

WONDER

USA/Hong Kong | 2017 | 113' | Drama, Family | Rated PG

Directed by

Stephen Chbosky

Written with

Steve Conrad
Jackie Thorne

R.J. Palacio
(from the novel by)

With

Jacob Tremblay
Julia Roberts
Owen Wilson
Izabela Vidovic

Original Music by

Marcelo Zarvos



Première:

Los Angeles
14 November 2017

World release:

16 November 2017

Who Gives You the Courage to Face the World?

Budget: \$ 20.000.000

Gross: \$ 295.000.000

REVIEW

The Pullmans are a quiet, ordinary family with two kids; Olivia, called Via, at her first high school year, and August, Auggie, who is about to start his fifth grade. He has been homeschooled until now because of a physical problem that afflicts his face: after numerous surgeries, he now has no disabilities, just a 'different' appearance, which might scare most of the other kids...

The family that Palacio depicted in his best-selling novel truly was material for writer-director and novelist Stephen Chbosky: after "The Perks of Being a Wallflower", maybe one of the most delicate though intense teen drama of the last few years, Chbosky gets involved in this interesting project where, in my humble opinion, Auggie is but a means to an end. Actually, the real focus of the whole story, while it gets us to sympathize with the little deformed boy, tries to revolve around all of the young characters investigating a bit of all of their lives.

The screenplay, more than the (arguable) decision of keeping the 'chapters mode' of the book, is a great exercise in the alternate building and demolishing of a harmony, for all the main characters: being in-and-out of different character's POVs truly is the winning choice, also thanks to a lot of frames built up to symbolize the 'universe' in which they live and where Auggie so desperately dreams to be.

Fair use of the theme of bullying makes the movie a potential educational means for young children, while Via's narrative live (and her friend's too) are more than suitable for preteens and teens. If this wasn't enough, the adult figures are lightly touched but there is still place to reflect about their lives too.

In all of this, the best performances are given by the younger actors. Jacob Tremblay, after his achievement in "The Room", carries on along the path that we all wish may lead to a great career; next to him shines another emerging actress, Isabel Vidovic. This sixteen-year-old girl, with a number of appearances in both tv series and movies, seems in control of a character more difficult than it may seem. Via is actually one of the most convincing characters, considering the heavy prosthetics that condition Tremblay's "facial" performance. Another good surprise is Owen Wilson, whose recent dramatic turn is unexpectedly good: his Pullman father is both delicate and

funny, with a childish spirit but at the same time responsible and caring for his children. Among these good performances, Julia Roberts does well in refraining from emerging with her undeniable skills, but her mother and her motherly mistakes in caring for her ill-fortuned baby boy much more than for her teen daughter is the truest detail of the story.

Marcelo Zarvos deserves a few words: he is not one of the most notable composers in Hollywood, but he has a great deal of experience and right after the music for Denzel Washington's "Fences" works for another intimate movie, where emotions have to be underlined far more than action. And the result is a good one.

This kind of movies doesn't often get the right credit: they should be privileged against most of the blockbusters monopolizing the box office. In particular, I strongly recommend this movie to the vastest audience, from kids to adults: I promise you're not going to regret it!

ASSESSMENT	
POSTER	75%
TAGLINE	78%
TRAILER	75%
SATISFACTION	90%
DIRECTING	81%
SCREENPLAY	84%
PRODUCTION DESIGN	82%
CINEMATOGRAPHY	88%
CAST	90%
MUSIC	86%
TOTAL	85% = B