

Film Review: Meandering ‘The Master’ Serves Up Powerful After Effects

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on September 20, 2012 - 5:24pm

- [Amy Adams](#) [2]
- [Cult](#) [3]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [4]
- [Jesse Plemons](#) [5]
- [Joaquin Phoenix](#) [6]
- [Laura Dern](#) [7]
- [Movie Review](#) [8]
- [Patrick McDonald](#) [9]
- [Philip Seymour Hoffman](#) [10]
- [Scientology](#) [11]
- [The Master](#) [12]
- [The Weinstein Company](#) [13]
- [World War II](#) [14]

CHICAGO – ‘The Master’ is the type of film that invites days of contemplation. It is a film about America, but only a certain type of American. It is a film about the need to belong, but in the end it separates all its characters away from each other. Lead actors Philip Seymour Hoffman and Joaquin Phoenix radicalize writer/director P.T. Anderson’s strange alchemy.



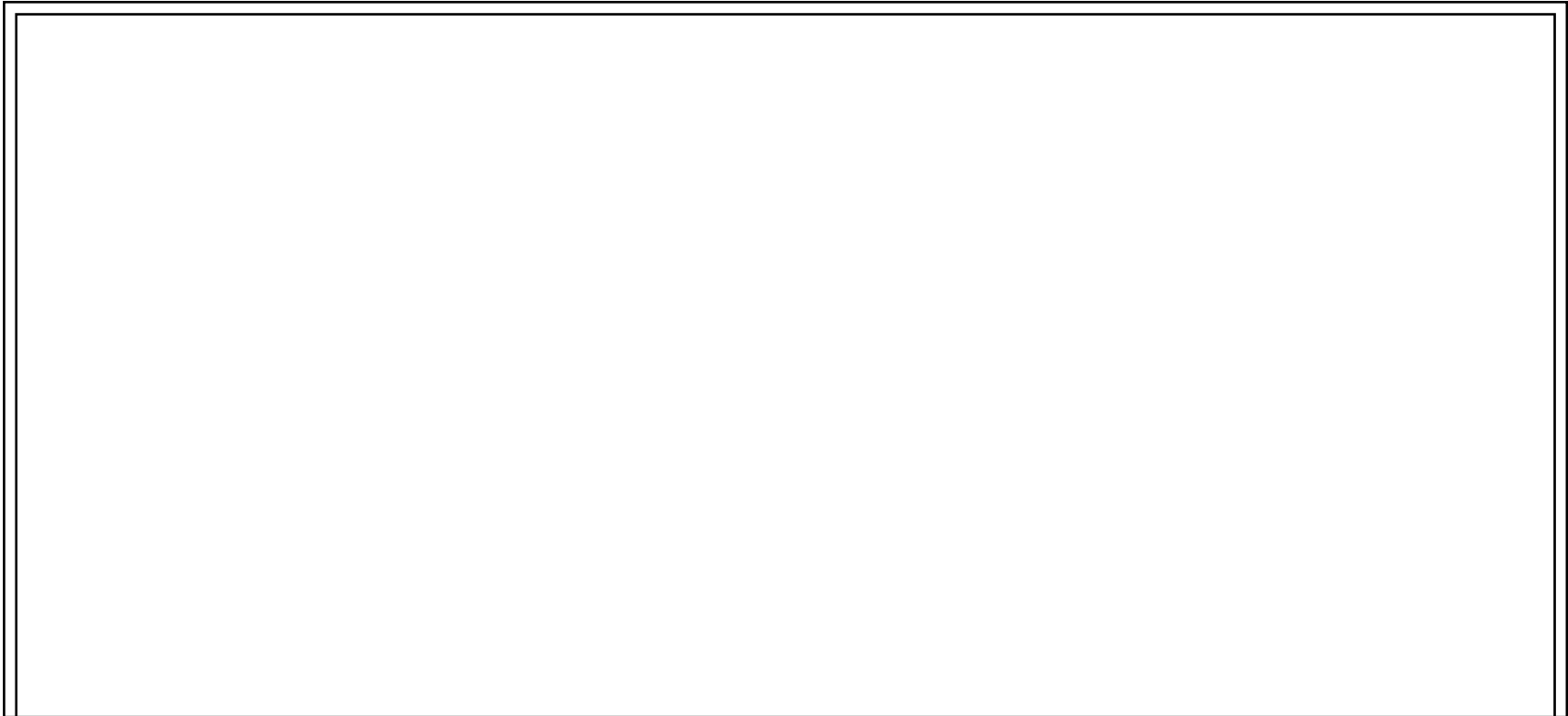
Like Anderson’s “There Will Be Blood,” this film also meanders very slowly in episodes, rather than the beginning/middle/end narrative structure. Except for a certain timeline, the scenes in this film could be thrown up in the air, spliced back together, and still create the same film about what is depicted. There are some amazing sequences, though, especially anything having to do with confronting the relative truth of what The Master is selling. Because this is an original story, it mesmerizes within the provocative filmmaking of P.T. Anderson, but can also be quite chilly in trying to access the story and its characters.

Freddie Quill (Joaquin Phoenix) is a World War II naval veteran that has obviously been mentally affected by the conflict. He is shown in transition to civilian life in a number of psychological tests, hospital time and a series of jobs that he eventually can’t hold. He loves making homemade alcohol concoctions – a holdover from the war – and it is in the midst of a bender that he meets Lancaster Dodd (Philip Seymour Hoffman). Dodd is also known as The Master, a proprietor of a cult-like society called The Cause, which deals in past lives.

The Master takes a shine to the volatile Freddie, and soon the navy vet becomes part of the traveling entourage that seems to be the core followers of what The Master is preaching. This includes his wife Peggy (Amy Adams) and son Val (Jesse Plemons). Val is the doubter in the group, and challenges Freddie in this discretion. Freddie is fast becoming the enforcer of The Master’s word and methods, so much that he seems to be losing what little is left for himself. The path to redemption in the world of The Master is rockier than what is sold.

“The Master” opens everywhere on September 21st. Featuring Philip Seymour Hoffman, Joaquin Phoenix, Amy Adams, Jesse Plemons, Christopher Evan Welch and Laura Dern. Written and directed by Paul Thomas Anderson. Rated “R”

 [Continue reading for Patrick McDonald’s full review of “The Master”](#) [15]





Philip Seymour Hoffman as Lancaster Dodd in 'The Master'
Photo credit: The Weinstein Company



[Continue reading for Patrick McDonald's full review of “The Master”](#) [15]

Source URL (retrieved on Apr 25 2024 - 7:35am):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/20004/film-review-meandering-the-master-serves-up-powerful-after-effects>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/hankq>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/amy-adams>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/cult>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/jesse-plemons>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/joaquin-phoenix>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/laura-dern>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/movie-review>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/patrick-mcdonald>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/philip-seymour-hoffman>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/scientology>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-master>
- [13] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/weinstein_company.html
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/world-war-ii>
- [15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/20002/meandering-the-master-serves-up-powerful-after-effects>