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Art Appreciation

Disney Pixar's *Inside Out*

An Appreciation Piece

Disney Pixar Animation Studios released *Inside Out* on June 19, 2015, directed and written by Pete Docter. Ronnie del Carmen was also a lead director, and Meg LeFauve and Josh Cooley were both co-writers of the film as well. While there are of course hundreds of people involved in the making of the movie, Pete Docter seemed to be the main artist, or brain behind the work, as well as the Producer, Jonas Rivera. *Inside Out* is a children's animated film, following the same 3D animation style of all Pixar films, which is done using Pixar's own in-house CGI software called Presto.

The story of *Inside Out* follows an eleven year old girl named Riley, as she moves far away from her small town in Minnesota to a small new house in San Francisco with her mom and dad. Throughout the movie, the audience is introduced to five different, personified emotions that live in Riley's brain (Joy, Sadness, Anger, Fear, and Disgust), and how they all work together to keep Riley happy, as well as handle other functions of the brain, such as the storage of core memories, short term memories, and long term memories, to name a few. Adding childhood whimsy and creative metaphor, the writers use lovable characters to explore the complex topics such as the loss of friendship, growing up, and accepting change in a way where the children in the audience laugh and their parents tear up.

I chose this work because it is the only movie that can get me to tear up simply talking about it, and I think the concepts used are incredibly unique and creative, as well as deeply symbolic, resonating with everyone who has loved and lost in life. In the film, there are "core memories", memories which are key in creating a new "personality island", or a part of you that makes you, you. For Riley, she has Friendship Island, Honesty Island, Family Island, Hockey Island, and Goofball Island, which all make up

the core of who she is. When her core memories fall out of place in the film, and become lost, Joy and Sadness go on a quest to retrieve them. But, with all of her core memories gone, as well as Joy and Sadness, Riley feels lost and can only communicate with Anger, Disgust, and Fear. The film goes on to show how negative these actions are, from causing her to lose friendships, fight with her parents, lie and steal, and eventually lose all ability to feel any kind of emotion at all. While it is certainly important to see the movie to understand it in full, it is easy to see the heavy symbolism laced between colorful animation and entertaining characters, which explore the basics of the pain and confusion we feel as we grow up and find out that things are a little different and a little harder than the days we fell asleep on long car rides and our parents carried us up to bed.

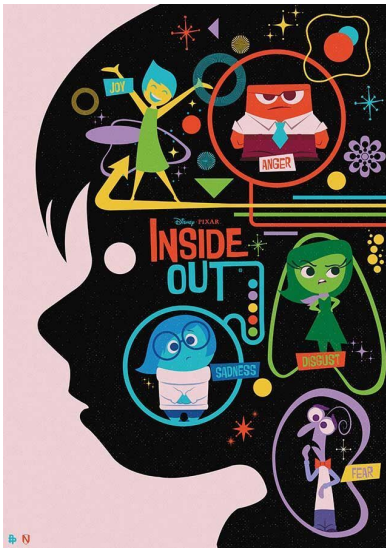
I personally lost my best friend of eight years when I was in high school, and the scenes from the movie that show the montages of happy friends paralleled with the destruction of "Friendship Island", crumbling into the pit of forgotten thoughts, panning back to Riley sitting alone with silent tears streaming down her face, brought back all the pain of wounds that were never given a chance to heal in my own experiences. The film aims to show that it is okay to show vulnerability, sadness, and grief, because it is then that the ones who love you will swarm you with support and love to get you through. This, to me, is one of the most important messages we can be giving not only to children, but to the adults, who often have no larger shoulders to cry on.

Pete Docter is a long-time director for Pixar Animation Studios, and has worked on many of their films in the past. As a child, he felt that he had a bit of social anxiety, and would find himself drawing and sketching as opposed to mingling with the crowd. While he eventually found his legs and was able to make friends and have a good social experience in high school and beyond, he later noticed that his daughter was beginning to experience the same social anxiety as he had, resurfacing his insecurities from years and years ago. While he understood what she was going through, he wanted so desperately to see what was going on "inside her head", thus giving birth to the idea for this story.

To speak critically, I cannot honestly conjure up negative things about it, and I have thought long about it. Perhaps, if anything, I would say that the closing credits were a little boring, as Disney films usually do something really cute or funny while the end credits are rolling, such as interviews, deleted scenes, or little animations interacting with the text. As far as the other aspects of the film, I thought that utilizing psychological jargon into creative visuals was astounding, such as having an actual train for “the train of thought” which runs throughout the brain, or the “mind workers” who jokingly send up memories of silly songs up to “headquarters” just to annoy the other emotions, offering up an explanation to how random songs that we can’t stand pop into our heads at random. All in all, this film is by far one of my favorite films I have seen, let alone my favorite Disney Pixar film.

Works Cited:

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