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Beau/Derek on The Descendants

★★★★☆

By Beau Behan



One can argue that Shakespeare's legacy to the literary world is a précis expression: "To be, or not to be, that is the question." In essence, it is a question of whether death is better than life. The Descendants is not about Hamlet; rather, it is about taking one side of this proverbial expression---that is, "To live, and to live to the fullest."

George Clooney portrays Matt King, a man forced into self-introspection. He is suddenly bombarded by his past, by a present family crisis due to his wife's comatose state, and by the very uncertain future of raising his daughters without a mother. To make matters worse, he must also grapple with a decision to sell the family's land that was handed down from Hawaiian royalty and missionaries.

Academy Award winning director Alexander Payne (Sideways) has painstakingly labored to convey the adage that life is not always a bed of roses. One can even say that his conscientious effort could be egregious due to the pain and sorrow that a moviegoer may experience through King's agony and dilemma.

I highly recommend this movie. It reminds us that life is too short. Derek is off on a holiday- practicing living life to the fullest!

(Derek Zemrak is a filmmaker and the president of the California Independent Film Festival Association (CAIFFA); Beau Behan is a member of the CAIFFA Board and director of the Lamorinda Theatres.)

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