

Film Review: Eccentric Story of ‘Mr. Turner’ Still Visually Arresting

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on December 26, 2014 - 10:23am

- [1800s](#) [2]
- [Artist](#) [3]
- [British](#) [4]
- [Dorothy Atkinson](#) [5]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [6]
- [J.M.W. Turner](#) [7]
- [Lesley Manville](#) [8]
- [Marion Bailey](#) [9]
- [Martin Savage](#) [10]
- [Mike Leigh](#) [11]
- [Movie Review](#) [12]
- [Mr. Turner](#) [13]
- [Patrick McDonald](#) [14]
- [Paul Jesson](#) [15]
- [Ruth Sheen](#) [16]
- [Sony Pictures Classics](#) [17]
- [Timothy Spall](#) [18]

CHICAGO – The thing that can be said for British writer/director Mike Leigh is that it’s never known what story may capture his fancy. The auteur of “Happy-Go-Lucky,” “Topsy-Turvy,” “Secrets and Lies” and “Life is Sweet” now tackles the last quarter century of a notable British painter’s life, through his strange maneuverings and unconventionality, in “Mr. Turner.”



Rating: **3.5/5.0**

The Mister is J.M.W. Turner, an English Romantic landscape artist, whose form elevated the genre into a pre-impressionism age – making Turner a rather controversial figure in his time. The film plays upon that theme, as Timothy Spall portrays the painter in Mike Leigh’s script as a prolific adventurer and eccentric. Since Turner is a landscape painter, the director and cinematographer (Dick Pope) create an expansive cinematic canvas that “sees” Turner’s vision. The story, however, is a mishmash of scenes rather than a cohesive narrative, and depending on the viewer could be interpreted as off putting – but that is also a distinct mark of Mike Leigh and his approach to storytelling.

John Mallard William Turner (Timothy Spall) is in the last quarter of his famed life. In the beginning of this end, he has just lost his beloved father William (Paul Jesson) and that causes an aimlessness throughout the next several years. He soldiers on despite estate disputes from his first mistress Sarah (Ruth Sheen), with whom he had two children.

Turner also seeks comfort from his housekeeper Hannah (Dorothy Atkinson), but still cuts through the British art world with his eccentricities, travels for inspiration, and rendering of his masterpieces. A chance journey to a seaside resort yields another affair with Sophia (Marion Booth), a sailor’s widow who becomes a constant for the rest of Turner’s life. When he does go gently into the good night, he leaves thousands of oil and watercolor masterpieces.

“Mr. Turner” continues its limited release, including Chicago, on December 25th. See local listings for theaters and show times. Featuring Timothy Spall, Dorothy Atkinson, Marion Bailey, Paul Jesson, Lesley Manville, Martin Savage and Ruth Sheen. Written and directed by Mike Leigh. Rated “R”



[Continue reading for Patrick McDonald’s full review of “Mr. Turner”](#) [19]



The Artist (Timothy Spall) and his canvas in “Mr. Turner”.

Photo credit: Sony Pictures Classics



[Continue reading for Patrick McDonald’s full review of “Mr. Turner”](#) [19]

Source URL (retrieved on Apr 19 2024 - 3:58am):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/24919/film-review-eccentric-story-of-mr-turner-still-visually-arresting>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/hankq>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/1800s>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/artist>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/british>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dorothy-atkinson>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/jmw-turner>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/lesley-manville>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/marion-bailey>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/martin-savage>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/mike-leigh>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/movie-review>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/mr-turner>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/patrick-mcdonald>
- [15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/paul-jesson>
- [16] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/ruth-sheen>
- [17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/sony-pictures-classics>
- [18] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/timothy-spall>
- [19] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/24917/film-review-eccentric-story-of-mr-turner-still-visually-arresting>