

Holiday Movies Like a Box of Chocolates

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A Review by
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There are two films out this holiday season that you might want to catch: “It’s Complicated,” and “Sherlock Holmes.” These two are fun to watch, no doubt, but look at them like empty calories for the brain—mind candy if you will. They are simply a means by which you can escape your everyday blahs, bills from the gift shopping, or troubles in general (or your family if they’re staying just a bit longer for the holidays than you wanted).

With the cast that’s in “It’s Complicated,” how can you miss? Alec Baldwin is in the role he is destined to play (over and over if need be, it hasn’t gotten old yet), and Meryl Streep is her fabulous self. But it is John Krasinski (of U.S. television’s “Office” fame) who steals the show and many scenes with his “good guy” sense of comedy. In fact, if it’s a scene where you are laughing out loud, it is Krasinski who is either at the center or adding the embellishment that makes the whole scene work. True, this film panders to middle-aged fantasies too numerous to mention, but it delivers on big laughs.

Sherlock Holmes is equally as entertaining, but don’t look to feel enriched or enlightened for a long time afterward. Elaborate sets, very good performances (again, how can you miss?), and a somewhat interesting style give this film a “likable” quality. And in keeping with the books? Well, yes and no. Certainly Hollywood has had its hand in Guy Ritchie’s retelling of this story, but not completely devoid of keeping with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s work. Sure, there may not have been such a steamy relationship between Holmes (played by Robert Downey, Jr.) and Irene Adler (played by Rachel McAdams), but there were guns, martial arts, and some of the other antics you see in the film. Still, it’s like watching a really good “Law and Order” with grand sets and sequences that are simply fun.

But as with all holiday indulgences, don’t take too much of this mind candy in—you might find yourself in a sugar stupor. Make sure to see an “Up in the Air,” or “Fantastic Mr. Fox,” or better still “Me and Orson Welles” to make sure there’s a balance.