

## Emotional Drama, Sidesplitting Comedy

Contributed by Gregory Brand Jr. - Black College Wire  
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"Why Did I Get Married?" hits mark

The king of "chitlin' circuit" theater and moderately entertaining motion pictures has hit a new and interesting high with the release of his newest film based on one of his hit stage plays, "Why Did I Get Married."

Featuring an all-star cast, "Tyler Perry's Why Did I Get Married?" takes an interesting and surprisingly realistic approach to how educated and career oriented African Americans look at love and living.

Throughout the film, several situations that are rarely, if ever faced on screen, are addressed in explicit detail here, and it makes for a genuinely entertaining and personal experience.

The characters are distinctly human and even though the success level achieved by them is exceptional, the story is still believable and ultimately relatable.

The film opens as Patricia (Janet Jackson), a psychologist and professor is lecturing to a class about her book "Why Did I Get Married?" She talks to the class about what the book aimed to accomplish and what inspired her to write it. She then goes on to say that she was inspired to write the book by the annual vacation that she and her friends take along with the discussions that inevitably occur.

After the necessary introductions to the film's key characters are made, she and her husband Gavin (Malik Yoba), are off to attend this year's vacation in the mountains of Colorado.

As the friends and couples, Terry (Tyler Perry) and Diane (Sharon Leal), Marcus (Michael Jai White) and Angela (Tasha Smith) and Mike (Richard T. Jones) and Sheila (Jill Scott) all make their way to Colorado, each couple is hit with their own personal set of problems. The most glaring issue manifests itself in the marriage of Mike and Sheila when Mike brings another extremely attractive female who is said to be a friend of Sheila's on the couples-only vacation. Mike also leaves Sheila to drive from St. Louis to Colorado as he flies with the "friend."

The problem hits the roof when it is revealed that Sheila's verbally abusive husband, Mike is cheating with the so-called friend.

As the characters' stories play out, the viewer gets an opportunity to see exactly how groups of friends really work when it comes to love, relationships and real friendships.

While the plot weaves between the characters' lives, the story never goes for cheap laughs. Even though there are distinctively hood characters in the film, this is not a ghetto film. Not even a reference, let alone a comedy sketch from crappy films like Soul Plane make an appearance, and that works wonderfully.

Brilliant performances are delivered throughout. The character development is one of the most captivating elements of the film. The couples have real personalities and the film shows them. Smith as the over-the-top loudmouth Angela

portrays the intelligent ghetto girl that only a black college can cultivate to perfection, while Jones does a low-down-dirty-rotten husband with smart comedic flare. Jackson, Scott, Leal and even Perry deliver strong and memorable performances.

In a nutshell, "Why Did I Get Married?" does a good job of balancing emotional content with sidesplitting comedy, all on top of a brilliant cast.

For fans of a good movie with strong production value, this film hits its mark. The movie is beautifully shot and the locations are gorgeous.

Bottom line: "Why Did I Get Married?" is a deeply interesting film that hits home with audiences of all kinds and for once doesn't have to make African Americans look like fools to make them laugh, and cry. Grade: A.

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