

Film Review: Elegant, Delicate Emotions Are Forged in ‘Youth’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on December 12, 2015 - 3:17pm

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CHICAGO – When a film tries to be philosophical, it easily can devolve into heavy handedness. But the exception is the latest from writer/director Paolo Sorrentino, the richly presented “Youth.” It treads upon many definitions of the title, and lands upon all of them, because that’s life.



Rating: **5.0/5.0**

Sorrentino’s last feature film was the underrated “This Must Be the Place” (2011), another meditative work that featured Sean Penn. This film features older actors Michael Caine, Harvey Keitel and Jane Fonda as representatives of different life phases in their golden age, each searching for something that remains a bit elusive. The great young actor Paul Dano adds his particular spice, this time in a reactive character rather than a antagonist, and he handles one of the most surprising scenes with perfect energy. The film is awash with imagery that fortifies the director’s point of view in the story, and has nuggets of dialogue that echo long after the intensely constructed end piece.

The setting is a Swiss hotel, five star and exclusive. In attendance is an eminent and legendary conductor/composer Fred Ballinger (Michael Caine), his daughter Lena (Rachel Weisz), film actor Jimmy Tree (Paul Dano), film director Mick Boyle (Harvey Keitel) and some background guests including the world’s greatest retired soccer player (Rudy Serrano) and the newly crowned Miss Universe (Madalina Ghenea).

The lodgers interact with each other, amid the luxurious spas, nightly entertainment and scenery. They contemplate the status of their lives as their situations occur, for example, Lena’s marriage has fallen apart. Also the Queen of England desires that the composer come out of retirement, the director can’t get his film made without star Brenda Morel (Jane Fonda), and a Buddhist Monk (Dorji Wangchuk) wants to fly.

“Youth” is in limited release, including Chicago. See local listings for theaters and show times. Featuring Michael Caine, Harvey Keitel, Jane Fonda, Paul Dano, Rachel Weisz, Luna Mijovic and Madalina Ghenea. Written and directed by Paolo Sorrentino. Rated “R”



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Fred (Michael Caine) and Mick (Harvey Keitel) View the Universe in ‘Youth’
Photo credit: Fox Searchlight Pictures

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