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THE NEW WORLD (2007)

Published by [David Carter](#) on 2010/2/25 (27 reads)

Directed by Etienne Dhaene
Review by David Carter



Released by Casque d'Or Films
Running Time: 92 minutes
Rating: Not Rated
Color format: Color
Audio/Subtitles: 2.0 Stereo French/English Subtitles
Region Code: 1, NTSC
Aspect Ratio: Fullscreen
16:9 Enhanced: No
Special Features: None
Trailer Online: [Yes](#)



Short Version: Tender, realistic dramedy

We here at FilmFanaddict typically deal with cinema that is somewhat outside of the mainstream. A quick perusal of our reviews will show you that a good chunk of the films we look at contain ninjas, zombies, vampires, sex fiends, mass murders and occasionally all of the above. We don't limit ourselves by any means, however, and we're also happy to cover the remainder of the films that typically get left out of mainstream coverage. A perfect example of that is a film like THE NEW WORLD. It is a French comedy/drama that deals with the trials and tribulations of a lesbian couple attempting to have a child. THE NEW WORLD is a great film that doesn't fit neatly within confines of Hollywood cinema or the types of foreign films that receive attention in the US, so it is more than welcome here at FilmFanaddict.

School counselor Lucie has a bit of bad luck the morning of her fifth anniversary with Marion. She gets kicked in the head during a friendly kickboxing match and finds herself unconscious for a few minutes. After regaining consciousness, she's overcome with a desire to have a child for the first time in her life. She wastes no time informing Marion of her newfound fondness for motherhood and Marion reluctantly agrees to the plan, albeit only to stop the nagging. France's adoption process is long and arduous for heterosexual couples and even more so for homosexual ones – only one of the women would be allowed to adopt the child, giving the other no rights at all. Artificial insemination is too expensive for them, so the ladies set out to find a sperm donor on their own.



They first enlist one of Lucie's college friends but he backs out unexpectedly when his partner protests. They fare no better by putting an ad in the paper and their friends aren't able to track down a man for them either. Fortune smiles on them when their Canadian friend Hugo visits France and agrees to be the donor without hesitation. Nine months later, Lucie and Marion are happily raising their son, Enzo, when Hugo moves to France and wants to be a larger part of his son's life, straining Lucie and Marion's relationship.

THE NEW WORLD deals with some heavy issues – adoption, discrimination against homosexuals – but keeps things lighthearted for the most part. The film and our heroines both take things in stride and with a smile and viewers will find it easy to connect with them. There is a lot of sitcom-style comedy in the film and at times it felt almost episodic, as problems for the couple would be brought up and resolved only to have another issue arise immediately thereafter. This is a double-edged sword for the film. On the one hand, it does keep things interesting since I certainly can't accuse THE NEW WORLD of belaboring any points or drawing out any conflicts for too long. It works against the film in the sense that it takes the audience on an emotional rollercoaster, never giving them any time to enjoy a resolution before another problem pops up.

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Another concept that works for and against the film is its depiction of Lucie and Marion's relationship. THE NEW WORLD should be commended for the sensitive and non-exploitative portrayal of a lesbian relationship that it contains. Lucie and Marion's relationship feels very authentic and natural and its matter-of-fact depiction ensures that homosexuality is never made the butt of any of the film's humor. On the other hand, one could make the argument that THE NEW WORLD is too cautious in its dealings with homosexuality, particularly in regards to the adoption/child raising issue. The film doesn't take a strong enough stance against the multiple homophobic characters, allowing all of them to be redeemed in some way, and doesn't provide ample explanation as to why Lucie remains in the closet for the majority of the film. I wanted the film to push a little bit farther on those issues but instead it simply fell back into comedy.

This is the first DVD from Casque D'Or that I've reviewed and I was pleased with the presentation of the film but the disc itself is barebones. THE NEW WORLD is an enjoyable film with several moments that are touching and funny. It has been a hit at several American LGBT film festivals and I think that most viewers will have a good time with it.



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