Film Review: Finding One’s Self in ‘Where’d You Go, Bernadette’

Submitted by PatrickMcD [1] on August 19, 2019 - 9:32am

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CHICAGO – There is something so lovely about a film that unfolds slowly, until the moment occurs when a multi-layered story occurrence takes the breath away. “Where’d You Go, Bernadette” is such a film, portrayed with a magic subtlety by Cate Blanchett, one of the finest film actors working. She lives a life that is broken, but not in ways we suspect.



Rating: **4.5/5.0**

The concept of genius is the theme, the type of genius that is world changing. Imagine a Steve Jobs disappearing shortly after the iPhone is introduced, and finding him years later completely outside what we know him for. This is what happens to Bernadette in the film, and the director Richard Linklater (“Boyhood”) allows it to transpire as a mystery. It takes a bit to get into gear, as Kristen Wiig distracts as a wacky neighbor, but even she comes into her own when the essence of Bernadette is revealed. This film is really for anyone who felt cut off from the thing that made them great when life intervened, and then perhaps is given that elusive second chance. “Where’d You Go, Bernadette” – based on a best selling novel – is relatable on many levels.

Bernadette (Cate Blanchett) is an upper middle class stay-at-home Mom who is rehabbing a large house in Seattle. Her husband Elgie (Billy Crudup) is a high-level software developer and her daughter Bee (Emma Nelson) is of high school age. Bernadette is constantly distracted by life, which includes a difficulty connecting to people like her neighbor Audrey (Kristen Wiig).

It is eventually determined that Bernadette has a past, associated with a skill that was stratospheric in its influence and notoriety But something happened, and now the Mom hiding in Seattle is having a bit of a breakdown. When a economic breach occurs because of Bernadette’s carelessness, it begins a series of events that leads her down another path.

“Where’d You Go, Bernadette” opened everywhere on August 16th. Featuring Cate Blanchett, Judy Greer, Kristen Wiig, Billy Crudup, Laurence Fishburne, Steve Zahn, Emma Nelson and Megan Mullally. Screenplay adapted by Richard Linklater, Holly Gent and Vince Palmo. Directed by Richard Linklater. Rated “PG-13”

Continue reading for Patrick McDonald’s full review of “Where’d You Go, Bernadette” [16]



Cate Blanchett is the Title Character in 'Where'd You Go Bernadette'
Photo credit: Annapurna Pictures

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