

Film Review: Keira Knightley is Ahead of Her Times as ‘Colette’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on September 28, 2018 - 10:05am

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CHICAGO – The maturation of Keira Knightley... from ‘Bend it Like Beckham’ to “Pride and Prejudice” to the current “Colette,” has had the actor delivering an evolving depth and purpose to her roles. The latest is a fantastic overview of an ahead-of-her-time French novelist, as the rest of society tried to catch up.



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

“Colette” refers to Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette, a writer, mime, actor and journalist, plus wife to Henri Gautier-Villars (AKA “Willy”) in late 19th/early 20th Century Paris. She found her talent for writing through her husband, a raconteur in the City of Lights who put his name on Colette’s early novels, even as they became best sellers. The film – directed by Wash Westmoreland (“Still Alice”) – is an overview of this all, including Colette’s breakaway from his tutelage. Keira Knightly and Dominic West are electric as the husband-and-wife duo, and each adds a spice to the story that moves it forward that much more. Colette was a fascinating real-life figure, and gets a well deserved interpretation by the intuitive Ms. Knightley. It’s also a very entertaining film, without the dreariness that sometimes accompanies period settings.

Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette (Keira Knightley) is a country girl, who is being wooed by an older city gentleman known by his pen name Willy (Dominic West) in Paris. When she capitulates and moves to the big town, she is caught up in her husband’s business of producing written material for publications, in a sort of factory set-up. As their bills mount, and Willy’s infidelities become apparent, the young country bride is let down.

With their backs to the wall, Colette (as she has now named herself) writes a series of “Claudine” novels, and Willy attaches his name to them. They become the toast of Pareé, as the books are runaway best sellers. Willy gets addicted to the fame, and Colette becomes more bold in her choice of lovers, including American Georgie (Eleanor Tomlinson) and vague Missy (Denise Gough). Colette became more of herself, as she continued to discover.

“Colette” has a nationwide release on September 28th. See local listings for theaters and show times. Featuring Keira Knightley, Dominic West, Eleanor Tomlinson, Fiona Shaw and Denise Gough. Screenplay by Wash Westmoreland, Richard Glatzer and Rebecca Lenkiewicz. Directed by Wash Westmoreland. Rated “R”



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Through a Glass, Enlightened: Keira Knightley as ‘Colette’

Photo credit: Bleecker Street Media



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