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# CODA

## Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

*CODA* (Children of Deaf Adults) despite being somewhat formulaic pushed all the buttons â?? strong writing, superb acting, and solid production design. Imagine being the only family member who can hear and speak! Basically, thatâ??s where our filmâ??s lead actress finds herself. Actress Emilia Jones portrays seventeen-year-old, Ruby Rossi, a Peppermint Patty, and semi-typical teen in that she goes to high school, has a teenage crush, and feels awkward socially in her hometown of Gloucester, Massachusetts.

Whatâ??s not typical is that she engages in a commercial fishing operation with her family before school, signs to communicate with and for her father (Tony Kotsur), mother (Marlee Matlin), and brother (Daniel Durant), haggles with the local fishmonger and sings with a voice most nightingales would be envious of. Despite, all of this, the Director and Writer of *CODA*, Sian Heder, manages to thread the needle as most of the time itâ??s wholly plausible that this person is living this life.

*CODA* so pleased audiences at the 2021 Sundance Film Festival, it walked away with more awards than any film in recent Sundance history. Most notably it took home both the Grand Jury Prize and the Audience Award for best drama. In addition, Apple TV splashed a record-smashing $25 million for the film rights. Until the last few years, no film had reached the $10 million mark. So donâ??t expect to see CODA out at any local film festivals.

At its most basic essence, CODA is heartwarming, endearing, and full of characters embodied by actors who truly understand the concept of emoting. In my opinion, next to Oscar-winner, Marlee Matlin (*Children of a Lesser God*), Mexican actor/writer/director/producer, Eugenio Derbez, stands out as he delivers more than one show-stealing moment with his dead-pan presence and energetic delivery. Emilia Jonesâ??s performance is exceptional as her character Rubiâ??s struggle is self-evident onscreen. Rubi is conflicted with going her own way or continuing to support her family. The issue comes to the forefront when she joins the schoolâ??s choir and finds herself attracted to her duet partner and her latent singing ability draws the attention of her tough-love choirmaster, portrayed by Derbez.

As the conflict mounts, Rubi learns to stand in her truth and Director Heder allows the audience to witness and experience the world from the deaf personâ??s perspective. But wait! Thereâ??s more. Heder illuminates the family in a subtle manner with the prime focus on Rubi. Despite their handicap of being deaf, they all engage in what is considered normal activities. Thereâ??s sibling rivalry, budding relationship angst, concerns about making a living and supporting a family. And, thereâ??s some hilarious comic relief in the parentsâ?? expressive love for one another.

Normally, Iâ??m not so drawn to a dramedy. Yet, *CODA,* while predictable at times, pivoted at critical moments creating a most compelling narrative with its expressive, heartfelt acting, its naturalistic, on-location filming, and its strong writing. Not sure when *CODA* will be available for public viewing. But, I can definitely say. *CODA* is worth the price of admission. Highly recommended!

While we wait for the filmâ??s release check out the Meet the Artist: Sian Heder on Coda video. Youâ??ll be glad you did!

**Category**

1. #Sundance
2. Feature Film
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**Tags**

1. CODA
2. Sian Heder

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