

Review: Beyond Clueless (Charlie Lyne, 2014)



It reminded me of being a child again, and hauntingly, how I am today. On both occasions, my visions of high school teens were voyeuristic and rather intangible; times where I thought I knew how things were but, as experienced showed, weren't personally true. It's a time where everything was 'cute', high school relationships were faux serious and fickle, and revenge was served with the most extreme shade. In a daring move to document cinema's most frowned upon genre, journalist and director Charlie Lyne has showed that teen cinema is where cult movies thrive. *Beyond Clueless* leaves you in dizzying awe; a welcome reminder of the films that shaped your younger years.

A breakdown of nineties and noughties teen movies, looking past the makeup and boys and into the souls and actions of their protagonists.

Lyne has established himself as a sort of bubbly Mark Cousins; replacing his borderline pretence with a flat out lust for teen movies. The sheer number of films he covers (well into the hundreds) conveys the depth of his knowledge as he carefully picks apart films that are regularly seen as shallow. He shows the homoerotic undertones of *Eurotrip*, and uses accurate, lustrous wildlife analogies when discussing the primal aspect of high school. Although *Clueless* is the titular feature here, its appearance is lacking. This isn't a negative thing, Lyne himself admits that *Clueless* 'knows itself' and has instead used his concise running time to deal with more obscure works.

It's a marvel this film hasn't become a sprawling, overlong

bore. It paces itself well enough to give off an animated effervescence, or depict the dank depths of tongue in cheek horror flicks well. It almost calls for a sequel; a look at the films that, although present in passing clips, aren't really dwelled upon at the best opportunities.

Over these grainy clips, Summer Camp provide a hazy, euphoric soundtrack that lifts what could be a dragging compilation piece to a well rounded tribute to teenage cinema. The Craft's Fairuza Balk makes a vocal appearance as the narrator for the whole thing. Even at 40, her dry, almost cynical 'know it all' tone makes Beyond Clueless feel like a high school drama in its own right; an homage to masturbatory mania, social outcasts and Freddie Prince Jr; bold defining factors of the genre.

Under its chipped, dark nail polish, Charlie Lyne has managed to expose the clever core that rests undisturbed in teen cinema. An exposition of intelligence under vacuity; this is fizzing cinematic nostalgia for today's youth.

Beyond Clueless is released in the UK on January 23rd. It will play at the Cameo in a preview screening on the 22nd January, featuring a Q&A with director Charlie Lyne. Tickets can be booked [here](#)

