

6/28 THU	for June 28 - July 5						
THEY CALL IT MYANMAR 5:30 7:30	THE BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL	1:00 6:10	1:00 6:10	1:00 6:10	4:00 6:45	4:00 6:45	4:00 6:45
MUSIC FROM THE BIG HOUSE ends tonight! 9:45	YOUR SISTER'S SISTER	2:40 4:50 7:00 9:00 11:15	2:40 4:50 7:00 9:00 11:15	2:40 4:50 7:00 9:00	5:25 7:35 9:30	5:25 7:35 9:30	5:25 7:35 9:30
9:30	HYSTERIA	9:15	9:15	9:15	9:40	9:40	9:40
4:30 7:15	WE HAVE A POPE	3:45	3:45	3:45	SOON: TO ROME WITH LOVE WHERE DO WE GO NOW		
	CABIN IN THE WOODS	11:00	11:00				

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WANDERLUST 5:40	SHERLOCK HOLMES 7:30	NO ONE IS SAFE 9:40
THE ARTIST 5:40	PROJECT X 7:30	21 JUMP STREET 9:40

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Once Upon a Time, Etc.

Pixar's *Brave* new world is still Disneyland

BRAVE: Directed by Mark Andrews, Brenda Chapman and Steve Purcell. Screenplay by Andrews, Chapman, Purcell and Irene Mecchi; story by Brenda Chapman. Editor, Nicholas C. Smith. Music, Patrick Doyle. Starring Kelly Macdonald, Billy Connolly, Emma Thompson and Julie Walters. Walt Disney Studios, 2012. PG. 100 minutes. ★★☆☆☆

Oh, that hair. Rapunzel may have the length, but she has little else on the locks of Merida (Kelly Macdonald), the Scottish princess in Pixar's *Brave*. Merida's hair is sunset orange, vermilion, peach, candy-apple red, a riot of curls that never settles, bouncing around her shoulders in a glorious tangle. It streams behind Merida as she gallops through the forest on horseback, nailing targets with perfectly aimed arrows; it flounces and bounces, uncontrollable, when she shows up all of Scotland's eligible first-born sons in an archery contest. When her mother, Queen Eleanor (Emma Thompson), dresses her up like a lady, a single unruly curl repeatedly escapes from her bursting cap (sometimes with a bit of aid from Merida).

The hair gets all the love (I'm hardly the first person to rave about it) because the hair is the one thing about *Brave* that fully lives up to the film's potential — beautiful, wild, created with the best of Pixar's magic. The film's will o' the wisps, little blue airborne jellyfish that sigh and coo, come close, and Merida's triplet brothers get all the studio's expected cleverness; the little hellions will go to great lengths for a plate of baked goodies.

But this is a story about a young woman, and Pixar has never quite figured out how to tell those. Women are goofy supporting characters (*Finding Nemo*), heartachingly absent presences (*Up*) and efficient robots

(*Wall-E*), but not the stars of their own stories. Abundant expectations hang on Merida's shoulders, and while she's a character to love, the film only earns a sort of warm affection — especially if you're the sort who loves nods to fairytales, with their transformations, horrid deadlines, and emphasis on the importance of knowing what you really wish for.

Part of the problem is that, despite the nice way *Brave* tweaks the notion of happily ever after, it remains awfully traditional; the conflict, for Merida, is between her mother's expectations and her own yearning for independence, even though no one so much as mentions that boys and men do whatever they like, without repercussions. Merida's complaints about her responsibilities border on the poor-little-rich-girl variety — she is a princess, after all — so the film tries to make her troubles universal by locating them in the clash between mother and daughter. This works, to a point, and the compromises the women reach are well-earned and true. They're also a touchy lesson.

Pixar's films are family-centric, and this one's no different, but the moralistic bent is pulled a little too far to the fore. The lovely and true notion that stories teach us how to live is made awkwardly, needlessly explicit. This isn't quite as painful, however, as the drippy songs that soundtrack Merida's jaunts into the forest. Trite and modern, they're a jarring reminder that we're still in Disneyland, where the greatest freedoms a girl can hope for are to (eventually) marry for love, get to keep her beloved horse, and occasionally be allowed to set her weapons on the table. **EW**

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