

## Blu-Ray Review: Oscar-Winning ‘Black Swan’ Demands Repeat Viewing

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on April 4, 2011 - 10:27am

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CHICAGO – Darren Aronofsky’s Oscar-winning “Black Swan” was one of the most ambitious films of 2010, a piece of psychological drama that, despite an incredibly stupid recent backlash of the kind that always comes eventually with a project this highly-acclaimed, will absolutely stand the test of time. It doesn’t just reward repeat viewing as much as anything from 2010, it practically demands it. You can’t fully appreciate any of the accomplishments if you see them only once.

And I mean ANY of them. I’ve seen “Black Swan” multiple times, more than any film from 2010, and I’m flabbergasted at how well it holds up. There’s always something new to admire, like a symphony performance in which you hear a different instrument every time. Of course, Natalie Portman’s spectacular work stands out the first time, as it should. Portman gives a physically and emotionally draining turn that earned her a well-deserved Oscar.



Black Swan  
Photo credit: Fox Searchlight

But great films aren’t the work of one actor. Watch it the first time to be blown away by Portman and watch it again to appreciate the supporting cast — Barbara Hershey’s blend of maternal protection and “Mommie Dearest” creepiness; Mila Kunis’s daring representation of both budding sexuality and competition; Vincent Cassel’s combination of multiple male archetypes from lover to mentor to tormentor. Watch it again and note just the technical elements, including Matthew Libatique’s stunning cinematography that almost acts like another dancer as the camera swirls back and forth around its subjects or Clint Mansell’s brilliant dissection of the original “Swan Lake” score into something new. They both should have won Oscars.



Black Swan was released on Blu-Ray and DVD on March 29th, 2011

Photo credit: Fox Home Video

Ultimately, a film is more than the sum of its parts and the best way you can view "Black Swan" is to dismiss all the individual elements and just let yourself be sucked into the production. Don't try to explain it. Just take in the emotions and ride the feelings. Don't interpret the dream literally. Just marvel at what it makes you feel. Again and again and again.

The Blu-ray for "Black Swan" is good but not quite the home run I was hoping for with my #2 of 2010. I would have loved a commentary track from Aronofsky or any of the cast or crew for that matter, even if the film does work better without detailed explanation. As for making-of material, this release is rich with it, including multiple featurettes about the production along with numerous interviews with the major players. It's a very strong series of featurettes.

As for the video and audio, it's good not great. The HD picture looks a little more muted than I expected with a little bit of loss of line detail. The sound is better in 5.1 DTS-HD. Still, I can't help but think there's an inevitable special edition with a better visual restoration, commentary track, and more. Until then, this version will more than suffice. Don't miss it.

#### Special Features:

- o Metamorphosis: A behind-the-scenes documentary with Darren Aronofsky
- o Behind The Curtain - An inside look at the ballet's influence on the film's costume design and production design
- o Ten Years In The Making - Natalie Portman and Darren Aronofsky discuss their creative journey, from "preparing for the role" to "dancing with the camera"
- o Cast Profiles - Roles Of A Lifetime - Presented by Fox Movie Channel, stars reflect on their challenging and rewarding characters
- o BD Live: Go behind the scenes with brand-new exclusive footage
- o Live Lookup powered by IMDB
- o Digital Copy

*'Black Swan' stars Natalie Portman, Mila Kunis, Vincent Cassel, Barbara Hershey, and Winona Ryder. It was written by Mark Heyman and Andres Heinz and John McLaughlin and directed by Darren Aronofsky. It was released on Blu-ray and DVD on March 29th, 2011. It is rated R.*



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