

'Miss Pettigrew Lives For a Day' as Rare as Boobs Without Silicone in Hollywood

Submitted by [HollywoodChicago.com](http://www.hollywoodchicago.com) [1] on March 6, 2008 - 1:37pm

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CHICAGO – Character comedies that actually have some depth and fun are as rare as boobs without silicone in Hollywood. "Miss Pettigrew Lives For a Day" reaches these heights with a sensibility of an old studio picture with stylized glamour, lovable rogues and at the center the great Frances McDormand as the title character taking a chance in 24 sparkling and event-filled hours.



Amy Adams and Lee Pace in "Miss Pettigrew Lives For a Day".
Photo credit: IMDb

McDormand is Miss Pettigrew: a proper governess in late 1930s London who can't keep a job because of her stubborn propriety. When the agency that sponsors her refuses to give another reference, Pettigrew takes matters into her own hands by stealing a job posting.

She shows up to begin her situation as a "social secretary" to up-and-coming American actress Delysia Lafosse (the luminous Amy Adams).

Lafosse's life is a whirl of social and performing opportunities. She has taken up residence with Nick (Mark Strong): a Humphrey Bogart-like nightclub owner where Lafosse is a singer.



She has spent the night with Phil (Tom Payne) – a producer who can give her a career-making part in his new play – and she professes love for Michael (Lee Pace): her piano accompanist with the golden fingers.

Enter Miss Pettigrew. She is capably able to balance in one crazy day all the screwball zaniness in Lafosse's life while simultaneously providing wisdom and joy to the actresses' friends, lovers and ultimately herself.

Taking a page from the style of past comedy masters Ernst Lubitsch and Preston Sturges, director Bharat Nalluri imbues Miss Pettigrew with a cheery comedic atmosphere that enhances the witty script and allows the characters to uplift the proceedings with their foibles and motivations.



Amy Adams in "Miss Pettigrew Lives For a Day".
Photo credit: IMDb

Amy Adams stands front and center yet again with her daffy actress Lafosse while also succinctly realizing the downside of the character's questionable ambitions.

Her climatic rendition of the classic song "If I Didn't Care" allows for a deep breath of beauty and truth in her performance. It also makes her potential redemption all the more palpable.

McDormand yet again reminds us of her preeminence as one of the industry's finest character actors. She portrays as much of the inner conflict in Miss Pettigrew as she does in her role as a social secretary and comic advisor with just enough secrecy to allow her reality to make sense.

This is a true balancing act and an endearing interpretation especially as those secrets are revealed.

I hesitate to call this a "grown-up film" as the themes play out universally. Amy Adams is similarly just as good if not better as she was in the crowd pleaser "Enchanted".

This is just great filmmaking that's accented with humor, profundity and even romance in representing the adage "what a difference a day makes". Please work for me, Miss Pettigrew. I need you.

"Miss Pettigrew Lives For a Day" opens on March 7, 2008 in limited U.S. theaters.

[Click here for our full "Miss Pettigrew Lives For a Day" image gallery!](#) [15]



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Source URL (retrieved on Sep 19 2024 - 6:40pm):

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