



VIFF movie review: You can choose your friends ...



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Marrying the Family

Sunday, Oct. 2, 6 p.m., at Rio Theatre and Saturday, Oct. 8, 1:30 p.m., International Village 10, 1 p.m. | Tickets/Info: viff.org

Writer/actor Taylor Hill's new film Marrying the Family is a mockumentary in the spirit of Christopher Guest's WaBest In Show. Director Peter Bensonropes in a talented cast — Hill, Adam DiMarco, Julia Benson, Nicholas Carella, Alistair Abell, Peter Benson and Nicole Oliver — for this zany look at the events leading up to the the wedding of Dylan (Hill) and Corey (Adam DiMarco).

With just the appropriate amount of genuine West Coast flavour to be far close too many of us, Marrying the Family reminds viewers that you can choose your friends, but not your family.

Vancouver's Nicole Oliver plays Kathy, Dylan's domineering wedding planner mother who gets some great scenes. One of Vancouver's leading voice actors fresh off of voicing multiple characters in Sausage Party, Oliver has been busy in front of the camera lately instead of behind a microphone.

"As an actor, this film was a dream because Taylor put together an ensemble that can really work together instinctively," said Oliver. "It's like doing improv where the central tenet is you never say no and always say yes. There were times that we just kept going to the point we could all hardly keep from losing it on set."



This energy carries through in the film, providing equal parts easy laughter and awkward familiarity. The opening scene of wedding speeches is hilarious, setting the tone for what's to follow.

"Ironically, having a wedding is kind of like making a movie," said Oliver. "You go in with the best of intentions and things always go awry, but something comes out at the end that works out OK. The stress, the pleasure and the craziness of it all is something we can all relate to."

Oliver's militant organizer Kathy is wicked, but devoted and loving. She said that she modelled the character after her own mother. But if her mother reads this, she insists she didn't.



"I've been at enough weddings and we've all seen that woman who means well, thinks she knows everything and in the end just has to let her daughter grow and let her daughter go," said Oliver. "It was a blast."

Weird but loving siblings. Terminal hippie parents. Unfortunate hook-ups and more. *Marrying the Family* mines a lot of camp stereotypes, but Hill's snappy writing brings both giggles and cringing.

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