Troubles in long-distance love

**FILM PREVIEW**

**Like Crazy**

**WHEN**
Opens Friday, Nov. 18

**DIRECTED BY**
Drake Doremus and
New York Souther

**STARRING**
Anton Yelchin, Felicity Jones, and Jennifer Lawrence

**Katherine Soper**
ARTS & CULTURE STAFF

Love can be almost impossible to define — at once comforting, maddening, intoxicating and mysterious. The romantic drama Like Crazy examines the different sides of the constantly changing emotion, letting audiences peer into the dark and confusing lives of two lovers struggling with the challenges of long-distance relationship.

Like Crazy revolves around Anna (Felicity Jones), a British exchange student who falls for Jacob (Anton Yelchin), an aspiring designer, while they both attend school in Los Angeles. Anna and Jacob become hopelessly infatuated with each other. But when Anna's visa expires, she's forced to return to England. The distance between the two lovers begins to have adverse effects on their once intimate relationship.

and constant communication barriers eventually lead Jacob to seek companionship with Sam (Jennifer Lawrence), while Anna also looks for company elsewhere during their time apart.

While the film clings on to the idea of "true love," it also reveals all the troubles and demands associated with it. No matter how strong the connection is between Anna and Jacob, their distance from each other creates a sense of tension and uncertainty. Knowing how difficult it is to be completely faithful and devoted under such difficult circumstances.

"I think the (movie) is trying to be as honest as possible about what it's like to be in a long-distance relationship," Jones says. "It doesn't try to over-sentimentalize the characters or the story. It's trying to interrogate what it's like to be in a relationship rather than resorting to cliches."

Instead of materializing into the simplistic happy ending of typical film romance, Like Crazy creates a realistic emotional balance. The genuine performances stem from director Drake Doremus' decision to use improvisation rather than a script for the majority of the acting in the film. While Jones and Yelchin were both unfamiliar with the unorthodox performance approach, it ultimately gives the movie a deeper sense of sincerity.

"Preparation is vital for something like this because it was improvised," Jones says. "You have to make sure you have a very clear understanding of who the character is and their journey — it's partly makeup and hair, and then just finding the lines in the script: why the person is behaving the way they are.

"Neither one of us have ever done that before," Yelchin adds. "Immediately after the month of rehearsals, we just got to know each other so well and we all wanted to take a risk and make something very honest."

"This is a kind of different experience — it's very intimate, and you disappear into this magical cocoon of improvisation that you have so much freedom in."

With a genuine portrayal of the real difficulties of a relationship, Like Crazy lets viewers observe their own romantic connections through the movie's dramatic lens. The tension that Jacob and Anna share creates an in-depth examination of the complexities of love, illuminating a small corner of the perplexing emotional experience.

"We've been moved by how many people can actually relate to the story and how many stories they've heard," Yelchin says. "People can go away looking at their own lives and looking at their own sense of love."

**ALBUM REVIEW**

**Black Tide**

**Post Mortem**

**Ian Phillippchuk**
ARTS & CULTURE STAFF

When a band like Black Tide relies on guitar work as much as they do on Post Mortem, it's comforting that they're at least competent and energetic. You might describe them as frenetic and suffling with the relentless speed they hammer on their instruments, but the tight riffs and slower compositions ensure that when you do come up for air, you'll dive right back into Black Tide with gusto — just perhaps not this album.

Apparrently puberty is a bitch: now 16 years old, lead vocalist Gabriel Garcia's voice has changed considerably since Black Tide's last album. Still miles ahead of any number of contemporary singers with regards to his overall package, the changes have moved him from the screaming and growling rage into a nice melodic roar, but he proves he still has the harder chops on "Walking Dead Man."

With the change in vocals comes a change in music too, while "Ashes" and "That Plot" are plenty hard enough for causal metal fans, Post Mortem sees the band evolve their sound into more of an extremely heavy hard rock territory.

Lyrically, the entire album feels like teenagers complaining about their petty lives, and Garcia clearly needs another four years dealing with chin fuzz before his voice settles down into anything approaching metalcore. The album might still be enjoyable if you happen to be looking for a harder version of Incubus. The breathless drums and thrashing guitars would be more at home in a band like Pantera, and as a whole, Black Tide comes across as a little too young both in years and in sound to be playing anything as hard as that.

On "Take It Easy," Garcia wonders, "Where will we be five years from now? / What will this mean five years from now?" The answer is that five years from now, Black Tide will try to forget that Post Mortem ever existed. The pieces are there, and if the band can put them together and get over their teenage angst, there might just be a solid band developing from this disappointment.