

Pixar back to its roots with 'Inside Out'

Written by By David Pinson For the Sun
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««« **out of four stars**

PIXAR has had a tough time since they were enveloped by Disney. The company that used to stand as the pinnacle of quality for American animation has fallen victim to the Hollywood repetition virus for last five years. Cars 2??? Not necessary. A Monsters Inc. prequel that focuses on the college years of Mike and Sully and devolves into Revenge of the Nerds rip-off? Who cares????

Then they announced *Finding Dory* and *Toy Story 4* and I figured it was the end of days. PIXAR looked as if it had become a money printing machine more focused on selling toys than providing quality product.

Some of that still remains true but their latest flick, *Inside Out* gives me hope. It is a return to form for the studio that provides an ORIGINAL story with heart and warmth. So rejoice!!! PIXAR is back!

Inside Out takes us into the mind of an 11-year-old girl, Riley (Kaitlyn Dias), and introduces us to her emotions who take a physical form and flips the switches and knobs on her emotional control panel. The mind of an 11-year-old is the perfect place to set up this scenario. Riley is a pretty happy kid so Joy (Amy Poehler) runs the show and has the controls most of the time. Joy is joined by four others, Fear (Bill Hader), Anger (Lewis Black), Disgust (Mindy Kaling) and Sadness (Phyllis Smith).

As Riley is transplanted with her parents from her life in the Midwest and plopped down in San Francisco the other emotions take charge. Especially Sadness who can't seem to keep her blues to herself. Joy and Sadness get lost in the intricacies of Riley's mind and have a *Wizard*

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e of adventure that fully explores the concept. Plenty of laughs and a couple of tears mixed with a fully realized world makes

Inside Out

the best PIXAR film in the last five years. Easy.

Director Pete Doctor gave us *Up* and has proven to be a master at providing a rich emotional landscape in his films. A perfect fit for this project. He weaves a detailed tapestry that sends the story on some unique and inventive twists and turns. You will travel on the Train of Thought and meet forgotten imaginary friends made mostly of cotton candy.

Of all the emotions, Disgust is the only one that isn't fleshed out. All of the others are perfectly cast and used to their full potential. We take brief trips into other people's minds and these interludes provide some of the best moments in the film.

What happens here in *Inside Out* is that PIXAR has given us a family film that truly has something to offer anyone, regardless of age. This is the return to form that I'm talking about. A four year old can be thoroughly entertained sitting next to their grandparents wearing a grin just as big as theirs. This is the magic that has been missing. This is what makes a great family film. It does not talk down to its audience.

With *The Good Dinosaur* next on the PIXAR docket, I'm hoping for more ingenuity to come. You can keep your endless sequels. We want new stories or at least we should.

Jurassic Park 4

just made more money than any movie in a three day span than anything else in history. And I'm sure if

Inside Out

makes its millions there will be more to come. Regardless, it is nice to see that we can still see something new every once in a while. It makes me full of Joy.

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