

## Film Review: Ever-Present Passion in ‘Me and Earl and the Dying Girl’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on June 12, 2015 - 11:21am

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CHICAGO – There are feelings encoded in a film, imparted by the creators, which sometimes takes a while to become apparent. “Me and Earl and the Dying Girl” is an example, with a deceptive surface story that contains an ocean of feelings and emotions within its passionate core.



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

The film won both the top jury prize and audience favorite award at the Sundance Film Festival, and brings it into the marketplace five months later with a considerable momentum behind it. That momentum doesn't do the first part of the film any favors – it is filled with glib high school and adult characters who either act beyond their age or pour too much into stereotypical character traits. But the film clicks into place once all this is established, and becomes a story that touches like a retrieved cherished memory – rooted in the main character's love of the history of cinema arts. Movies are a fantasy state, that reflect back our hopes and ambitions. With “Me and Earl and the Dying Girl,” all three of the title characters participate in those sensations.

The “Me” in the title is Greg (Thomas Mann), who is about to become a high school senior, and has no particular goal, except to keep hanging out with his best friend Earl (RJ Cyler) and continue to make parody videos of their favorite obscure film titles (think Werner Herzog's “Fitzcarraldo”). This all changes when he finds out a classmate named Rachel (Olivia Cooke) is dying of leukemia.

Greg's mother (Connie Britton) implores the teen to “hang out” with Rachel, and he does so reluctantly, because Rachel's mother (Molly Shannon) maintains an uncomfortable closeness to him. Slowly Greg develops a connection to the Dying Girl, and that affects everything happening around him, including his relationship with his eccentric father (Nick Offerman) and his friendship with Earl.

*“Me and Earl and the Dying Girl” has a limited release, including Chicago, on June 12th. Featuring Thomas Mann, RJ Cyler, Oliva Cooke, Nick Offerman, Molly Shannon and Connie Britton. Written by Jesse Andrews, from his novel. Directed by Alonso Gomez-Rejon. Rated “PG-13”*



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Olivia Cooke, Thomas Mann and RJ Cyler of ‘Me and Earl and the Dying Girl’

Photo credit: Fox Searchlight Pictures

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