



FEEL ALL THE FEELINGS: THE FILMS OF GRETA GERWIG

20th Century Women

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Directed by: Mike Mills

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a Modern People/Archer Gray production

Presented by: A24, Annapurna Pictures

Executive Producer: Chelsea Barnard

Co-producers: Jillian Longnecker, Geoffrey Linville

Associate Producer: Andrea Longacre-White

Unit Production Manager: Joel Henry

Production Supervisor: Ami Werges

Production Co-ordinator: Wednesday Standley

Production Accountant: Amy Smolev

Location Manager: Dan Cooley

Post-production Supervisor: Michael Urann

1st Assistant Director: Rod Smith

2nd Assistant Directors: John Nasraway, Nic Hiles, Dana Rummerfield

Additional 2nd Assistant Director: Mollie Stallman

Script Supervisor: Julia Schachter

Casting (LA/NY): Mark Bennett

Casting (Canada): Jackie Lind

Additional Casting: Cindy Estada, Lyle Dohl

Written by: Mike Mills

Creative Advisor: Katherine Nolfi

Director of Photography: Sean Porter

Aerial Cinematographer: Dwayne McClintock

Camera Operator: Jason Oldak

Digital Imaging Technician: Ernesto Joven

Key Grip: Cynthia Bystrak

Still Photographers: Merrick Morton, Gunther Campine

VFX Studio: A52

Special Effects Co-ordinator: Joe Pancake

Edited by: Leslie Jones

1st Assistant Editor: Jason Voss

Production Designer: Christopher Jones

Assistant Art Director: Courtney Fain

Set Decorator: Neil Wyzanowski

Property Master: Perry Pascual

Costume Designer: Jennifer Johnson

Assistant Costume Designer: Petra Larsen

Key Costumer: Brigitte Ferry

Set Costumer: Corinne Eckart

Make-up Department Head: Jorjee Douglass

Key Make-up Artist: Jacqueline Knowlton

Hair Department Head: Shandra Page-Edwards

Key Hair Stylist: Vanessa Price

Colourist: Mark Gethin

Colour by: MPC

Music: Roger Neill

Sound Designer: Frank Gaeta

Sound Mixer: Amanda Beggs

Re-recording Mixer: Rick Ash

Supervising Sound Editor: Frank Gaeta

Stunt Co-ordinator: Nash Edgerton

Assistant Stunt Co-ordinator: Brett Sheerin

Dolby Engineer: Jim Wright

Unit Publicist: Bebe Lerner

Transportation Co-ordinator: Tony Ruiz

Cast:

Annette Bening (*Dorothea Fields*)

Elle Fanning (*Julie*)

Greta Gerwig (*Abbie*)

Lucas Jade Zumann (*Jamie*)

Billy Crudup (*William*)

Alison Elliott (*Julie's mother*)

Thea Gill (*Abbie's mother*)

Vitaly A Lebeau (*young Jamie*)

Olivia Hone (*Julie's sister*)

Waleed Zuaiter (*Charlie*)

Curran Walters (*Matt*)

Darrell Britt-Gibson (*Julian*)

Alia Shawkat (*Trish*)

20th Century Women, Mike Mills's third dramatic feature, promises to be every bit as autobiographical as *Beginners* (2010), which confronted his mother's death and his father's subsequent decision to come out as gay. Mills's new film is a throwback to his teenage years in the late 1970s, when he was raised by his mother with the help of two older sisters.

Jamie (Lucas Jade Zumann), the boy in *20th Century Women*, is an only child, but his divorced single mother Dorothea (Annette Bening) asks two younger women, her twentysomething lodger Abbie and teenager Julie, to help him grow into a man. So, like *Thumbsucker* (2005), this has a fragile teenage boy at its heart, though as the title suggests, Jamie's personal development is not the film's sole focus. *20th Century Women* is mostly a portrait of Dorothea, a fascinating and elusive woman who carries values from her childhood in the Great Depression into her later life as a bohemian single mother in 70s California, but it's Julie and Abbie's story too. As a concept, *20th Century Women* risks becoming a sweeping study of generations of womanhood, but in practice it's far more generous than that – the characters are too singular to become types, and Dorothea herself actively resists analysis and categorisation.

