

entertainment

WHAT ABOUT BOB?

Directed by: Frank Oz
Starring: Bill Murray
Richard Dreyfuss
Julie Hagerty
Charlie Korsmo

What About Bob? is one of the most enjoyable comedies of the year. The humour is straight forward and the plot is simple which makes this the kind of comedy that appeals to the masses. It is not one of those comedies with ever-so-subtle humour that it is unenjoyable trying to sift out the jokes and understand them. However, Bill Murray and Richard Dreyfuss are what makes this movie go. They are the film's catalysts without a doubt. Without these two uproariously funny guys it would be hard for this film to be as funny and appealing as it is or for it to be the box office semi-smash it was last summer. Using Dreyfuss and Murray as vehicles, director Frank Oz delivers the message "Everyone loves a friendly psychotic." The plot is simple. Bob Wiley (Murray) is a very troubled individual. Very troubled! He is scared of open places, closed places, touching things in public, contracting diseases, making good first impressions, sudden cardiac arrest, having his bladder explode, and any other phobia one possibly have. He also breaks into cold sweats, talks to himself, shakes, and has direct syndrome--which is a very rare disorder where one has involuntary periods of cursing profanities. Bob spends years of his life playing musical psychiatrists looking for the right doctor to help him. Enter Dr. Leo Marvin (Dreyfuss). His previous doctor transfers him to Dr. Marvin's care. In one session with Dr. Marvin and believes that there is hope for himself. Believing Dr. Marvin is the smartest man ever (in fact our lovable psychotic at one point compares everyone else to him: "He's so above us. We're like the ropes on the Goodyear blimp"), Bob promptly follows his doctor on vacation to Lake Winnepesaukee from the city. He then meets and attaches himself to the doctor's family and in doing so irritates Leo Marvin to the point of extreme actions. Murray is typically funny and once again delivers another brilliant comic performance. This role is probably the best ever suited for his talents. His melanchant stupidity and his grand over drawn sighs and exhaling make him the perfect schizophrenic. The

real surprise lies in the performance of Richard Dreyfuss proving his versatility as an actor, he brings a comedic aura about him that matches, if not surpasses, that of the wag Bill Murray. The film has a couple problems though. Firstly, the movie doesn't realize that it is about the degradation and fall from stature of a man that really did not do anything to deserve it. Does failing to understand the needs of today's kids qualify Dr. Marvin as a tragic hero. This particular facet of the film is not very funny. However, since this film doesn't take itself seriously Dr. Marvin's fall from grace is at least better than Henry Turner's in Regarding Henry. Secondly, why does the change (from urban to rural) in scenery change Bob's popularity? It is hard to believe that Bob would be perceived so differently in two different societies: a social outcast in the city and a lovable schizophrenic in the country. Despite these minor shortcomings, What About Bob? is a very funny and entertaining film. Murray and Dreyfuss will tickle your funny bone and the wild and zany script will also succeed in drawing smiles. This film is very interesting and enjoyable, and worth renting even though it is a bit silly to be taken serious.

GRADE: B



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