

# Rogue Cinema

We cover it all, because we just love film!

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## Fairview St. (2010) – By Cary Conley



James Winton was a small-time hood who has just finished serving four years in the pen for robbery. Before prison, he was a low-life, good-for-nothing drunk with a bad reputation. But prison has changed his life for the better, or so James hopes. He's sober, and together with his pretty young wife, he's ready to start his life anew. All he wants is a second chance to do things right. But his past is following him a bit too closely for his comfort.

First, he has an angry cop whose marriage is on the outs following him, just waiting to put James back behind bars. Then, his close friend—a man who was more of a father to him than his own father ever was—is murdered...and James

was the last person to have been seen with him. His old buddy Bobby also tracks him down and wants to pick up where they left off four years earlier. Bobby has a magnetic personality and James is getting drawn into the old life he so desperately wants to leave even as he fights against that draw. In short, everything is going wrong for James—he just can't seem to shake his past. But he does have a loving and supportive wife who wants very much to be a family with James and his father in their tiny house in a lower-middle class neighborhood on Fairview St.

As James' life continues to spiral downward, there is a sense of anxiety, of impending doom. Is James' and Natalie's marriage strong enough to survive this last downward spiral? Is James' father right that James is and always will be trouble? Is Bobby's negative influence too strong for James to resist? Will the cop with a chip on his shoulder finally manage to pin the murder on James and send him back to prison? All of these questions will be answered in a final showdown that pits friend against friend, family members against each other, and two mortal enemies ready to break the law to get their way....but you have to watch the film to see how it all goes down.

Fairview St. is the first film from Rebel Pictures' Michael McCallum, but you would never know because the film is so mature it seems like a production from a seasoned Hollywood veteran. It is a superb human drama that examines how one man fights to be morally balanced even though he is surrounded by negative influences.

Michael McCallum writes, directs, and stars as James Winton in this gritty drama. He proves he is a solid and powerful actor. James' wife is played by Elizabeth G. Moore who does a terrific job of portraying the sad and lonely but hopeful Natalie. Natalie's polar opposite is James' old friend Bobby (Jerrod Root). Root does a fantastic job of delivering his character's loud-mouthed, brash, over-the-top personage, perfectly balancing Moore's quiet, understated role. William McCallum co-stars as James' father, also sad and lonely since the death of his wife, and more than a little suspicious of his son's intentions. He's been burned more than once and he is reluctant to open his heart again only to be disappointed again.

### Monthly

Yes (74%)

No (22%)

A little. (5%)

### Submit

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Jeff Bone plays the overzealous detective who has seen the streets chew up and spit out more than a few young men. He busted James the first time and has no faith that prison has changed him. Angry over the breakup of his marriage, he wants to exact revenge on all the punks he blames for helping to end his marriage. If the punks hadn't been working overtime, then neither would he, and maybe he would still have his family. He is chomping at the bit to put James away again. Shane Hagedorn plays the detective's partner, Ferguson. Although he's relatively new to the force, his vision isn't clouded by resentment and he knows his partner is looking to hang a crime on an innocent man. Hagedorn, seen previously in an hilarious comedic role in the movie Handlebar, shows he has excellent acting chops in this dramatic role. All the actors are very strong.

The cinematography by Anthony E. Griffin is superb as well. There are many very interesting shots and angles. I particularly enjoyed an intense discussion between James and Natalie that occurred next to a door-length mirror. We see the actors, but we also see them reflected in the mirror, perhaps commenting on the two different lives they have led, and foreshadowing the split that is to come.

McCallum proves again that he has excellent taste in music, as I enjoyed this soundtrack as much as the one for his second feature Handlebar. This time the songs reflect several different genres of music; although the songs are eclectic, they fit the scenes and the emotions of the characters very well.

But by far, the best part of the entire film is the climax. In a dramatic turn DiCaprio or Damon would be proud of, McCallum explodes with emotion. In one intense scene near the end, McCallum shows an incredible range of emotion, from sadness and anger to hatred and finally exasperation. He manages to push out a few tears and I suspect they were real. I also have to commend McCallum for having the balls to shoot an ending that is more than a little downbeat. This is not the typical "everything will work out" ending. It ends badly for some and the viewer is left suspecting that it will end badly for the others as well. It's a brave move for any writer or director, and it will definitely leave an impact on the viewer. I found the ending refreshing and satisfying, if a little depressing. But that's real life, isn't it? Not everything has a happy ending...except for every single film from every major studio in Hollywood.

I've seen many, many independent films as a Rogue Reviewer. While many of those films have been excellent, few are nearly flawless. Fairview St. falls into that rare category of being "nearly flawless." Do yourself a favor and drop by Rebel Pictures ([www.rebelpictures.net](http://www.rebelpictures.net)) and get a copy of Fairview St.

By Duane • Film Reviews •

232 views

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