

Film Review: ‘Aladdin’ Remake Doesn’t Live Up to Animated Source

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on May 23, 2019 - 6:46pm

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CHICAGO – The Walt Disney Studio (cash) obsession with turning their animated film hits to live action movies continues this Memorial Day weekend with “Aladdin,” which adapts the 1992 classic. What worked in 2018 with “Beauty and the Beast” falls flat with this title, because the animated version plays better.



Rating: **3.0/5.0**

And lest anyone forgets, the first film relied heavily on the improvisation skills of the late Robin Williams (as Genie), so without his take – and Will Smith attempting the impossible as a live-action replacement – the film was destined for mediocrity. The odd choice of Guy Ritchie as director, who has spent the last ten years making action heroes out of King Arthur and Sherlock Holmes, added problems with generating that “Disney feel.” And this film also had a slack pacing ... adding a whole half hour to the original film’s running time, without creating any energy for those extra minutes. However, it is “Aladdin” after all, and the songs, setting and weird humor are all still in place. To give this effort a baseball metaphor, it managed a bunt single.

Aladdin (Mena Massoud) is a post-adolescent street thief, who helps a runaway Princess Jasmine (Naomi Scott) figure out the nuances of the Arab market where they live. This begins a tale as old as storytelling, involving a magic lamp, a villain named Jafar (Marwan Kenzari) and a visit from the occupant of that magic lamp, a dreamer named Genie (Will Smith).

Jafar desires the lamp, and uses Aladdin to retrieve it from a dangerous lair. The Genie emerges and grants Aladdin the three wishes. He uses one to become a prince, to entice Princess Jasmine to marry him, and that is when the complications arise. Jafar desires power as Sultan, which means gaining control of the lamp. The only thing that can stop him is a former street urchin named Aladdin.

“Aladdin” opens everywhere on May 24th in IMAX, RPX and regular screenings. See local listings for theater format and show times. Featuring Will Smith, Mena Massoud, Naomi Scott, Marwan Kenzari and Nasim Pedrad. Screenplay adapted by Guy Ritchie and John August. Directed by Guy Ritchie. Rated “PG”



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The Cast of the Live Action 'Aladdin'

Photo credit: Walt Disney Pictures



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