**A Pigeon Sat on a Branch Reflecting on Existence**

Hello, This is Jake Winters with WKNC with your weekly movie review. This week will be a review of a pigeon sat on a branch reflecting on existence. This film was directed by Roy Andersson, a Swedish film director. It was produced for the Venice Film Festival in 2014 and only recently released in the United States on the 3rd of June this year. This movie comes as the third installment in what Andersson calls the living trilogy. These three films are all connected in that they observe the obscure. They are considered absurdist comedy and rightfully so.

The film begins in museum. A man peruses the exhibits with some amount of interest while his disinterested wife waits for him to complete his ponderings. The only sound during this time is music. The music becomes important when it links this small scene to the next. A man is standing in front of a set dinner table staring absently toward it. He stands bored waiting for something but nothing comes. His wife is in the other room humming to the music as she does some chore. Which is in fact the same music that was playing inside of the museum. The man eventually reaches for a bottle of wine on the table and begins to open it with a corkscrew. The effort to pull the cork from the bottle strains the man’s body inducing a heart attack. Here the short story ends and the viewer is quickly moved to the next. This vignette is a part of three which come after the beginning museum scene and all three focus on death. One a man dies while on a cruise ship and the other a woman awaits her death in a hospital refusing to let go of a purse that she holds to her chest. These surreal situations are characteristic of the film. A series of short stories strung together by mostly random coincidences. Some major characters in some stories become a part of the background in others. Or the often spoken phrase I’m glad to hear that you are doing well is uttered across a telephone linking the stories together in a minor way.

The film is shot using only still camera angles. From when a shot begins to when it ends the camera is static. It is as tough the audience is looking through a window into the world of the story. Usually the shot is of a somewhat large area with many events happening at the same time. In all of this it is rather easy to miss subtleties placed into the background of the shot. In a scene where a man is on the telephone in the street two major characters from another story are sharing dinner in a restaurant that the audience can see into from the window. How background characters are used by this film is unique. When something odd or peculiar happens in a setting with extras they will often notice instead of just being a bystander to the plot. Their facial expressions allow the viewer to compare how a character reacts to the odd circumstances with their own reactions.

Color plays an important role in film and in Pigeon there was an obvious effort to make muted colors a constant throughout the stories. This subtle feature of film is not always used to its full potential. The boring appearance of the film contrasts the disturbing and bizarre scenes. This extra attention to detail is a part of what makes this film interesting to watch. The settings are often familiar to its full potential.The settings are often familiar yet they seem un real. The city seems too dull and the street is completely vacant while the man on the phone paces outside of the restaurant.

The film can be categorized as an absurdist or surreal comedy. And while the film can be hard to laugh at there is a comedic value to the situations. The film gets its name from arguably the oddest segment of the film. In what appears to be a home or school for the mentally disabled there is a talent show taking place. The scene begins as a girl is finishing her act and another is called to the stage to perform. The man directing the performances asks the girl what she has prepared and goes on to have a full length conversation with the girl on stage in front of the audience. She explains that she has memorized a poem and tells him the jist of the poem. It is about a pigeon wondering why it does not have any money. This is where the film takes its name from. It is one of the few stories that is hard to relate to any of the other stories throughout the film.

The tone set by the film can be descried as morose, morbid, and melancholy. The characters are almost always in unfortunate positions. It is hard to say what meanings are hidden within this film and I will leave my interpretation out of this view as to let you view it without any pre conceived notions.

I personally am not the biggest advocate for the film. I would day there are points when it drags on and on and seems as though it will never end. That being said I also feel that every person should watch this kind of film from time to time. It is far different from your average movie and I would even venture to say that this is not a movie but rather an art piece.

Thank you for listening to this week’s edition of the movie review. This is Jake Winters for WKNC have a good night.