

Carol – Review

An **adventurous**, talented filmmaker, **among** Todd Haynes' many successes are films like *Safe* (1995), *Far From Heaven* (2002) and *I'm Not There* (2007). *Carol* is perhaps his greatest **achievement** - indeed, the website Metacritic lists it as the best-reviewed film of 2015 - an adaptation of Patricia Highsmith's groundbreaking 1952 novel *The Price of Salt*, which deals with the **forbidden** love affair **between** two women of different classes at very different points in their lives.

These two women are shop attendant Therese Belivet, who **aspires** to be a photographer, and Carol Aird, a **socialite** and mother **trapped** in a marriage that is rapidly **disintegrating**. Played by Rooney Mara and Cate Blanchett respectively, they create a **disarming**, wholly believable bond



as **prospective**, tentative lovers, their **chemistry** lighting up the **screen** from their very first **encounter**, when Carol meets Therese as she searches for a Christmas present for her young daughter.

A decade ago Ang Lee's *Brokeback Mountain* portrayed the relationship between two gay men in an era **inhospitable** to homosexuality with huge success, and Haynes has done something similar here in terms of lesbian romance, though the two are certainly very different films. In his recreation of 1950s Manhattan, Haynes, director of photography Ed Lachman, set decorator Heather Loeffler and costume designer Sandy Powell have created a **sumptuous backdrop** for Therese and Carol's story. It is one of love and of longing, and it remains as utterly relevant today as it did when Highsmith published her novel - under a **pseudonym** - back in the 1950s. A marvellous picture.