

Film Review: 'A Ghost Story'

A Ghost Story

Direction: David Lowery

Screenplay: David Lowery

Cast: Casey Affleck, Rooney Mara

Length: 92 minutes

Rating: 12A

'A Ghost Story' examines the universal themes of love and loss, its effects on the human desire for connection over time and memory. A classic human story told with utterly original and completely unpredictable imagination. Starring Oscar winner Casey Affleck as 'C' and Oscar nominee Rooney Mara as 'M', this film is shot entirely in a square shaped aspect ratio, representing the apparently ordinary lives of the central characters. We follow their apparently ordinary story from their house day in and day out.

A score of tense violins are the only suggestion that the extraordinary may be approaching, with the noises of the train horns blowing in the distance and birds and insects in the surrounding trees amplifying the claustrophobia of the summer heat in normal suburbia. Suddenly, we discover C has been killed in a car accident, only to awaken as a ghost and return home to his girlfriend whom is left behind. Everything changes from here.

As the score vanishes, so do their hopes and dreams for a future together. All safety and security that once existed is gone while painfully long static takes heighten the intensity of loneliness and isolation with no music or dialogue for extended sequences creating further emphasis.

'A Ghost Story' is similar in style to the bleak tones of the 2015 film 'Macbeth' by Justin Kurzel as well as the 2014 film 'The Grand Budapest Hotel' and other works by Wes Anderson

through highlighting symmetrical lines and vanishing points, as well as the 4:3 aspect ratio and dolly camera movements.

As time passes, C's ghost interacts with other residents of the house while the narrative jumps back and forth between life and death, before and after the accident, filling in the painting of the story piece by piece.

From the urban lives of the small town to the big city, to the rural wilderness, we are taken on a journey through time all from the same constant location with twists and surprises in abundance. Our fears of mortality as individuals and humanity as a species are all touched on creating a profound impression long after the film is over. Both spiritual and haunting, sad but not depressing, this piece of work is the epitome of arthouse filmmaking.

It is the absolute antidote to the blockbuster film franchises traditionally released in summer.

Is there something there?

7/10