

Charlie Sheen Opens Up in ‘A Glimpse Inside the Mind of Charles Swan III’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on February 13, 2013 - 3:39pm

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Rating: **2.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – Roman Coppola, Oscar-nominated as you read this for his great work co-writing “Moonrise Kingdom” (he also co-wrote “The Darjeeling Limited” with Wes Anderson) brings us the truly odd “A Glimpse Inside the Mind of Charles Swan III,” now available On Demand and opening this Friday in Chicago. The film proves two things – that Charlie Sheen is a better actor than his public persona and stint on “Two and a Half Men” may have led you to believe and that he needs to find a character to prove that instead of this riff on his real-life drama.

Charles Swan III does not coincidentally have the same initials as the man who plays this troubled character, who we meet after a break-up with the lovely Ivana (Katheryn Winnick) sends him into an existential and intoxicant-filled tailspin. We wander through this egotist’s hallucinations (in one, he wins an award for Best Bullshit, and, in another, he is dressed a cowboy and shot through the heart by a tricky Indian maid) as the people around him hope he gets his shit together and doctors are concerned about his health. Then he really goes off the edge. Jason Schwartzman stars as his best friend Kirby Star while Bill Murray, Patricia Arquette, Aubrey Plaza, Dermot Mulroney, Stephen Dorff, and Mary Elizabeth Winstead fill out a talented ensemble.

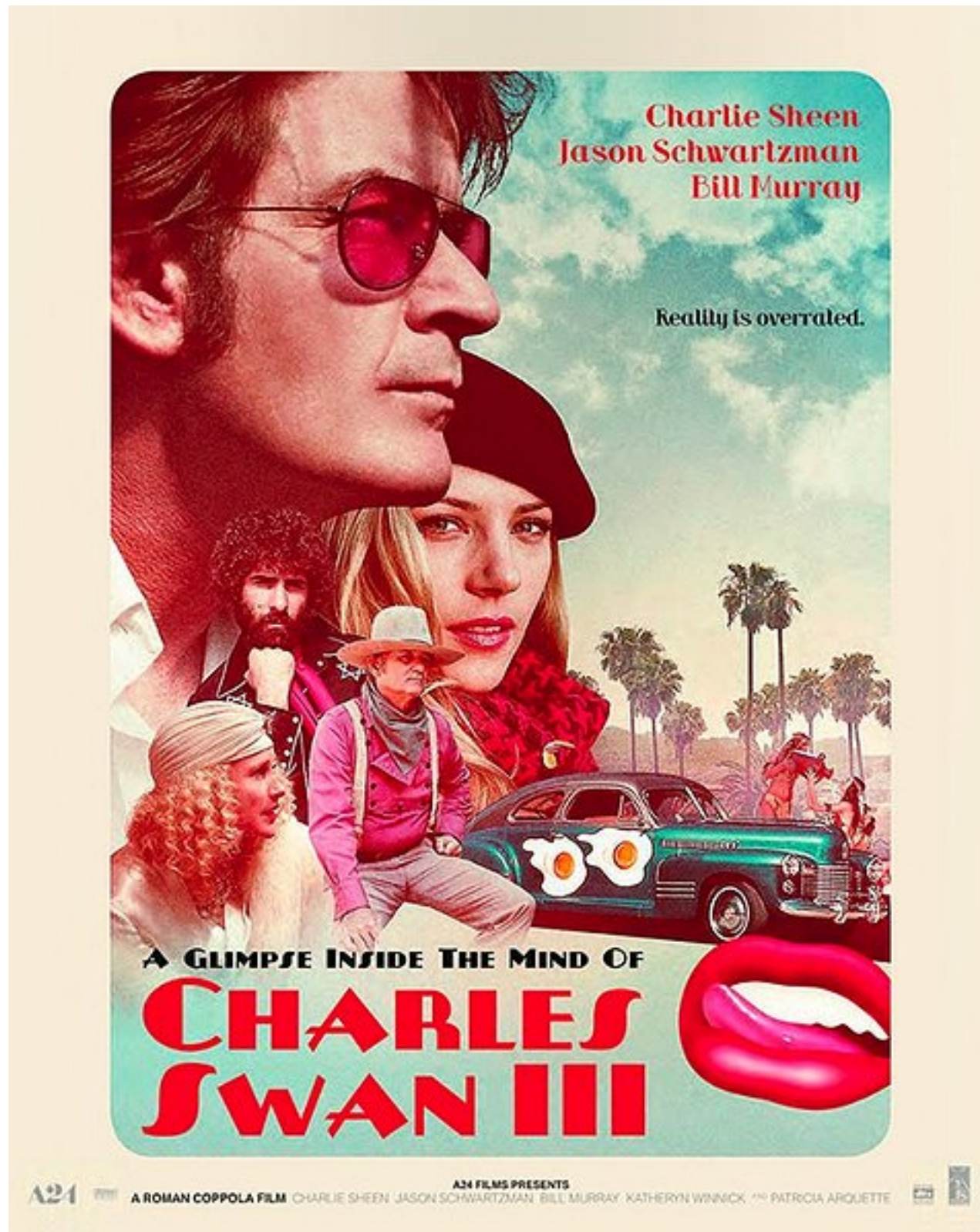


A Glimpse Inside the Mind of Charles Swan III

Photo credit: A24

The experimental tone of “A Glimpse Inside the Mind of Charles Swan III” works pretty well for about 40-45 minutes. Watching Sheen traverse this highly-stylized vision of Los Angeles and work opposite actors like Murray, Arquette, and Plaza, I was reminded of something I hadn’t thought about it in quite some time — as crazy as the winning actor may be in real life, he’s a pretty charismatic actor. With bushy hair and giant sunglasses, Sheen not only fits the part perfectly (well, because it’s kind of based on his real life) but makes interesting choices as an actor. I went into “Swan” thinking it might be just a variation on Sheen’s stage act, which, was really just the actor riffing with little script or focus. It’s more than that. There’s more effort here than you might expect and Sheen carries the film in ways that make you wish he gets an interesting role in a different project soon.

Because this isn't that interesting project. It too often feels like Coppola and his star were making it up as they went along and the grounded drama, like Charlie arguing with Kirby about working on his album cover, simply doesn't work at all. We have no dramatic investment in anything and the film falls into that tonal valley in which it can't decide if it's experimental or honest, ending up as really neither, especially after Charles starts drinking. I couldn't figure out what to take from "Glimpse," and perhaps that's part of Coppola's point, that people like Charlie Sheen are more than their image allows for in sound bites and YouTube clips, but it's not fully-fleshed out.



A Glimpse Inside the Mind of Charles Swan III

Photo credit: A24

Ultimately, little of "A Glimpse Inside the Mind of Charles Swan III" feels even half-fleshed out. I had heard some true hatred for this film in some critical circles and I think that's an overreaction. The cast, especially Sheen, is interesting, and I think Coppola is a talented filmmaker. This just feels like something the gang made for their friends that is somehow being released in theaters. It's not awful but it probably works better if you know someone involved in its production.

"A Glimpse Inside the Mind of Charles Swan III" stars Charlie Sheen, Jason Schwartzman, Bill Murray, Katheryn Winnick, Patricia Arquette, Aubrey Plaza, Dermot Mulroney, Stephen Dorff, and Mary Elizabeth Winstead. It was written and directed by Roman Coppola. It is now available On Demand and opens in Chicago at the Loews 600 N. Michigan on February 15, 2013.



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