

## Foreign Language Film Festival 2010-2011

### *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*

#### About the movie

DIRECTOR	Woody Allen
YEAR / COUNTRY	2008 / USA
GENRE	Comedy, drama
ACTORS	Rebecca Hall, Scarlett Johansson, Javier Bardem, Penélope Cruz



#### PLOT

The film is a fairy tale where love doesn't come true, and everyone doesn't live happily ever after. Vicky (Rebecca Hall) and Cristina (Scarlett Johansson) visit Barcelona for the summer, staying with Vicky's distant relative and her husband. Vicky is practical and traditional in her approach to love and commitment. She is engaged to the reliable Doug (Chris Messina), but she isn't really in love with him. She is in Barcelona getting her masters in "Catalan identity". Cristina, however, is a nonconformist and spontaneous, but she is unsure of what she wants from life or love; this makes her much more open to adventurous relationships than Vicky and much less willing to settle for a man she doesn't love. When they both meet the artist Juan Antonio Gonzalo (Javier Bardem), Cristina is immediately open to having a relationship with him whereas Vicky finds him a macho opportunist. Both of them fall in love with him during the film. Juan Antonio is not, however, the superficial Latin lover they had both expected. Like them he doesn't have absolute control of his life. He has remained in contact with his ex-wife María Elena (Penélope Cruz), and is, indeed, in some way still in love with her. He is a much more caring and complex person than both had originally thought. The film explores what love means to people but ends short of true love. The settings of Barcelona and Oviedo greatly enhanced by the beauty of the film seem to make romance more possible.

#### LANGUAGE

The English of the film is very direct and relatively easy to understand. The girls and all the other characters of the film are educated and this is reflected in their English. There is very little slang. The Spanish characters sometimes speak in Spanish.

#### GRAMMAR

Foreigners frequently get prepositions wrong in English. Take for the example the difference between 'at the end' and 'in the end'

*At the end of the movie Vicky and Cristina return to New York.*

*In the end, the film explores what love means and how people fall in love.*

In the first example, "at" signals the literal end of something, in this case the movie. In the same way, 'at the end of the road, there is a light house,' tells us what we will find when we come to the end of the road. 'In the end,' on the other hand, means 'in conclusion' or signals that the writer is about to summarise what has gone before.

## VOCABULARY

To fall into place: to come together; the piece of the puzzle/mystery fell into place	Shell fish: clams, shrimp, oysters etc.
Nuts: crazy	To bury yourself in something: to become totally involved in something so that you don't have time for anything else and you can't think about anything else
To beat around the bush: to avoid talking about or doing what one should be talking about or doing	A huge blow out: a very big party
Grain of charm: a little bit of charm	To keep your food down: to be able to stop yourself from vomiting
A cookie cutter mold: a metal tool which determines the shape of cookies, a stereotypical character or appearance one	To hold your own: to be able to defend yourself
To be hurting: to be suffering	To drop off the face of the earth: to totally disappear
To blow it: to miss a chance	Crack pot: crazy
To be hard to please: to be difficult to satisfy	To manoeuvre her into the sack: to convince her to have sex with you or put her in a situation where she has sex with you
To settle for something: to accept something that is not exactly what you wanted ( <i>accontentarsi di qualcosa</i> )	To read into something: to interpret further than appearance, to give something a deeper meaning than it really has
To be stuck: to be caught in a position so that you cannot move ( <i>essere incastrato in qualche modo</i> )	Shrink: psychoanalyst
To hold your liquor: to be able to drink a lot of alcohol and not get sick or seem drunk	To lay something on someone: to tell someone something which you know will be heavy for them, to emotionally influence someone in a heavy way
Shaky: unstable	Tint: a shade/variation of a color
To withhold: not to show	Mormon wife: Mormon men were allowed to have more than one wife, so one wife of two or more wives.
Disapproving: not agreeing with someone or something and showing your disagreement	To dread: to hate
An ex-patriot: an American who lives outside of America	