



WENDY AND LUCY

USA | 2008 | 80m | 15

Director: Kelly Reichardt

Screenplay: Jonathan Raymond

Cinematography: Sam Levy

Music: Will Oldham (theme), Gregory 'Smokey' Hormel (additional music)

Editing: Kelly Reichardt

Leading Players: Michelle Williams, Will Patton, Will Oldham, Wally Dalton



In the follow up to her 2006 feature *Old Joy*, Reichardt presents another subtle yet powerful film. Wendy and Lucy provides a snapshot in the journey of Wendy (Williams) who is travelling to Alaska in search of work. Accompanied by her dog Lucy, it soon becomes clear that Wendy is somewhat isolated from the society around her, a drifter of sorts with only her car-cum-home as protection from being forced to sleep on the streets. The film begins as Wendy stops overnight at a small town in Oregon, only to find that her car will not start the next morning. As Wendy faces the task of getting her car fixed within her ever dwindling budget, events become worse as she is arrested in an attempt to shoplift some dog food, during which time Lucy goes missing.

The pace of the film is slow and the style minimalist with the sounds of trains, trees or Wendy's humming being preferred to music. In many cases the events that take place are nothing unusual in everyday life, yet here they take on a new significance due to Wendy's circumstances. With each obstacle Wendy faces, or each display of humanity (or otherwise) the viewer is given time to reflect on their own values and perhaps question whether as individuals we have any responsibility in the lives of those around us. Take for example the kindness shown by the security guard (Wally Dalton) who helps Wendy in seemingly trivial ways but who makes a big difference by simply not ignoring her and trying to help in some way. The humanity of the security guard provides a stark contrast to the lack of forgiveness seen in John Robinson's self-righteous shop assistant (a crucifix hanging around his neck), who apprehends Wendy, claiming that "if people can't afford dog food they shouldn't have a dog". What are the moral implications of owning a dog in such financial difficulties - should a person relinquish their only trusted companion as they slip further into poverty?

It is the glimpse into the final moments of the transition to sleeping on the streets that Reichardt largely explores in the film. We don't see the grand downfall of Wendy, in fact we know very little of her background aside from the fact that she has a sister. In the only call Wendy makes to someone other than the

TODAY'S SCREENING SHOWN IN ASSOCIATION WITH **DHI**



what did you think of the film? please mark or tear your vote ▶

excellent A

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B

fair C

D

poor E

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pound, her sister makes it clear that she is unable to give Wendy money, not that she had asked for any but is that a hint at her previous experience or simply a reiteration that everyone is broke? In all respects Wendy's character seems fairly 'normal', is her character simply losing everything in the attempt to make a better life? Perhaps a retake on the mythical American Dream, these are questions which Reichardt leaves to the viewer, instead highlighting the delicate line between the last shreds of security and becoming homeless. One clear allusion to this is the scene in which Wendy is forced to sleep rough when her car is taken in for repair. Williams' performance as Wendy throughout is impressive and feels very truthful, yet here she really captures the vulnerability of Wendy when woken by the threatening ranting of a homeless man (Larry Fessenden). It is difficult not to question how one would cope in such a situation but what is more poignant is that for Wendy this may just be the start of life to come.

BFF filmnote by Helena Stokes

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Turn It Loose

Alastair Siddons | UK | 2008 | 96m | 12Atbc | sub-titles | turnitloosemovie.com

Showcasing the pulsating b-boy culture which has evolved over the last 30 years into a truly global phenomenon. Six competitors from all corners of the globe battle one on one for the chance to be crowned World Champion 2007. A genuinely uplifting film and one of the best dance documentary films in recent years. **Meet filmmaker Alastair Siddons at the post-screening q and a, and experience live breakdancing from BREAK at 7.00pm before the screening.**

... and tomorrow

Monday 16 November, 6:30 pm ,Little Theatre Cinema | £8 / £6

The Hide

Marek Losey | UK | 2008 | 82m | 15 | youtube.com/thehidemovie

Alex Macqueen as über-twitcher Roy Tunt is unforgettable in this twisting chamber piece leavened with sly humour. An encounter between two men in a bird hide on the atmospheric Suffolk mudflats appears to be a riff on genre conventions but soon deviates into less predictable waters – what exactly is being hidden by this hide? With slanting light glossing the film with the appearance of a graphic novel, the truth gradually emerges from the shadows! **We are delighted that Producer John Schwab will be with us to take your questions after the screening.** Don't miss 'Roy Tunt's Video Diaries on You Tube - www.youtube.com/watch?v=dezPYjMzeus

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