

## Film Review: Old Hollywood Glamour in Woody Allen's 'Café Society'

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on July 23, 2016 - 8:37am

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CHICAGO – In the 1930s, the contrast between the world of Hollywood movie sparkle and the rest of a Depression-era America was as different as peasants and kings. Writer/director Woody Allen captures this dichotomy with an East Coast/West Coast tale of one family in "Café Society."



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

Since this is a Woody Allen film, there is also some star-crossed lovers involved, when a woman gets between a nephew and his uncle. This intrigue drives the story, and Allen puts some family conflict in the midst, as the Jewish kin that are featured illustrates how different life was in that era of America. Throw in a little tribute to the film "Casablanca," and "Café Society" has a vibe of glamour and fascination, with the usual jokey observations that Woody likes to sprinkle throughout his stories.

Phil Stern (Steve Carrell) is a high powered agent in mid-1930s Hollywood. He receives a call from his sister in New York City, that his nephew Bobby (Jesse Eisenberg) is coming to Los Angeles and could use some work. The family in New York feels that Phil has eschewed his East Coast roots, which includes his middle class Jewish family and mobster nephew Ben (Corey Stoll, also Bobby's brother). Bobby reluctantly accepts Los Angeles, but isn't that happy until he meets Vonnie (Kristen Stewart), another worker in Phil's agency.

Bobby falls in love, but Vonnie can't reciprocate because she is beholden to another, which turns out to be an affair with Uncle Phil. Bobby leaves the situation behind, and escapes back to New York City, where his brother Ben has opened a nightclub and makes him manager, complete with Rick-from-Casablanca white dinner jacket. Bobby finds a new life, and a new marriage with Veronica (Blake Lively), but his past is about to catch up with him.

*"Café Society" continues its nationwide release in Chicago on July 22nd. See local listings for theaters and show times. Featuring Steve Carrell, Jesse Eisenberg, Kristen Stewart, Jeannie Berlin, Blake Lively, Corey Stoll and Parker Posey. Written and directed by Woody Allen. Rated "PG-13"*



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Bobby (Jesse Eisenberg) Does His Best Bogart in 'Café Society'

Photo credit: Amazon Studios



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