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## 'Dumb Money' Smartly Spotlights The Underdogs With A Burst Of Comedy

written by Toan Le • 10 months ago



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Retelling stories of recent events with an entertaining sense of humor can be tricky to pull off, but Craig Gillespie's "Dumb Money" proves that smart comedy can still exist within the walls of nonfiction.

Based on a sensational true story, the film follows Keith Gill, played by Paul Dano, a regular financial analyst who is in a happy marriage with his wife, Caroline, played by Shailene Woodley, and has a troublesome brother, Kevin, played by Pete Davidson, and his consequences after he puts his savings into buying GameStop stocks during the COVID-19 pandemic. Keith discusses his insane choice during his live stream, under the nickname Roaring Kitty, a persona he puts on when he gives investment advice, along with the reddit page "r/WallStreetBets."

As his story gains steam, many of his viewers decide to follow his lead and sink their savings into the stocks; this includes an overworked nurse named Jenny, played by America Ferrera, a broke GameStop retail employee named Marcus, played by Anthony Ramos and Harmony and Riri, two in-debt college students played by Talia Ryder and Myha'la Herrold, respectively.

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*"Dumb Money" amazingly portrays its underdogs as empathic human beings. Photo courtesy of Sony Pictures Releasing.*

Soon, as everyone pours in their investments with devotion and start to “hold the line,” GameStop’s stock price prospers to over hundreds of dollars, putting millions into the pockets of working-class citizens. The public and major news outlets start to notice the spike, including the ignorant millionaire and billionaire hedge funds, Gabe Plotkin, played by Seth Rogen, Steve Cohen, played by Vincent D’Onofrio and Ken Griffin, played by Nick Offerman. The newsworthy event gradually develops into an ultimate fight against Wall Street and the rigged stock market.



*The writers do not shy away from exposing the truth behind the rigged stock market. Photo courtesy of Sony Pictures Releasing.*

Following the success from his previous projects, which include “Pam and Tommy” and “I, Tonya,” Gillespie’s humorous approach to addressing any major event continues to be a stylistic success. His direction weaves in many details about the story that surely leaves an entertaining bite. From the portrayals of billionaire titans to earnest underdogs, Gillespie assures that the story of the common class is heroic, and the story of Wall Street’s head hedge fund managers is hilariously villainous.

The script is undoubtedly creative in its retelling of the events, providing so many moments that are intense and adrenaline-inducing as if the viewers are watching a football game, rooting for their favorite teams. Lauren Schuker Blum and Rebecca Angelo, the writers of the film, surely output such a strong, sharp script for the story to be more than

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just mere facts. They also include a side story that adds an emotional depth to the protagonist—an appreciative aspect in constructing characters’ developments and relationship dynamics.



*The audience can’t help but to root for the working class underdogs. Photo courtesy of Sony Pictures Releasing.*

Each story of the underdogs carefully tailors to the bigger picture of exposing the rigged system that is the stock market. Although, at some points, juggling multiple narratives can leave the story a bit unfocused, but nonetheless, it delivers some outstanding commentary about the struggles of working class during the pandemic. The writers do not shy away from illustrating these greedy head fudge CEOs with sophisticated hilarity, injecting a sense of justice into the viewers when the credit starts rolling.

Of course, the film would not have earned its outstanding reputation from the masses without its entertaining cast—a collective group of talented individuals that primarily has a background in comedy, especially Davidson, Rogen, Offerman, and Ferrera. The stellar ensemble brings so much energy and commitment to the roles, making the whole movie-going experience so refreshing and hopeful.

Everyone performs extremely well that there is a case to be made about each actor earning their respective recognition. However, as a leading man for the whole cast, Dano plays his role fantastically, maintaining a calm presence throughout the film, playing as if he is just a catalyst for other characters to shine. His portrayal of Keith is really subtle and disarming, from his fatherly mannerism to his quiet love for cats.



*Each story of the underdogs feels refreshing and empowered. Photo courtesy of Sony Pictures Releasing.*

Ultimately, the film is a joy to watch with many set pieces that leaves the audience in roaring laughter. The cast is exceptional in their own way, but the script and Gillespie’s execution are the stars of the show. “Dumb Money” really pushes the boundary of comedy in the biographical genre, proving that factual events can be just as entertaining and outrageous as fictions.

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