



**Official Oaxaca FilmFest Endorsement Package
Confidential**

STEVE AND OLIVIA
VICKI CARGILL

Dear Vicki, Oaxaca FilmFest would like to thank you for entrusting us with your work and we are honored to present you with this review.

It is important to bring to your attention that this review does not constitute a critic of your work, but is aiming to offer you an objective commentary that can help enhance your artistic abilities.

Following the review of your project, here are some points that deserve attention:

- ⑩ Steve Diamond is an award winning Broadway composer who's going through a rough patch: his father has just passed away. Tomas, his musical and life partner leaves him for another man and also has plans to sell their Manhattan penthouse and to make matters worse, Steve's last attempt at Broadway glory disastrously backfired. On the other side of the pond, Olivia Lockwood is an oboe player at the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, her husband, Sir Simon Lockwood the orchestra's conductor has left her for the Nanette, the second oboe player and is making her life hell as he wants to evict her of their home and put the house on the market. Olivia's daughter, Judith is a musical prodigy who just got accepted for an audition to enter Julliard, but she finds herself under immense pressure to live up to her father's reputation as a classical music performer, while her friend Kelly encourages her to pursue her true passion: Jazz. And how does this two parallel stories connect? Well, turns out Steve just found out that he has a twin sister, and that twin sister happens to be Olivia. Steve travels all the way to England to meet his twin sister, and they begin to connect forming quite a unique family.
- ⑩ While Steve and Olivia have never met in their lives and are separated by an ocean's distance, they still have much in common: for instance, music is in their blood as they are both the offspring of teenage Jazz musicians, they themselves are proficient in music with varying degrees of success. They also share unbelievably bad luck in love, as their respective exes are manipulative and abusive narcissists who try to take their homes away from them and destroy their professional careers. The twins are linked by these life-shattering events, but once they meet, they just click, becoming fast friends as if they've had always been together. Steve is written as a Gay man who is successful and likable and yet he's being too hard on himself, believing that his success had only been possible thanks to his professional (and sentimental) relationship with Thomas. He's fantastically upbeat when he's around Olivia and her daughter Judith, but at first he's not entirely sold on what "family" means. Olivia is not handling her recent divorce well, but the arrival of Steve gives her the friend she so sorely needed. However, family goes beyond simply being "friends" and getting wasted and smoking joints while hitting the town and relishing into their respective post-break-up high. Becoming family means supporting each other, and particularly for Steve it is a little bit hard to realize that he has a sister and a niece now. Steve treats his reunion as an R & R vacation away from failure, as he stands immobile while Olivia's ex-husband keeps bullying her and puts her through unfair emotional humiliation after another. Steve's arc is all about realizing that Olivia is not some drunk buddy he can drown his sorrows with, but that she's her blood, her family and that he has found in Olivia and Judith the love he believes that has always been denied to him. As for Olivia, while her brother's presence represents finding a kindred spirit among such terrible bad luck, she has to stand-up to Simon for both her daughter and herself, Olivia had never allowed herself to truly embrace Judith's talents as a Jazz singer rather than a classical music performer. As for Judith, she's the typical smart-ass teenager with big dreams, and the talent to back them-up. Her friend Kelly is her self-appointed manager and they are so tight together that sometimes we forget they are not blood sister, and yet this is another form of family, sisterhood through a bond that is thicker than blood. STEVE AND OLIVIA, more than being about "family" is about what is like to have a brother or a sister who is there for you at the worst moment in your life, someone to have your back whether that person is your blood twin or your would-be manager.
- ⑩ On page STEVE AND OLIVIA is a "twins separated at birth reunite and hilarity ensues" tale, but this description does absolutely no justice to how immensely fun and agile this script is. The dialogue is a blast to read, it's not artificially witty or clever, and it's truly humorous without calling attention to itself. When you read the script you catch yourself laughing and realizing that you've had this silly grin as pages fly by, and that you have been totally caught by the reunited twins. There's some amazing humor in the script ("Bleached Roots" is the new "springtime for Hitler") but there's also a big heart here. The script is set in England for most of the runtime, and it reminds us of Working Title productions like ABOUT A BOY, it's definitely a feel-good film, but it's not saccharine, it's actually cool without being forcibly edgy. The key lies in the characters: Steve is not a broad gay caricature, he reads like the coolest guy in the room always, like the kind of role that Hugh Grant used to play (again, ABOUT A BOY comes to mind) and Olivia could be a Kate Winslet type, a bit of a mess but, slowly freeing herself from being under Simon's thumb. Judith and Kelly's relationship is also the other backbone of the script. Judith may be the typical smart-ass teenager, but she's also her own character, taking refuge in her music and being frustrated (much like her mother is) by her father's disapproval of her true musical inclinations. Kelly on the other hand is not a jealous friend, but rather is the only person (so far) that is in awe at Judith's musical talents and looks to send her best friend to the stratosphere, which is what actually sets in motion the events of this story. As for Simon and Thomas, they are equally manipulative, arrogant and full of themselves, and it gives us immense pleasure to see them get owned at some point. Overall, this is a fantastic good time, with enough heart, obstacles and fully fleshed characters that we get attached to. This script will make for a very entertaining motion picture once it gets filmed.

These various elements constitute the strength of this project. Under no circumstances would I change any of these.

Nonetheless, there are a few points that need to be addressed, that possibly should have been handled differently.

- ⑩ There's definitely a few grim n' gritty moments that are a bit too harsh tonally. Like Judith's audition at the seedy club and Olivia's story of how her first love died. They can be a bit jarring, even if the purpose of these plots is to create conflict and better flesh-out the characters.
- ⑩ Subsequently there's definitely a few moments that we could use more of: Bleached Roots sounds horrendously hilarious. Although more moments like this could throw the film into "Adam McKay" territory.

If I had one quote that would summarize the project, it would be this:

When reading STEVE AND OLIVIA you will find yourself laughing and constantly grinning as this story of siblings reunited will charm you and move you and ask "when can I see the movie?"

I want to personally thank you again.

I hope this was helpful.

If you would like us to post this particular quote on IMDB, please contact me directly and I will be happy to do so.

Saludos!

Enrrico Wood Lagonigro.

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