

Film Review: ‘Blancanieves’ Contributes to Silent Film Art

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on April 5, 2013 - 3:57pm

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CHICAGO – The silent film, which was revived by the 2011 Best Picture Oscar winner “The Artist,” is honored again in the new film “Blancanieves.” This artful re-imagining of the Snow White story – set in Spanish bullfighting rings – cherishes the feel of silent film, and features clever composition.



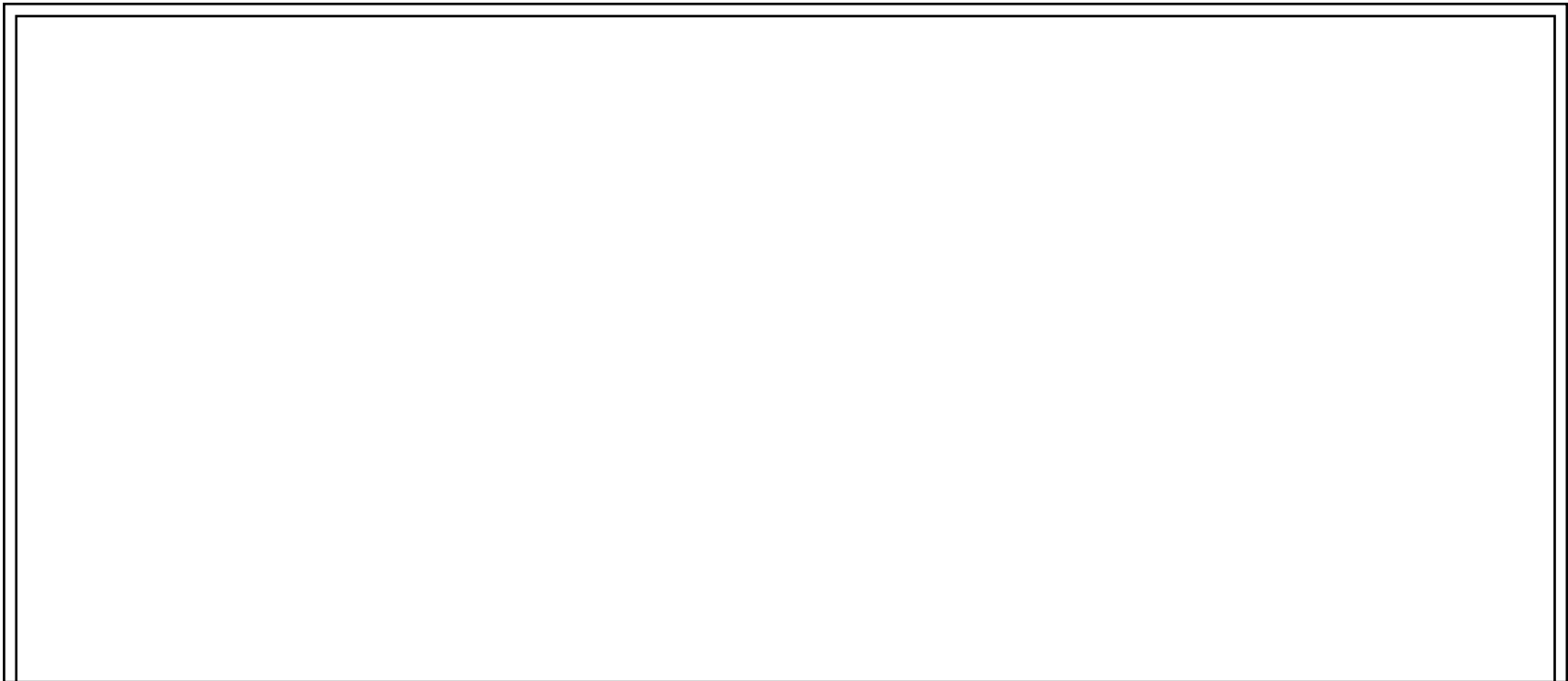
The story in “Blancanieves” is not as strong as “The Artist,” and the Snow White reworking is heavy handed, but director Pablo Berger adds his own outrageous camera work and point-of-view, imbuing the film with both a smart aleck “wink” at the camera and an example of silent film if Orson Welles had been directing back in those days. “Blancanieves” is a passionate night at the movies, unfolding in the clean lines of old time aspect ratio (square rather than rectangular) and mood music that approximates emotions in a varied and expressive way. This is a must see for admirers of the silent film era, and moviegoers who desire a different type of film experience.

Antonio Villalta (Daniel Giménez Cacho) is the greatest bullfighter of 1918 Spain. He has fame, fortune and the admiration of the whole country. His wife (Inma Cuesta) is heavily pregnant, and her mother (Angela Molina) is by her side at an important bullfighting exhibition. Fate intervenes as the bull gores Antonio, causing his wife to go into labor. Tragically, she dies giving birth, and Antonio rejects the new infant because of the loss of his wife and his career – he cannot walk again.

As little Carmen (Sofía Oria) grows up, she is raised by her grandmother. When a heart attack kills the old woman, Carmen is forced back to her father’s home, and into the clutches of his new wife Encarna (Maribel Verdú). The stepmother treats her cruelly, and refuses to allow her to see her father, but eventually the girl wills a reunion. Years pass, and the now 18 year old Carmen (Macarena García) experiences the death of the father. Encarna wants to kill the girl to get her out of the way, and in Carmen’s escape she sustains a head injury that erases her memory. She is adopted by some traveling little people (who dub themselves dwarves) who happen to bullfight, and the story begins anew.

“Blancanieves” continues its limited release in Chicago on April 5th. See local listings for theaters and show times. Featuring Maribel Verdú, Daniel Giménez Cacho, Macarena García, Ángela Molina and Sofía Oria. Written and Directed by Pablo Berger. Rated “PG-13”

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Carmen (Macarena García, Bottom Center) and Her Fellow Travelers in ‘Blancanieves’
Photo credit: Cohen Media Group

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