

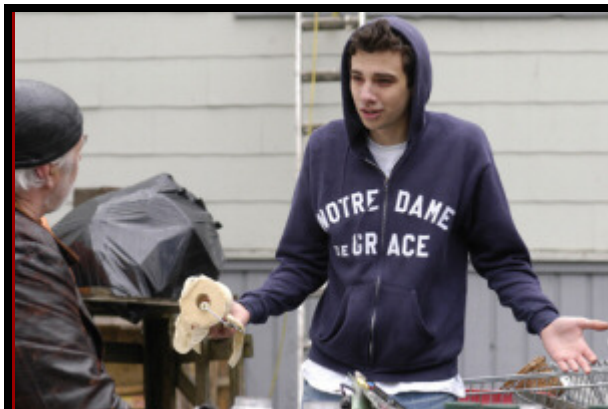
NINE OUT OF TEN STARS!!

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Hard Times, Past and Present *Fetching Cody* is More Than a Time Travel Tale

When writer/director **David Ray** wanted to tell a story set in the rough Downtown Eastside district of Vancouver, he didn't shy away from it. Not only is his story set there, he also shot it on location. But the tale isn't a bleak documentary about urban crime. *Fetching Cody* is a bittersweet time travel fantasy that shows beauty even in the most desperate of places.



Art (Jay Baruchel, right) seeks advice from his mentor, the homeless sage Harvey (Jim Byrnes). (Cheap and Dirty Productions Inc., 2005)

Directed by: David Ray

Written by: David Ray

Starring: Jay Baruchel, Sarah Lind, Jim Byrnes, Lucas Blaney, and Neil Denis

Rated **NR**

Running time: 87 min.

FilmGuru's Rating : 9 out of 10.

Far from a tale of privileged youth, *Fetching Cody* is story of young kids on the street in a near hopeless situation. Art and Cody (**Jay Baruchel** and **Sarah Lind**) are two young kids in love. From the beginning of the film, as they ride a bike and chase a bright red balloon, they seem indistinguishable from any young lovers. Drugs and prostitution show, however, the desperate lives that they lead.

When Cody dies of what appears to be an accidental overdose, Art turns to his friend and mentor, Harvey (**Jim Byrnes**). Harvey is a homeless eccentric who collects junk. He seems to be a bit crazy, and "remembers things other people don't

remember," as Art kindly puts it. While staying in the abandoned warehouse, Art accidentally discovers Harvey's so-called time machine. Soon he has a plan for changing Cody's past and preventing her tragic future.

Like every time travel story, *Fetching Cody* has its own set of rules. To my surprise, however, the story is relatively free of plot holes and sticks to its own metaphysics. When Art changes something in the past, it doesn't always change the future. As Harvey tells him, time is a mighty river and it takes a lot to make it change. So Art keeps going back, looking for the one thing that will save Cody.

The principle cast of *Fetching Cody* deserve high marks for making a time travel story so believable. Unlike most sci-fi epics, this story is character based. So it is essential the actors make us believe in them. With outstanding performances by Baruchel, Lind, and Byrnes, the film is both compelling and heartbreaking.

Shooting the film on location in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside presented certain challenges for the director, but the intent was not to show a bleak world but one of beauty in the most unlikely of places.

In an e-mail with the director, Ray said that he was inspired by the 1950 film *Harvey*, whose Elwood P. Dowd "wrestled with reality for 35 years and... finally won out over it." The character of Harvey in *Fetching Cody* was named after the famous invisible rabbit.

With a talented cast, high production values, and a tight, well-written script, *Fetching Cody* sets a high bar for independent features. Ray's first feature film is a great promise of work to come.
