

Film Review: 'Brighton Rock' Remake Fails to Justify its Existence

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on August 26, 2011 - 4:00pm

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Rating: **2.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – Rowan Joffe's long-gestating remake of "Brighton Rock" (the 1947 noir classic was based on the beloved book by Graham Greene) raises the question least-desired in one of these situations – why bother? Sure, the story is a nifty little tale of a rising criminal undone by his own avarice and the love of a girl and the cast assembled for the remake is an undeniably talented ensemble. That said, the piece is lacking the urgency that makes the viewer feel like it needed to be made in the first place. It's a hollow film, concerned more with detail than emotion or character and so it comes off more like a filmmaking exercise than an engaging story, and it never justifies its existence.

One of the most unusual elements of the "Brighton Rock" remake is an update to a new time period – one that had yet to come when the source material and original film were produced. Moving the action of the piece to the '60s could have created a new energy to the story, especially given the cultural and social revolution at the time, but it feels cosmetic, like so many elements of the film. Joffe hasn't updated the material successfully, merely transplanted it.



[Read Brian Tallerico's full review of "Brighton Rock" in our reviews section.](#) [15]

Said story still centers around a rising thug named Pinkie (Sam Riley of "Control"). You won't forget his name since Rose (Andrea Riseborough), the girl who forever changes his life, says it repeatedly, typically in wide-eyed awe. "Brighton Rock" opens with the murder of one of the men in Pinkie's gang. Retaliation is inevitable and the killer is hunted down on a crowded pier, where he runs into the naïve, awestruck waitress who will actually serve as a lynchpin in a Brighton turf war.

When a photographer snaps a photo of the waitress with the man that Pinkie is about to brain under the pier, the tough boys with switchblades realize that they need to keep her under control. And what better way to control a dame than to have her fall in love? Lucky for them, any attention at all from the dreamy Pinkie and this cookie crumbles. But as she falls deeper in love with him, he falls in love with the impending and growing power struggle. Can he keep all of his plates spinning or at least determine the order in which they'll come crashing to the ground?



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"Brighton Rock" stars Sam Riley, Andrea Riseborough, Helen Mirren, John Hurt, Philip Davis, Nonso Anozie, and Andy Serkis. It was written and directed by Rowan Joffe. It was released in Chicago on August 26th, 2011.



Brighton Rock

Photo credit: IFC Films

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