Amy Schumer is Empowering in 'I Feel Pretty'

Submitted by PatrickMcD [1] on April 21, 2018 - 12:06pm

- Aidy Bryant [2]
- Amy Schumer [3]
- Busy Phillips [4]
- Emily Ratajkowski [5]
- Empowerment [6]
- HollywoodChicago.com Content [7]
- I Feel Pretty [8]
- Lauren Hutton [9]
- Michelle Williams [10]
- Modeling [11]
- Movie Review [12]
- Patrick McDonald [13]
- STX Films [14]
- Trainwreck [15]
- Women [16]

Rating: **3.0**/5.0

CHICAGO – It is a neutered Amy Schumer who is portraying her latest character… a schlumpy woman who lacks the confidence to break out of her shell. It takes the most sitcomish of all actions, the whack on the head, to motivate her that she is one of the most beautiful woman in the world. This empowers the story of "I Feel Pretty."

This film is going to be a good girlfriend-out-at-the-movies night, because is has a great heart to what women have to put up with in society. From the average to the wealthiest to the most beautiful, women are still unfairly judged based on their outer carriage, and the film effectively exposes that message. However, as a comedy it relies too much on Ms. Schumer's abilities to milk humor out of a character that isn't confident until she is, and then confident again because?… I prefer the edgier Schumer from "Trainwreck" and "Snatched." This is just a "lessons learned" film, and it has some slow stretches in the action as it takes us to school.

Renee (Schumer) is a IT geek for a cosmetics company, forced to work away from the glitzy headquarters in New York City. She is looking for love, as is her two best friends Vivian (Amy Bryant from "SNL") and Jane (Busy Phillips). She has self esteem issues, until one day she hits her head on an exercise bike, and wakes up thinking she is one of the most beautiful women in the world.

How May She Help You? Amy Schumer as Renee in 'I Feel Pretty'

Photo credit: STX Films

This encourages Renee to apply for the front-of-desk receptionist job for her company, which she lands because of her now superior confidence. She also lands a dude named Ethan (Rory Scovel), who is entranced by her now free attitude. She also is noticed by Avery (Michelle Williams) – the squeaky-voiced CEO of the cosmetics company – and the founder Lily (Lauren Hutton), as they launch a new make up line. Hopefully she can hold onto her new super charged presence.

Amy Schumer is in a tough place. She most likely does not want to continue her initial comic persona as a kind of clueless, sex crazed semi-adult. But her characters need to be drawn a bit edgier than Renee, who really could be portrayed by anybody with those certain characteristics. Schumer does a decent job of the high concept, yet there seemed to be something missing, the thing that sparked her earlier films. I understand that she wanted the empowerment to be the message, and it does come across, but if she is going to continue doing movies she'll need to transition into a persona that still maintains a bit of her old outsider quality.

The film actually picks up steam in the last third, especially in a remarkable scene in which the now "cured" (another bump on the head) Renee has to figure out the consequences of the other life, and has a sit down with her model-like friend Mallory (Emily Ratajkowski). This ideal of beauty has the same problems on the same end of the spectrum as Renee, and the bonding element of human commonality is as important a message as the empowerment. Having not gone through what a woman goes through, I can only speak to that empathy of common experience.

Renee Conquers All in 'I Feel Pretty'
Photo credit: STX Films

It's too bad they have to rely on the bump on the head, which has been getting a bit of criticism ("why does it take a brain injury to give a woman confidence…" etc), and Schumer herself in interviews has said it's only a metaphor. I just thought it was lazy and too old school, like Gilligan getting hit on the head with a coconut on his island. Can't it be voodoo or something? What part of a head injury stimulates the confidence part of us? If that were the case there would be clinics with hammers.

But the message of empowerment and "be who you are" is strong, and Schumer is admired for speaking her mind and projecting exactly that confidence in real life… precisely what she gave her character in "I Feel Pretty." If only that confidence came with the rest of Amy's edgy angst, to sharpen the humor even more.

"I Feel Pretty" opened everywhere April 20th. Featuring Amy Schumer, Aidy Bryant, Busy Phillips, Emily Ratajkowski, Michelle Williams, Rory Scovel and Lauren Hutton Written and directed by Abby Cohn and Mark Silverstein. Rated "R"

 [17]

By PATRICK McDONALD [18]
Writer, Editorial Coordinator
HollywoodChicago.com
pat@hollywoodchicago.com [17]

© 2018 Patrick McDonald, HollywoodChicago.com

Source URL (retrieved on *Apr 23 2024 - 7:14am*):

http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/28463/amy-schumer-is-empowering-in-i-feel-pretty

Links:

[1] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/hankq
[2] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/aidy-bryant
[3] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/amy-schumer
[4] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/busy-phillips
[5] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/emily-ratajkowski
[6] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/empowerment
[7] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/hollywoodchicagocom-content
[8] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/i-feel-pretty
[9] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/lauren-hutton
[10] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/michelle-williams
[11] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/modeling
[12] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/review.html
[13] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/patrick-mcdonald
[14] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/stx-films
[15] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/trainwreck
[16] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/women
[17] mailto:pat@hollywoodchicago.com
[18] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#PAT