

BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY

THE ONLY THING MORE EXTRAORDINARY
THAN THEIR MUSIC IS HIS STORY

Going in to see “Bohemian Rhapsody,” I had no idea what to expect.

On one hand, critics gave it mixed reviews at best. On the other, it earned \$51 million during opening weekend (according to Deadline.com) and received 8.4 stars on IMDb. Whatever I expected, I most certainly did not anticipate turning up to the theater only to find literally every single seat sold out in the entire theater except one. And I saw it four days after it came out!

There’s no denying “Bohemian Rhapsody” has nearly become a cultural phenomenon, despite barely being out a month. From giving new life to the classic Queen hits to fueling people’s fascination with the enigmatic legend that was Freddie Mercury, this film was a long time coming (and rightly so!) But did it live up to the hype? Sort of. The film was incredibly strong in some parts, yet weak in others.

The main issues lie with the beginning of the film, the pacing and the film’s focus. At the start of the film, rather than a slow start gradually introducing us to Freddie and the rest of the band in kind, we are immediately launched into Freddie joining the band and producing hits with them; they release their smash-hit “Killer Queen” less than 15 minutes into the film. This issue ties into the focus of the film: is this a movie about Freddie? Or the origins about Queen? Is it about their journey to the top of the charts? Or is it about the band members’ personal struggles? This issue could have

been fixed one of two ways: either focusing a lot more on the band as a whole at the beginnings of their career, or cutting the opening entirely, merely introducing us to the band after they have already become famous. This would have clarified the themes a lot more and made it feel less convoluted.

In addition, the pacing is difficult to keep up with. As I mentioned, the movie starts at lightning speed, taking Queen from a college band to an international hit-maker within a matter of minutes. Around the halfway mark however, the movie slows to a near halt, examining Freddie’s personal life in great detail and at great length. Don’t get me wrong, I appreciated a deeper, more introspective take on Freddie, but this once again made the film confusing and muddled the director’s intentions.

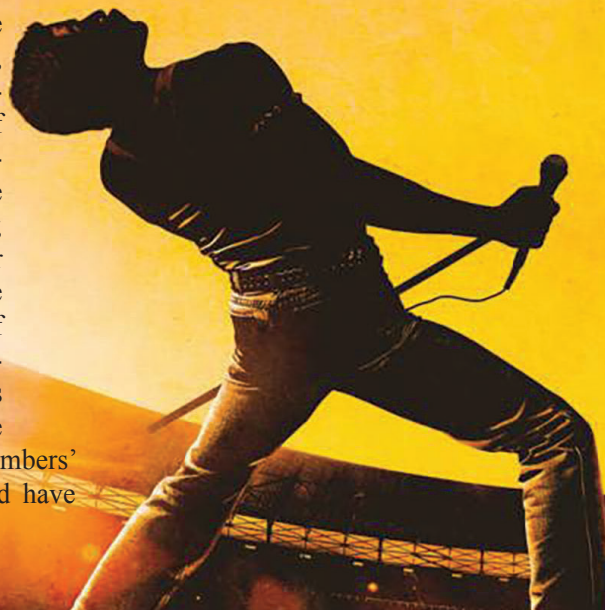
There was, however, a great deal the film did right. Most outstanding was Rami

Malek’s at times charming, at times perplexingly weird, yet altogether captivating performance as the incomparable lead singer of Queen. He gives the character his all, bringing charisma, quirks, and above all a real humanity that every actor aspires to bring to his or her character.

In addition, the look of the film was exquisite: the color, the costumes, the sets, the unique camera techniques all perfectly complimented the mood. Not only did the look excellently capture the 70s/80s nostalgia the film was so clearly aiming for, it also highlighted the confusion, the glory, the frustration and the triumphs so common in the lives of these rockstars. It really put the audience in the minds of Queen; it brought dimension, depth and genuine empathy from the audience.

One of the most notably good aspects of the movie: it’s funny. It’s so funny. This film has no pretense of being some jaw-dropping, epic, greatest-movie-of-all-time drama; it perfectly balances its more poignant moments with jokes that had the entire theater roaring with laughter.

All in all, “Bohemian Rhapsody’s” comedy, its music and its endearing portrayals keep the film an entertaining audience pleaser through and through despite its flaws. The overall best thing about the movie, however: the hair. Absolutely brilliant.



MOVIES

Reviews by Samuel Pearce

Seeing “The Nutcracker and the Four Realms,” interestingly, I had the exact opposite experience as I did seeing “Bohemian Rhapsody.” I was the only person in the entire theater. (Granted, I did see it on a Monday night at 9:00 PM.) Although this was probably largely due to the fact that it’s a Christmas movie and I saw it in mid-November, I think there’s probably a larger reason for the fact that there was no one else there.

“The Nutcracker and the Four Realms” is further evidence that Disney doesn’t need to make a live action remake of, you know, literally everything. It was a film no one really asked for and few people were super fired up to see. After watching it, I can say that there’s nothing awful about the movie... but there’s also nothing great. It’s not an abomination of filmmaking, but it’s not really worth the time or the money either.

“The Nutcracker and the Four Realms” has its good parts of course. It features some truly impressive and creative visuals, and despite the overwhelming amounts of CGI, is very pleasing to the eye. I also appreciated the ways in which the film pays tribute to the ballet it came from. The filmmakers put effort into respecting the source material despite taking some heavy creative liberties.

Unfortunately, however, there are many parts that detract from its few high points. It’s super-clichéd, and many of the dialogue moments felt flat and uninspired. From a predictable plot to a silly, by-the-numbers climax, there’s no genuinely tense moments. In addition, the attempts at humor were not very well written and didn’t make much sense. I think I yawned more often than I laughed, if I’m being honest.

Even the three A-list actors in the film couldn’t do much to save “The Nutcracker and the Four Realms.” Dame Helen Mirren gave a surprisingly unconvincing performance as Mother Ginger (though this may have been the fault of the script) and Morgan Freeman was barely in the movie. But unfortunately the worst part was Keira Knightley (who I normally love) as the Sugar Plum Fairy—she was just kind of annoying. From her high-pitched voice to her awkward mannerisms to her straight-up



unbelievable character, she was sadly one of the lowest points of the movie.

I say all this with full knowledge that the film was intended to be more of a kid’s movie. But does it deliver even as a kid’s movie? Sure, it’s bright, colorful, pleasing to the eye and contains some fun (clean) action younger audiences will probably enjoy. But at the same time, very little context is established for the film in a way that even a young kid would notice, it’s not really all that Christmasy for a Christmas movie and it’s just flat out boring in parts. I’m aware that I may be judging a little too harshly for a children’s movie, but I’m not even sure the movie appeals to its target audience.

Overall, I didn’t think this movie was awful, but it’s not good or memorable enough to be worth a watch. If you’re looking for a

fun fantasy film to watch with your younger siblings, you’d be better sticking with “The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe” or Tim Burton’s “Alice In Wonderland” (both Disney properties as well, and both of which this movie was kind of a rip-off). If you’re looking for a good Christmas movie, you might be better off rewatching your favorite Christmas classic than this incurably mediocre movie.

On a final note: Disney, please don’t hurt me, I still love you.



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LEFT: Bohemian Rhapsody
RIGHT: The Nutcracker and the Four Realms