

REVIEW

Jean of the Joneses is a darkly funny, later-than-usual coming-of-age tale



JEAN OF THE JONESES (2016). Courtesy of Search Engine Films.

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TITLE *Jean of the Joneses*
 WRITTEN BY Stella Meghie
 DIRECTED BY Stella Meghie
 STARRING Taylour Paige, Gloria Reuben, Sherri Shepherd
 GENRE Drama
 CLASSIFICATION 14A
 COUNTRY Canada/USA
 LANGUAGE English
 YEAR 2016

Director Stella Meghie said that when Taylour Paige auditioned for the starring role in *Jean of the Joneses*, she pirouetted into the room with a flamboyance that swiftly convinced the filmmaker she'd finally found her leading woman. Paige's penchant for flair and the unexpected makes the titular Jean, a floundering but talented ingenue of a writer, a curious and loveable character to behold in Meghie's feature debut. Surrounded by a Jamaican-American family of loud women – each quietly clasp her own secret – Jean tries to figure out just who the old man is who just dropped dead on her grandma's doorstep. Add an adorable, doe-eyed paramedic (Mamoudou Athie) to the mix and you've got yourself a genuine comic-mystery romcom. Filmed in Toronto and Brooklyn, this later-than-usual coming-of-age tale takes its cues from both Woody Allen's self-indulgent worlds and the literary panache of Zadie Smith, but remains original in its darkly funny perspective on the contemporary black experience and that universal feeling of having lived a third of your life but still being no closer to figuring it out.