

Something Wild ★★★½

Year of Release: 1986

Review by Randy Parker

Country: USA

Verdict: See It

Mix together a pinch of *After Hours* and two dashes of *Into the Night* and what do you get? The answer: *Something Wild*, directed by Jonathan Demme and starring Melanie Griffith and Jeff Daniels. The comedy/thriller *Something Wild* contains elements from both of these films, as its basic premise concerns a conservative yuppie (Daniels) meeting a wild, mischievous, and mysterious misfit (Griffith) and being involuntarily drawn into a series of first humorous and later nightmarish escapades. Sound familiar?

Although *Something Wild* is indeed reminiscent of *After Hours* and *Into the Night*, the film is nonetheless extremely original and inventive. Demme deftly and subtly alters the tone of *Something Wild* as it progresses. The movie begins as a light-hearted and off-beat comedy and gradually

evolves into a full-blown thriller. Thanks to Demme's confident direction, both aspects of the film succeed; *Wild* has a quirky sense of humor and generates considerable suspense.

Daniels and Griffith are superb and also deserve a good deal of credit for the film's success. They flesh out their characters well, making them both authentic and sympathetic. By the end of *Something Wild*, we have a vested interest in their well-being. The supporting performances are strong as well. And as with any Demme film, the soundtrack is a treat.

Something Wild is superior to *Into the Night* and at least as good as *After Hours*, the two films that seem to have inspired it. The three movies, together, would make a great triple-bill.