

“Cars 3”

By Helen Lutz

Almost every home, place of business and even lady’s purse has a mirror. Every day we check to see just how bad our bad hair day really is and whether or not we will be busted by the fashion police for mismatched shoes. As my mother aged she mentioned that she hated mirrors. She explained that even though she still felt like a girl of 20, seeing her reflection in a mirror reminded her that age 60 plus dramatically changed her appearance. It’s funny how we remember the little things as we age; I now fully understand my mother’s thoughts which leads me to talk about the story line behind the new “Cars 3” animation.



Pixar brought cars to life in the first “Cars” installment with Lightning McQueen as a fast, red, sure of himself race car – a champion. We’ll skip any mention of “Cars 2” and move right into “Cars 3” now racing onto theater screens everywhere. Owen Wilson again voices racer Lightning McQueen as he stays atop the racing world. However, the future waits for no one as it continually races ahead. We’ve seen the advent of home video; but Betamax and VHS have been left behind. Television has grown from a little black and white picture created by glowing tubes with three stations only broadcasting part of the day to the now over-sized, thin as a whistle super smart TVs which do just about everything but pop your popcorn. I won’t even start with the advances made in the field of computers, clothing, etc.; let’s just appreciate that we no longer have to punch out the IBM cards to run a program or spend all day Sunday ironing our clothes for the week.

In “Cars 3” Lightning McQueen meets the future as a new generation of cars enters the racing world. Hot, fast newcomer Jackson Storm (Armie Hammer) blows by Lightning like he was standing still making his way to the top of the racing world. He sincerely tells Mr. McQueen that he has followed his career and admired him ever since he was just a little kid...

As the years spin by choices must be made and Lightning must make his. Is retirement an option while he becomes the voice of a brand or does he look deep beneath his hood seeking a way to extend his career? He figures he can still come out on top and is challenged to prove it by his new billionaire sponsor Sterling (Nathan Fillion). Win and continue racing, lose and become a brand. Lightning is assigned a new high tech trainer Cruz Ramirez (Cristela Alonzo) who tries to whip him into shape, but quickly learns how difficult it is to teach an old dog new tricks. While watching Lightning’s crash of a racing simulator is one of the movie’s highlights, Cruz also finds out that some of the old ways can still be very valuable; especially when thrown into a wild demolition derby with the flaming, horned school bus Miss Fritter (Lea DeLaria) setting her sights on the destruction of Lightning and Cruz.

Beautifully done, the animation and color in “Cars 3” holds our attention and it is fun to see a girl car character finally getting to lead the way, but the story line and lessons learned will be better appreciated by the young at heart as opposed to the young. On a scale of one to four Hart Beats ... I give “Cars 3” TWO 1/2; my husband thinks it’s worth THREE. Either way, we can’t help but love Mater...again, wait until the credits end.