

RIP John Hughes. We won't forget about you.



When I heard the news (on Twitter) that legendary writer and director John Hughes had died I immediately went on YouTube to watch clips and montages from the enormous amount of movies he is responsible for making.

I laughed as I watched them and I began to realize the impact his creative genius has had on my life from a young age – Breakfast Club, Sixteen Candles, Ferris Bueller's Day Off, Pretty in Pink- and on through adulthood – Planes, Trains and Automobiles, Mr. Mom, She's Having a Baby. Hughes' list of classic movies is as long as your brother's mullet in high school, and each is, if this is even possible, even more entertaining.

Starting with the perilous and often nauseating genre of teen movies, he was able to show us everything that was right about being a teenager. Everything that was fun, painful, weird, but ultimately good. Ultimately hopeful. His movies made us feel it was OK to be who we were because we saw a little bit of ourselves and our friends in his characters.

From The Breakfast Club:

Dear Mr. Vernon, we accept the fact that we had to sacrifice a whole Saturday in detention for whatever it was we did wrong, but we think you're crazy to make us write an essay telling you who we think we are. You see us as you want to see us ... In the simplest terms and the most convenient definitions. But what we found out is that each one of us is a brain, and an athlete, and a basket case, a princess, and a criminal. Does that answer your question?

Sincerely yours,

The Breakfast Club.

Hughes mastered the nearly impossible task of writing for teenagers without coming across like, "Hey, kids, look at me. I'm 'Cool' just like you." Like in high school when your mom said you should buy a dress because it was "funky." (OK, thanks Mom, but "funky?" Nice try.) He never resorted to frat house raunchiness or lewd pranks, but frankly portrayed the undeniable truth that teenagers think and talk about, and sometimes even have, sex.

His movies felt authentic. From the dialogue ("I'm not THAT pristine." "You mess with the bull you'll get the horns.") to the wardrobe (Judd Nelson's trench coat and gloves; Anthony Hall's yellow button-down shirt) to the music (Simple Minds, Kate Bush, Psychedelic Furs), it all felt real and spoke to us as teenagers.

In Hughes' movies that traipsed around the land of grown-ups, he continued to glint sweet little moments of life as he took on adult lives with the same honesty. Optimistic and funny, he had a knack for telling stories about people who were far from perfect, but find their way to happiness – usually in a "What I was looking for was right here in front of me the whole time" epiphany.

One of my favorite scenes ever, is from the movie "Planes, Trains and Automobiles." The tension, humor, and hostility in it makes it almost uncomfortable to watch. I love John Candy, and his portrayal of Del, the (secretly) widowed shower

curtain ring salesman is heartbreaking and inspiring all at the same time – not an easy feat to write.

(This video is from one of my YouTube Channels. I copied it and uploaded it last year a few times because it is one of my favorites, but Paramount keeps taking it down. Watch it while you can.)

Now, looking back on the spectrum of his work, I feel a surprising loss personally , but I also feel a great gratitude to have been the generation he shined his brilliant, hopeful light on.

We won't forget about you, John Hughes.

Other things out there written about John Hughes:

"We'll know when we get there" wrote "Sincerely, John Hughes."

Dan Taylor wrote this on his blog.

This is a quick montage of his movies: John Hughes "Teenage Wasteland."

Music critic Ben Wener about his impact on pop.