

Season's 'Other' Dog Movie Gains Momentum

“Wendy and Lucy” wins over critics and earns praise for its dog star.

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Call it the season's other dog film. In a month that will surely be dominated by “Marley & Me,” “Wendy and Lucy,” about a down-and-out woman and her faithful dog, is quietly building serious critical acclaim. New York Magazine calls it “gorgeous and heartbreaking,” and the Los Angeles Times calls star Michelle Williams' performance “riveting.”

Williams stars as a down-and-out woman who travels from Indiana to Alaska with her dog Lucy in search of summer work. When Lucy disappears after Wendy is arrested for shoplifting dog food in Oregon, Wendy's already teetering existence spirals even more out of control.

Lucy is actually “Wendy and Lucy” writer/director Kelly Riechardt's dog. “She was no trouble at all to direct. She always did what she was told and got to the set on time,” Riechardt quipped to the audience while accepting Lucy's Palme Dog prize for best canine performance at the Cannes Film Festival.

Lucy has also won over critics on this side of the Atlantic. Variety singled out the dog in its review of the film: “Also deserving mention is Lucy herself, who has few equals in the world of canine thesping.”

“Wendy and Lucy” opens Dec. 10 in New York City and Dec. 12 in Los Angeles.