

## Lola Versus (R)

By Connie Ogle

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Let's admit it: One of the things we dread most is change. Lola, the 29-year-old protagonist of Daryl Wein's new film, is no different from the rest of us. She admits right up front that she knows seismic shifts are inevitable but balks at the idea. "What if I don't want to change?" she asks.

But Lola has no choice in the matter, which is bad for her but great for us. Her pain and confusion and defiant bad behavior in the face of romantic upheaval are the sturdy comic bones of *Lola Versus*, an extremely smart, exquisitely funny film about finding yourself amid the clang and clutter of contemporary life.

Lola, played by the engaging Greta Gerwig ( *Damsels in Distress*, *Greenberg*), is blessed with a variety of good fortune. Most of us would be thrilled with even half her attributes. She's intelligent, working toward her PhD. She's attractive, with the sort of tousled blond hair that looks good even when she has just rolled out of bed. She's engaged to a handsome artist (Joel Kinnaman of *The Killing*, who cleans up nicely once he's out of the rain and those gray hoodies), and they live in a funky New York loft that no one you know could afford. She's the daughter of awesomely hip parents (Debra Winger and Bill Pullman, who are so delightful you wish this swiftly paced movie could spend more time with them; I would love to know what these two do left to their own devices). Perhaps most importantly, Lola also has two of the best and most attentive friends anyone could ask for (Hamish Linklater and Zoe Lister Jones, who co-wrote the script with director Wein and is absolutely hilarious in the movie).

But then her fiancé breaks up with her, and Lola, reeling, has to write a new script for her future.

One of the charms of this movie — and there are more than a few — is the script's willingness to let Lola make hideously thoughtless, selfish decisions in the wake of her heartbreak. She's no cutesy, cookie-cutter heroine who faces heartbreak bravely; she doesn't just accidentally hurt the people she loves. She makes whopping mistakes that lead her to wail, "I'm slutty, but I am a good person!"

*Lola Versus* is set in a realistic-looking Manhattan — one that looks fabulous and seedy at the same time — and its characters carry a slight hipster vibe, so you may fear it will activate your impatience with overprivileged artistic types who really have nothing to complain about in the scheme of things. It won't. This is a movie that manages to be light and funny and still transcend age, background and culture to treat with compassion our ability to behave in our own worst interests and still nurture hope for the future.