Set in 1979, a year when, according to American politicians, both energy and confidence were at a crisis point, *20th Century Women* is poised self-consciously on the threshold of a new decade that will abate both the punk music that excites the younger protagonists and the hippie values that bring the generations together around a kitchen table laid with earthenware bowls of salad and tumblers of red wine. Reaganism, Aids and global capitalism are held just at bay in a summer of self-discovery, experimentation and feminist awareness-raising. It's a charmed and sometimes chemically enhanced time – the photography surrounds the characters in a sunny haze, and rainbow flares appear when their cars accelerate down the coastal highway. Photomontages inspired by Abbie's own autobiographical project punctuate the narrative, as do quotations and film clips. Dorothea lives in a house that was built in 1905 but is being remodelled, so it seems new, or at least under construction, again. Everywhere around her, time is in flux, and the film flashes forward to events outside its own timeframe – omniscient announcements that keep the future, including the consequences of her chain-smoking, close to hand.

Dorothea is manifestly a product of an earlier era: a wisecracking screwball maverick who loves *Casablanca* and poses as Humphrey Bogart. She wears bobbed hair and silk blouses that recall the fashions of her youth, as well as overalls summoning her frustrated dreams of becoming a pilot. But her Depression-era habits, from tracking stock prices to her independent thinking, suit her well in 70s California, where she wears Birkenstocks, says Jamie, 'because she is contemporary'. She demands, 'Show me this modern world!' and attempts to make sense of records by Black Flag, The Raincoats and Talking Heads. As she says of her own beloved car: she wasn't always old, she just got that way recently.

Bening plays Dorothea as wry, warm and determinedly unreadable. When Jamie recites a passage that seems to describe her (Zoe Moss's essay 'It Hurts to be Alive and Obsolete: the Ageing Woman') she lashes out – a

Nathalie Love (*Cindy*)
Cameron Protzman, Victoria Bruno
(*teens in therapy*)
John Billingsley (*Abbie's obgyn*)
Cameron Gellman (*Mark*)
Finnegan Bell (*Brian*)
Zoe Nanos (*Tanya*)
Lauren Foley (*Michelle*)
Gareth Williams (*fire chief*)
J. Francisco Rodriguez (*fireman*)
Zoe Worth (*Planned Parenthood worker*)
Finn Roberts (*Tim Drammer*)
Laura Wiggins (*Lynette Winters*)
Rick Gifford (*police officer*)
Paul Tighe (*Jamie's school principal*)
Matthew Foster (*Dorothea's bank manager*)
Kirk Bovill, Victoria Hoffman, Christina Andrea
Offley, Randy Ryan (*Dorothea's dinner guests*)
Diana Bostan, Toni Gaal, Tanya Young
(*William's women*)
Hans-Peter Thomas (*Abbie's NYC boyfriend*)
Kai Lennox (*reporter, Abbie's future husband*)
Paul Messinger (*Santa Barbara city official*)
Eric Wentz (*emergency room doctor*)
Samantha Gros, Britt Sanborn
(*emergency room nurses*)
Alexis Milan Turner, Catherine Zelinsky,
Boyce Buchanan, Kyle Olivia Green, Sam Marsh,
Antonia Marie Vivino, Sara Pelayo, Annabelle Lee
(*girl's choir*)
Avi Boyko, Tyler Leyva, Cameron Simon
(*Phlask – club band*)
Jesse Sanes, Sam Bosson, Ian Logan,
Patrick Pastor (*Snake Fang – house party band*)
Trent Bowman, Justin Rivera, Desmond Shepherd
(*ramp skaters*)
Joshua Burge, Daniel Dorr (*Abbie's friends*)
Christopher Carroll (*pharmacist*)
Hayden Gold (*Julie's Heshher friend*)
Alex Wexo (*Julie's stepdad*)
Pete Mason (*biplane pilot*)
Padraic Cassidy (*drafting office manager*)
Matty Cardarople (*bartender*)
Toni Christopher (*woman at bar*)
USA 2016©
118 mins

The screening on Fri 21 Jul will be presented with subtitles, including descriptions of non-dialogue

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liberating moment that warns the viewer away from simplistic interpretations of the film. Her fellow 20th-century women are enjoyably complex, and androgynous, too. As women's libber Abbie, Greta Gerwig has never been better: movingly, she grapples with life-changing health issues that isolate her from her art-school pals, while maintaining her commitment to Jamie. Elle Fanning's fragile, wise Julie is an expert mimic of men, who prioritises strength as the core virtue but reads Judy Blume between one-night stands. During the film, it's the women who become bolder, more sure of their identities, not Jamie, their failed project, driving around in a car spray-painted to reflect the musical tribes that bisect his peer group: are you Black Flag or an 'art fag'?

20th Century Women is a refreshingly rich and intelligent female-led drama. It's also a poignant character study that draws first-rate performances from its cast. If Mills intended to make a film about his own youth, the result is a story about the lives of women, the challenges of parenthood, the value of art and a recent past that now seems unreachable.

Pamela Hutchinson, *Sight and Sound*, March 2017