Film Review: ‘Little’ Squanders Its Comedic and Social Potential in an Attempt to Play It Safe

Submitted by JonHC [1] on April 14, 2019 - 3:12pm

- Black-ish [2]
- Girls Trip [3]
- HollywoodChicago.com [4]
- HollywoodChicago.com Content [5]
- Insecure [6]
- Issa Rae [7]
- Jon Espino [8]
- Little [9]
- Marsai Martin [10]
- Movie Review [11]
- Peeples [12]
- Regina Hall [13]
- The Hate U Give [14]
- Tina Gordon [15]
- Tracy Oliver [16]
- Universal Pictures [17]
- What Men Want [18]

CHICAGO – After a typical late night, deep dive of the internet, I found something terrifying. Around the 60’s, creating dinners in Jello were popular for some reason. Although I liked every individual ingredient, seeing the way they fit together was a less than appetizing. Watching “Little” reminds me of this experience except after the film, I was left with a bland, spiceless taste in my mouth.



Rating: **2.0/5.0**

With a strong cast of black, female actresses, I had certain expectations when going into this film. Obviously, I had hoped that there would be a message of female empowerment at the forefront, especially since the three main actresses have recently been part of productions that have emphasized that, most notably Regina Hall in last year’s indie hit “Support the Girls”. I’m ecstatic to report that this aspect was more than well-represented, which made the baffling part about why the black perspective was so underplayed/underutilized. Don’t get me wrong, you do get more than a few jokes at the expense of white people, and while those jokes were funny, they were ultimately the equivalent of low-hanging fruit.

Each of the three mentioned main characters has been in shows or films that are at the forefront of depicting the black experience, especially for women. Regina Hall, Marsai Martin, and Issa Rae are all part of productions that not only comments on the disparity among the races, but also the inequalities that plague women even today, with films like the underrated “The Hate U Give”, and TV shows like “Insecure” and “Black-ish”. The few jokes that were about race lacked any of the potential social bite that you have come to expect from the talent involved and instead felt placating and toothless.

In a comedy, you’re only as good as your jokes, and while there are a few gut-busters, many felt like empty calories. Screenwriters Tina Gordon and Tracy Oliver both have experience writing roles for strong, black women with films like “What Men Want” and “Girls Trip, respectively. Many will go into this film expecting the latter, but getting the former. “What Men Want” provides a perfect example for why “Little” fails, and that’s because they both use essentially the same, safe comedic formula. The jokes have no edge, which could have easily been gotten if either film pushed the social commentary in their films. That is why “Girls Trip” is far superior because it wasn’t afraid to break stereotypes or play into the cliches that we have come to expect from comedies.

“Little” opened everywhere on April 12th. Featuring Regina Hall, Issa Rae, Marsai Martin, Justin Hartley, and Tracee Ellis Ross. Directed by Tina Gordon. Written by Tina Gordon and Tracy Oliver. Rated “PG-13”

Continue reading for Jon Espino’s full review of “Little” [19]



Photo credit: Universal Pictures

Continue reading for Jon Espino’s full review of “Little” [19]

Source URL (retrieved on *Mar 28 2024 - 9:54am*):
http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/29327/film-review-little-squanders-comedic-and-social-potential-to-play-it-safe

Links:
[1] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/jonhc
[2] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/black-ish
[3] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/girls-trip
[4] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagocom
[5] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content
[6] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/insecure
[7] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/issa-rae
[8] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/jon-espino
[9] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/little
[10] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/marsai-martin
[11] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/movie-review
[12] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/peeples
[13] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/regina-hall
[14] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-hate-u-give
[15] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/tina-gordon
[16] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/tracy-oliver
[17] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/universal-pictures
[18] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/what-men-want
[19] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/29325/little-squanders-comedic-and-social-potential-to-play-it-safe