Sunshine” and they completely defy the sophomore slump, delivering a smart, fascinating, fun gem in the spectacular “Ruby Sparks.” Buoyed by one of the best screenplays of the year courtesy of one of our most interesting young actresses, “Ruby Sparks” is a clever romantic fantasy that works on nearly every level.



Rating: **4.5/5.0**

At his core, the writer is a control freak. Writers craft characters to serve their will, whether it be to entertain an audience, to make a statement, or to fulfill a side of their personality that they can't in the real world. The wonderful Zoe Kazan (“Meek’s Cutoff,” “The Exploding Girl”) has crafted a fable in “Ruby Sparks” about how that sense of control and craftsmanship makes a writer a unique romantic partner. Writing for herself and her real-life romantic partner in Paul Dano, Kazan has delivered a dense, multi-layered piece of work and she was lucky enough to find two directors who completely understood her themes. The screenplay for “Ruby Sparks” is a high-wire act of tones, genres, and themes and Kazan proves to be more than capable of traversing it.



[Read Brian Tallerico's full review of “Ruby Sparks” in our reviews section.](#) [17]

Calvin Weir-Fields (Dano) is a famous writer who hasn't delivered a new novel since his breakthrough ten years ago. His agent, therapist, and family encourage him to write more but he's been blocked by his own success. At speaking appearances, he feels awkward as fans try to break down his characters for the millionth time. He just looks defeated by life. Then he dreams of Ruby Sparks (Kazan).

She starts in his dreams and, as writers often do, Weir-Fields starts to write about Ruby. He crafts a past life for the girl of his dreams and she begins to inspire him. He's writing again. He's jumping off his therapist's walls instead of lying on the couch. And then he wakes up to find Ruby Sparks making him breakfast. She's gone from dream to paper to reality. And Calvin can still control her, altering her behavior through his typewriter.



[Continue reading for Brian Tallerico's full “Ruby Sparks” review.](#) [17]

“Ruby Sparks” stars Paul Dano, Zoe Kazan, Chris Messina, Annette Bening, Antonio Banderas, Aasif Mandvi, Steve Coogan, Deborah Ann Woll, Alia Shawkat, and Elliott Gould. It was written by Kazan and directed by Jonathan Dayton & Valerie Faris. It opens in Chicago on July 25, 2012.



Ruby Sparks

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