

WOKSAPE

"The Wise Book"

Scenes From *Nebraska* Film Hit Close To Home Powerful Movie Filmed In Plainview, Stanton, Osmond, Lincoln, Among Others



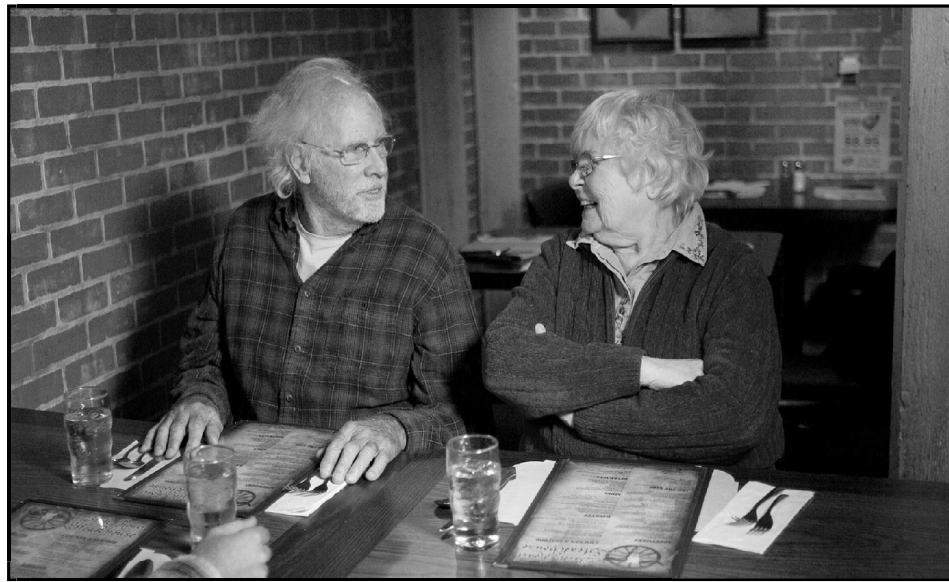
BY
**HUNTER
KOCH**

Alexander Payne's most recent film *Nebraska* came out in late 2013 and was nominated for a slew of awards. Unfortunately, it didn't do well at the Golden Globes; fortunately, it doesn't need awards to prove its merits.

Payne's last two films, *The Descendants* and *Sideways*, were excellent portrayals of the overwhelming nature of adulthood. *Nebraska* deviates from this concept and instead focuses on the relationship between an adult man and his elderly father, at least on the surface.

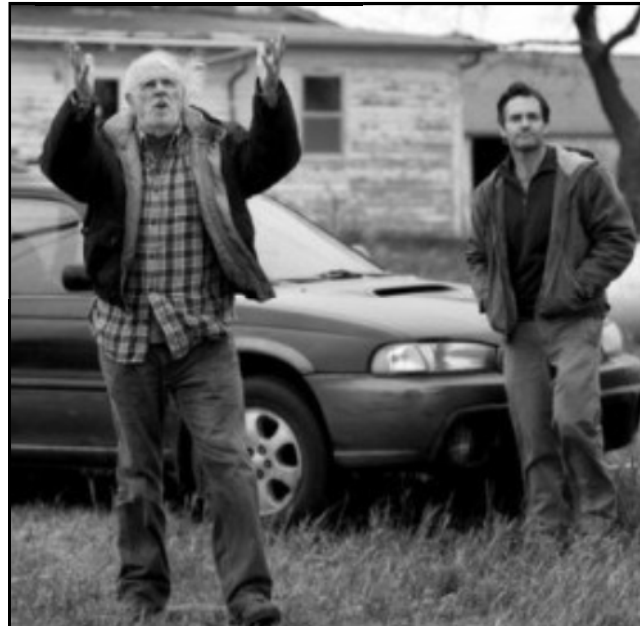
Mr. Payne doesn't write his own scripts, but this doesn't make *Nebraska* come off as any less personal than a film by a writer-director. A director doesn't arbitrarily choose a screenplay to direct; in eighteen years, Payne has directed six films, so there's intention behind the selection and development of a script. Regardless, Payne does a remarkable job with this film.

First, I'd like to acknowledge that many people believe Payne is making jabs at Midwestern stereotypes. Though it's easy to pick this up, if one thoroughly looks at the film, he can clearly see this isn't his intention. For one, look at the characters: yes, many are rude, greedy, or passive. However, one can see the regret, the desire for something more, the envy, and the unappreciated sacrifices that are within these characters' traits. Woody, the father, goes on his trip



Above: Woody and Kate Grant (Bruce Dern and June Squibb) talk in a Nebraska café.

Right: Woody and son David Grant (Will Forte) visit the old family farm house, which has long been abandoned. *Nebraska* features a Golden Globe nominated cast, with Bruce Dern for Best Actor and June Squibb for Best Supporting Actress.



