

Blu-ray Review: ‘August: Osage County’ is a Rusty Family Drama

Submitted by [NickHC](#) [1] on May 12, 2014 - 8:57pm

- [Abigail Breslin](#) [2]
- [August: Osage County](#) [3]
- [Blu-ray Review](#) [4]
- [Chris Cooper](#) [5]
- [Dermot Mulroney](#) [6]
- [Ewan McGregor](#) [7]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [8]
- [Julia Roberts](#) [9]
- [Julianne Nicholson](#) [10]
- [Juliette Lewis](#) [11]
- [Margo Martindale](#) [12]
- [Nick Allen](#) [13]

CHICAGO – John Wells’ adaptation of Tracy Letts’ “August: Osage County” is a movie that fell off the radar in 2013 during the busiest time of the year. When we were all caught up in narratives of lone survival, or tales of how this country was morally eroded by financial excess, this loud ode to miserable family gatherings moved into theaters, scooped up a couple of Oscar nominations for its revered talent (Meryl Streep & Julia Roberts), and then vanished.



Rating: **2.5/5.0**

For the sake of its integrity, perhaps it’s better that this movie had such a fate, as its material can be raised to “SNL”-levels without much tinkering. The dysfunction of this movie is so cacophonous, with heated characters so pointed, that it doesn’t challenge the idea of family drama, but almost unintentionally parody it. One can imagine the video edits that await of “August: Osage County,” in which its many hammy “goddammit!” screams are cut next to those muttered by crusty old generals in cheesy action movies. The characters’ individual story-lines, intermingled here for the sassiest gathering seen since “The Nutty Professor II: The Klumps”, are flat enough that they don’t resemble human beings, but archetypes. Its casting provides a fake sense of interest; watching Benedict Cumberbatch wrestle with a southern accent and a puppy-like sense of gee-golly-gosh shame isn’t as amusing as it may sound. Of the batch, Streep is the best, but she’s got much sounder work elsewhere in her filmography.

Regardless of its timing in 2013, this kind of story about a house metaphorically collapsing is one that would be out of season any time of the modern year. At least in this incarnation, Letts’ late-2000s plays seems out of touch with the idea of a modern family, and instead tries to recreate a simplified memory of different days; a laugh track awaits this story that is starved to start some trouble.



August: Osage County

Photo credit: The Weinstein Company

Synopsis:

An extended family is brought together after a tragedy. Their collective complicated history causes a volcanic breakdown of their entire unit, threatening the lifelong relationships they have with one another. Featuring Meryl Streep as Violet Weston, a new widower grieving for her husband's (Sam Shepard) sudden end. Featuring Julia Roberts, Chris Cooper, Margo Martindale, Dermot Mulroney, Juliette Lewis, Abigail Breslin, Julianne Nicholson, and Ewan McGregor.

Special Features:

- o On Writing with Tracy Letts
- o Deleted Scenes
- o The Making of August: Osage County
- o Audio Commentary
- o DVD Copy of "August: Osage County"
- o HD Copy of "August: Osage County"

"August: Osage County" was released on Blu-ray on April 22, 2014.

By Nick Allen

Contributor

HollywoodChicago.com

Source URL (retrieved on Apr 17 2024 - 3:28pm):<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/23974/blu-ray-review-august-osage-county-is-a-rusty-family-drama>**Links:**

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/nickhc>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/abigail-breslin>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/august-osage-county>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/blu-ray-review>

- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/chris-cooper>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dermot-mulroney>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/ewan-mcgregor>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/julia-roberts>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/julianne-nicholson>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/juliette-lewis>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/margo-martindale>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/nick-allen>