

Drawing Home Movie Review

Reviewer Harvey Karten December 5, 2017

Published on



Photo from the film Drawing Home.

DRAWING HOME

M.Y.R.A. Entertainment

Director: Markus Rupprecht

Screenwriter: Markus Rupprecht, Donna Logan

Cast: Julie Lynn Mortensen, Juan Riedinger, Kate Mulgrew, Kristin Griffith, Rutger Hauser, Torrance Coombs, Christian Campbell, Jenny Kost

Screened at: Critics' link, NYC, 11/2/17

Opens: December 1 in LA. Dec. 22 in NY.

Some folks are beach bums while others prefer the mountains: though sometimes the twain shall meet. In Markus Rupprecht's biopic, covering a segment of the life of Catharine Robb Whyte, we meet a small circle of city

dwellers and get another, more Spartan look, at rural people. The city appears to offer the easier way of life, especially if you've got a servant as Catharine does, but in less dense populations, you can love nature such as you can never really find among urbanites shopping for Canadian smoked salmon at Zabars on the Upper West Side of Manhattan.

Catharine Robb Whyte (Julie Lynn Mortensen) was enjoying a good life in Concord, Massachusetts, as we see her about to enter the Boston School of Fine Arts. She chose the art school by following her talent, with tuition paid for by her mother Edith Morse Robb (Kate Mulgrew) and her more understanding dad Russell (Peter Strauss). Her whole life looked glorious, as she was expected to marry John D. Rockefeller III (Jeff Gladstone), no less, but often things happen when you go to college and meet other young people with whom you have more in common. 'twas there she encounters fellow art student Peter Whyte (Juan Riedinger), who invites her to his woodsy cabin in Banff, Alberta, Canada—surely one of the world's most scenic places.

Should she toss aside a Rockefeller and hitch up with a woodsman who happens to have a talent for painting? Would she be happy in digs without indoor plumbing? Of course, no question: Rocky didn't have a chance. But wouldn't you know that her mom, who has a servant of her own, Jean (Kristin Griffith)—who understands young Catharine even better than her dad—and encourages her to follow her heart. With her heart leading the way on the march, she meets famous painter Carl Rungius (Rutger Hauer) who is hosted by Peter, also Peter's brother Cliff (Christian Campbell) and best friend Kit (Torrance Coombs). When they decide to open a ski area (without a lift), that's your signal: tragedy ahead! And the rest is history.

The history book fills in that the Whytes founded a museum in the Rockies for which Canadians are probably more familiar than we are in the States. The Museum of the Canadian Rockies lies in the aforementioned Banff, which exhibits materials related to the Rocky Mountain cultural heritage—

that means largely Indian lore, or that of Native Canadians if you prefer. While this film does not move the time line forward, the museum opened in 1968 and includes two historic log cabin homes and four log cabins. Somehow the Peter and Catharine Whyte Foundation was able to open the museum when she was in her sixties, but how they raised the money is anybody's guess.

But director Markus Rupprecht and his co-writer Donna Logan were not about to give us a static biopic of the sort that's shown in high school auditoriums on a snowy day, so out with museum lore and in with a picture of Catharine, who wanted more than the affluence of her parents and the even increased wealth that would fall into her lap with JDRockefellerIII. She was a free spirit as shown here by the German director in his freshman, full-length feature, but her spirited journey sometimes bogs down with its predictable arc—broken engagement, marriage, mother-in-law problems, tragedy, redemption. The picture is acted by a sprightly Julie Lynn Mortensen, a Danish-Canadian who grew up in Alberta and is known around those parts for shorts and TV episodes like "Girlfriends' Guide to Divorce." For his part, Juan Riedinger is Banff born and bred, and is also known as well largely for TV episodes.

No doubt many viewers will remember mostly Patrick McLaughlin's exquisite photography that could easily be used in a tourist brochure for Banff, Lake Louise, and surrounding areas and has great appeal for anyone who can bear to leave a tour of Quebec and head west.

Unrated. 112 minutes. © Harvey Karten, Member, New York Film Critics Online

Story – B-

Acting – B

Technical – B+

Overall -C+

Movie Review Details

Review Date

2017-12-05

Reviewed Item

Drawing Home

Author Rating