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in order to leave something behind for his kids. He wants something to live for, something to pass down, and something by which to be remembered. Are these not ideas that are apparent in corners of the United States, not just the Midwest?

Universal truths are portrayed through art; how they are portrayed are, in this case, up to the director. The film is black and white, bleak, and contains many wide shots of the vacuous

plains. One can make a connection between these aesthetics and the situations of the characters. Life can be hopeless, especially without a goal or purpose. The townspeople latch onto Woody's persistence, and his sons realize how much Woody's journey means to him. The relationship between Woody and his son provides some fulfillment for the son, though if it does the same for Woody, we'll never know.

Nebraska is an excellent film, and is recommended. It's fine if you take it as a quirky comedy about a father and son, but there's substance to this, as there is with all of Alexander Payne's films. It's a simple narrative, but this plays to the films advantage; it doesn't need experimentation or tricks. *Nebraska* is as good as (maybe better than) the film that beat it out at the Golden Globes.

Editor's Note

Film award season is here, and though I like reading about the Los Angeles Film Critics Awards and watching the Academy Awards, I always take the awards with a grain of salt.

For one, it is weird trying to comparatively analyze the merits of a movie; that is, the awards try to see which movie is better than the next. Some of the goals of art are for the author to express himself and for the audience to discover a truth. While I agree that there are good films and there are bad films (the *Wolf of Wall Street* is obviously better than *Las Vegas*), trying to compare a group of spectacular films to see which is best is somewhat odd and useless. Which is best: *Nebraska*, *Inside Llewyn Davis*, or *Her*? Does it even matter?

All of the contenders for the major awards are valuable and worth seeing. I see people putting so much weight on the opinions of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences that they ignore other nominees and other films not nominated. *Frances Ha*, one of my favorite films of 2013, received one Golden Globe nomination, but little fanfare came from the mainstream award shows. The value and artistic achievement of a film does not rest on the choices a few critics make, so I implore you, if you like movies, to seek out a variety of films, especially ones that you won't see on TV in January and February. There's a giant world of film outside of Hollywood's insular group, so if you do some exploring, I guarantee you'll find something amazing.

Hunter Koch

Uglies Offers Suspenseful Story And Extremely Powerful Message

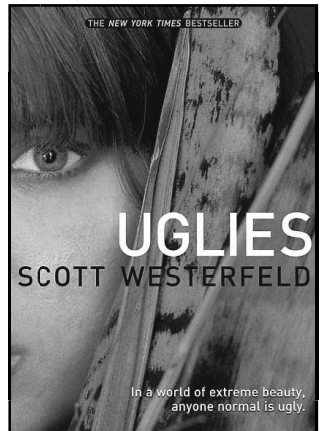


BY
**MORGAN
TESSIER**

In the novel *Uglies* Scott Westfield captures an intriguing journey of realization through the protagonist Tally Youngblood. In the futuristic science fiction setting of this book when a person reaches the age of 16 they undergo comprehensive cosmetic surgery to change them into a "pretty" and set them in their place in society.

Tally's days of being an ugly are numbered when she curiously encounters new people who have escaped and remain "ugly." Tally's new friends show her the world through their eyes. Tally begins to realize that the surgeries affect not only ones look but also their personality.

Sometimes individualistic free will is more important than strict government regulation. The distasteful affects of war and



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government conspiracies also play underlying roles in this book. This story may cause one to question the future of society.

Uglies is part of a trilogy. After reading the first, readers will definitely want to find out more in *Pretties*, *Specials*, and *Extras*.

This book compels readers to go against the grain and follow their individuality. I would recommend this suspenseful story to anyone who likes futuristic science fiction books.

Mechanical Bull Offers Listeners A Wild Ride



BY
**DAVID
ALLEN**

Mechanical Bull by Kings of Leon is a forty-five minute whirlwind of different musical genres.

The album ranges from the usual Kings of Leon guitar riffs to 80s college rock to even the funky bass lines on the track "Family Tree."

The album's title completely fits the atmosphere of the album. It's a revolving bull in a Tennessee bar, going up and down (melodic guitars and beats) in crazy ways, with a thirty-two year old man moaning (Caleb Followill's single style) while riding the machine.

Mechanical Bull has a great up-beat tempo even when the songs are slow like in the track "Beautiful War." The song is about having a good old love session, the bass guitar and the bass drums make a rhythm that sounds like a fast heart beat going through the "first kiss" phase of a relationship. The beat gets progressively louder coming to the end of the song.

The leading single off the album is "Supersoaker." Out of all the songs on the album, this would be the best to publicize. "Supersoaker" wraps the whole album together in warm musical blanket. The track features the 80s synthesizers and reverb that is predominant throughout the album.

Overall *Mechanical Bull* is a great one. It was number two on America's *Billboard 200*, and was number one in



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