



Double Discourse: ‘Drive-Away Dolls’ transcends the Bechdel test

BY: ELLA BARRY AND OLIVIA NORDYKE / ON: FEBRUARY 27, 2024 / IN: FEATURES

Spoilers

“Drive-Away Dolls” brings two unlikely personalities together for the ultimate road trip buddy comedy from Philadelphia to Tallahassee: sexy, extroverted Jamie (Margaret Qualley) and reserved Marian (Geraldine Viswanathan).

To make the trip, the two rent a drive-away car (apparently something you could do in the '90s) and make some stops at lesbian landmarks along the way, tripping up the goons who are following them to retrieve some important packages the gals have accidentally acquired.

While unknowingly being chased, Jamie and Marian learn more about each other, eventually becoming closer than they ever imagined.

Olivia’s Review

5 out of 5 stars

I knew I was going to like this from the second I saw the preview, but I was really blown away at how much fun I had while watching this. I say with complete confidence that this is the queer sister of the Barbie movie.

We immediately get into the plot, and there’s not a lot of time for character backstory, which I loved! We get to know the characters in the moment, which makes it even more interesting to watch their decisions play out.

I laughed out loud more than I have in a theater in years, mostly at Qualley’s performance and quirky accent.

Queer viewers will immediately recognize the tropes they see within their friend groups and the dating pool, and Marian’s character is a heartwarming example of how it feels to be an introvert amidst a sea of gorgeous, gregarious gays.

The '90s was a perfect setting choice for the movie’s visual character in every scene. More than that, it highlights the way queer people met each other before digital communities, creating nostalgia even for those who weren’t there.

This is not a movie to see with your parents. It’s hilarious, but raunchy and deserving of its R-rating. However, it IS a movie that all age-appropriate audiences will love, queer and straight alike.

“Drive-Away Dolls” brought together everything I want in a movie: hilarity, queer representation and lesbians banding together against slimy politicians.

Ella’s Review

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5 out of 5 stars

Unlike Olivia, I saw the preview for this movie and thought it looked bad, but I figured I'd watch it anyway for the sake of reviewing it. I was not ready to absolutely love this movie, but it's the funniest I've seen in a while.

"Drive-Away Dolls" is proof that weird, campy lesbian movies are making a comeback. If you watched and enjoyed "Bottoms" last year, you'll love its raunchier, funnier older sister "Drive-Away Dolls."

The film stars some of my favorite actors, including Qualley as Jamie, an outspoken and hilarious lesbian from Texas, and Pedro Pascal as Santos, who only has a brief cameo at the beginning, but reappears as a decapitated head later.

Santos' decapitated head is only one example of how unpredictable this film is. That's what I love about camp movies — there is no way you'll know where the plot is headed until it's already there.

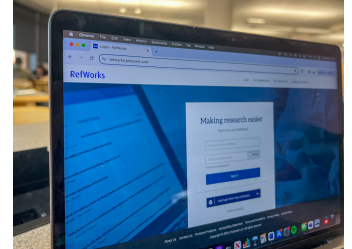
Every 20 minutes or so, the film is interrupted by a wonky display of colors and shadows, presumably representing an LSD trip. Initially these scenes left me questioning what I was watching and how any of this connected, but it all miraculously came together in the end.

I hate to be cliché and say this movie was "laugh-out-loud funny," but Olivia and I cackled over and over. If you like campy films, see it yourself and determine if Olivia and I were right for laughing, or if we're totally bonkers.

Photo via Showcase Cinemas.



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