

Reviews

Films are rated out of four stars ★★★★★



ELIZABETHTOWN ★★★

Directed by Cameron Crowe
Starring: Orlando Bloom,
Kirsten Dunst,
Alec Baldwin, Judy Greer,
Susan Sarandon
Rated – 12A
123 Minutes



Cameron Crowe has helmed many touching films. “Jerry Maguire”, “Almost Famous”, “Say Anything” and “Vanilla Sky” were all extremely well received by critics and audiences alike. He is a natural filmmaker, unafraid to be vulnerable by telling clearly autobiographical stories. His latest effort, “Elizabethtown”, recounts a young man’s journey back home for his father’s funeral.

Orlando Bloom plays Drew Baylor, a shoe designer who is in the midst of a colossal crisis after he unintentionally costs the company he works for more than \$900 million. On the verge of suicide, he receives the desperate phone call to return home after his father’s death. And so begins the sentimental journey back to Elizabethtown, Kentucky.

On the flight there, Drew’s life takes a turn for the better.



He meets-cute with the stewardess (Kirsten Dunst), who practically begs him to move to first class on the empty flight so she doesn’t have to keep walking to the back of the plane.

She hounds Drew into submission and almost forcibly inserts herself into his life. To be fair, Drew doesn’t put up much of a fight. Would any man?

The film plays out with an almost shameless saccharine sentiment. However, it is easily forgivable because it is heartfelt. You won’t feel manipulated by it.

I can’t say that Crowe’s latest film is on a par with those I mentioned above, but it is a moving romantic drama that will make the ladies cry and the lads pretend not to cry.



THE BROTHERS GRIMM ★★

Directed by Terry Gilliam
Starring: Matt Damon, Heath Ledger,
Monica Bellucci & Jonathan Pryce
Rated – 12A 118 Minutes

Terry Gilliam’s visual flare is undeniable. However, much like Tim Burton’s (Corpse Bride, Big Fish) cinematic efforts, his spectacular style often gets in the way of any tangible substance. Unfortunately, that is also true with his latest film, the schizophrenic adaptation of legendary siblings, “The Brothers Grimm”.

The film doesn’t really ever find out what it wants to be. It is part comedy, part adventure, part fairytale, part romance, part special-effects bonanza... But it never seems to deliver a coherent plot.

The story begins by transforming the brothers, named Will (Damon) and Jake (Ledger) in this version, into con-artists, ridding local villages of supposed demons and monsters, which they masterfully fake with primitive special effects.

Soon, the brothers are commissioned to a forest, which actually is haunted, and the adventure dwindles into an utterly incomprehensible and implausible mess.

It is a shame that the film fails to deliver on such a rich canvas. It seems as if Gilliam had so much on his plate and had no earthly idea how to reign it all in. The story had potential but needed a more focused scribe.

Matt Damon is the film’s one saving grace. He may have chosen to use a slightly dodgy British accent, but his comedic timing and dramatic range are enough to drag this film up to a respectable level.

This film reminded me most of the 2004 flop, “Van Helsing”. What you thought of that film will likely determine your probable enthusiasm for this brotherly tale.

