

Film Review: Phony Emotional Connections Trip Up ‘Arthur Newman’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on April 26, 2013 - 8:44pm

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CHICAGO – In what could be subtitled, “The Challenge of American Accents,” the new release “Arthur Newman” has a laugh-inducing U.S. inflection face-off between Brits Colin Firth and Emily Blunt. Amid that obstacle, there is a lame road picture that emotionally is false, and makes no sense.



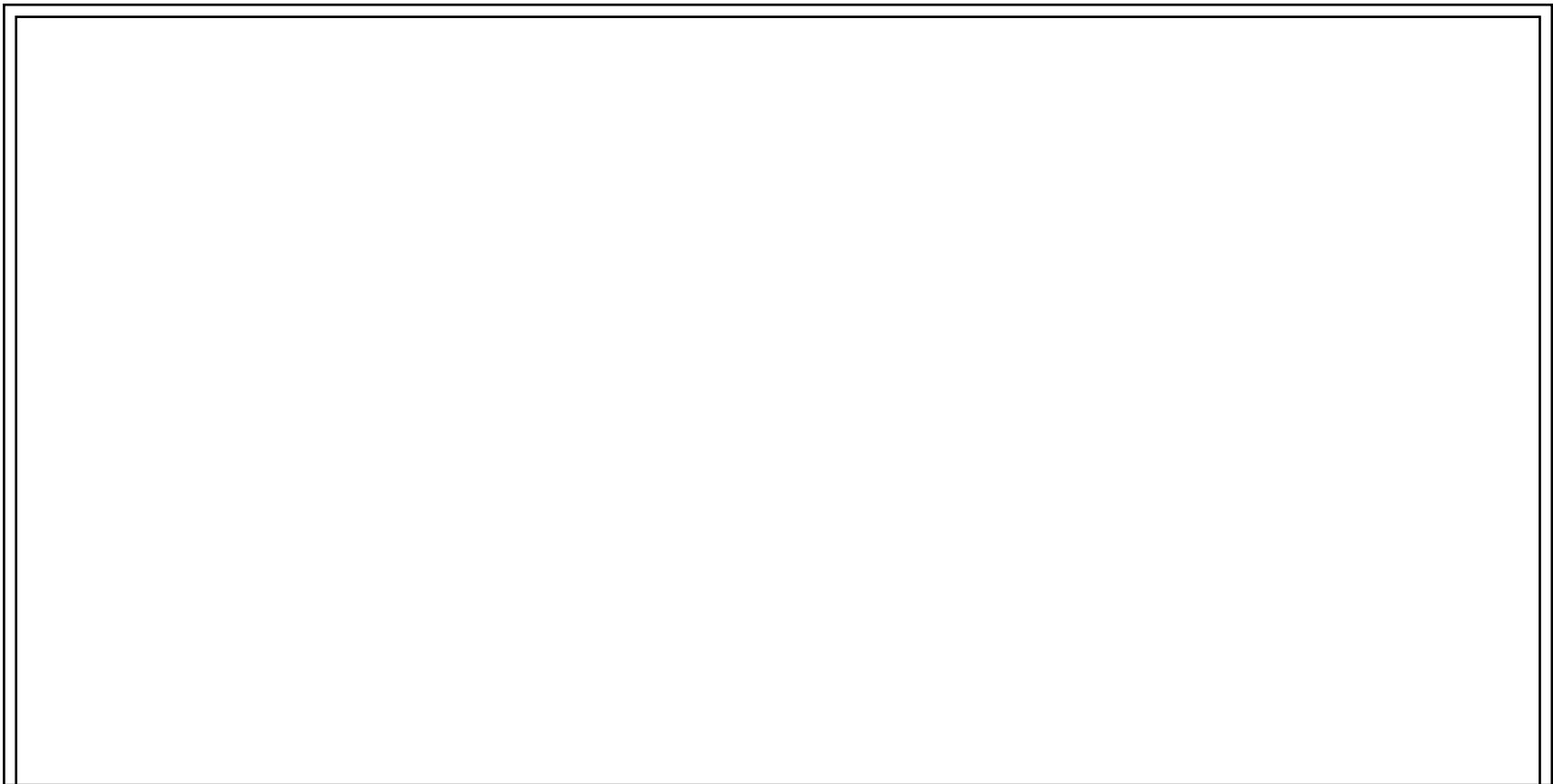
The film wants to create a mystery, but doesn’t want to solve it. The name “Arthur Newman” has been purchased by a man for reasons that really don’t become clear. Arthur has committed a crime against his ex-wife and family, but that crime is not clear. And when he does hit the road with his new name, he meets a strung out fellow traveler who may be a hooker, but resolves herself rather cleanly and becomes a spunky companion. All the so-called emotional connections between the two are based on a high concept adventure, and features little chemistry between them. Arthur Newman, the man and the movie, is a mess.

The film opens with a Florida man named Avery Wallace (Colin Firth) buying his new identity, “Arthur Newman.” Avery obviously has a plan, and makes sure he tells that plan to his girlfriend Mina (Anne Heche) and his son (Lucas Hedges). With very calculated movements, he throws away Avery and becomes Arthur. To punctuate this move, he is now driving a Mercedes convertible.

Arthur’s road trip is interrupted immediately with a commotion in front of his hotel on the first night of his escape. A feisty girl named Mike (Emily Blunt) is causing trouble with a what seems like a prostitution situation. Arthur finds her sleeping by the hotel pool, and takes her to a hospital due to a drug overdose. Somehow this means he has adopted her, so cue the road trip music. Arthur and Mike are on their way to a new life in Terre Haute, Indiana, and what they will find on that journey will help to define the discovery of their inner selves.

“Arthur Newman” has a limited release, including Chicago, on April 26th. See local listings for theaters and show times. Featuring Emily Blunt, Colin Firth, Anne Heche and Lucas Hedges. Screenplay by Becky Johnson. Directed by Dante Ariola. Rated “R”

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Looking for Identity: Mike (Emily Blunt) and Arthur in ‘Arthur Newman’
Photo credit: Cinedigm

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