

M is for the Many Things 'mother!' Gave Me

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on September 15, 2017 - 9:11am

- [Brian Gleeson](#) [2]
- [Darren Aronofsky Jennifer Lawrence](#) [3]
- [Deity](#) [4]
- [Domhnall Gleeson](#) [5]
- [Ed Harris](#) [6]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [7]
- [Javier Bardem](#) [8]
- [Kristen Wiig](#) [9]
- [Michelle Pfeiffer](#) [10]
- [mother!](#) [11]
- [Movie Review](#) [12]
- [Paramount Pictures](#) [13]
- [Patrick McDonald](#) [14]
- [Religion](#) [15]

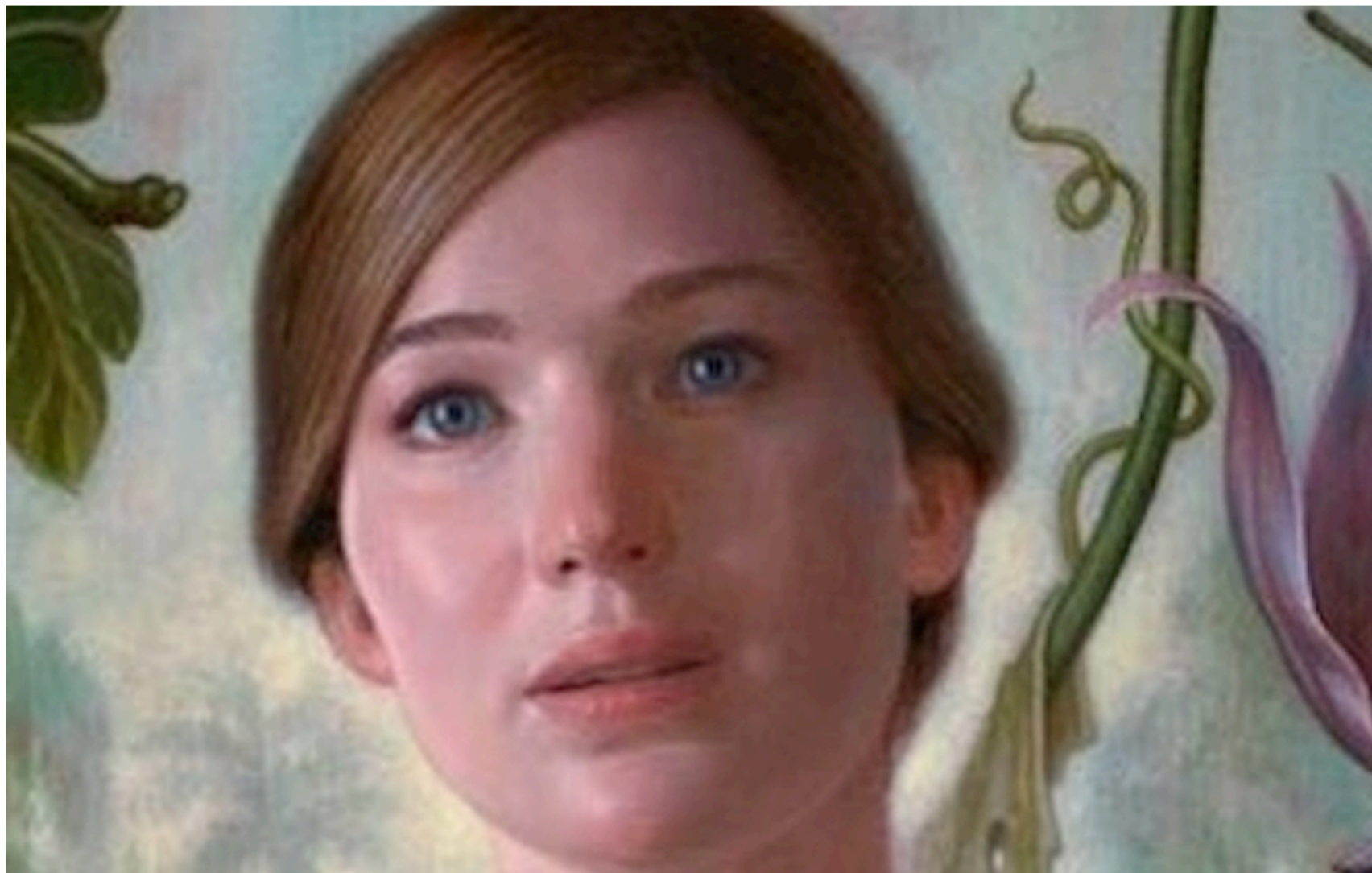


Rating: **4.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – In a film that is unsettlingly and regally composed with deep purpose and symbolism, “mother!” fulfills the nature of what it proposes to communicate within layers of essentially rendered storytelling and cinematic perspective. It can potentially change your overall point of view.

Written and directed by the wild-man auteur Darren Aronofsky (“Black Swan,” “The Wrestler”), the film is nothing less than a vision of religious science fiction, presupposing our current existence with afterlife implications. This is how I experienced it, and there will be other interpretations. Everyone who takes it in will have different points of view, because the emotions that the film generates most likely will be different sensations for everyone, including perhaps that the film is a nothing burger. But even that position means that the film has an effect, and will continue to have an effect as long as the art of cinema is studied.

A young woman (Jennifer Lawrence) is married to an older poet (Javier Bardem), and they live in an isolated estate with a home that had burnt to the ground, which the woman is renovating room by room. The poet has writer’s block, and it is torturing his soul. The woman’s position in the home is isolating, and the two never seem connected. An odd visitor (Ed Harris) infiltrates their calm, and the poet insists that he stay the night, which freaks out the young wife.



A Work of Art: Jennifer Lawrence in ‘mother!’

Photo credit: Paramount Pictures

The next morning the visitor's wife (Michelle Pfeiffer) shows up, and completely disrupts the household. The visitor's sons (Domhnall and Brian Gleeson) also show up and fight until the older one is killed. This sets off a funeral party at the house, and a series of events that results in the young wife's pregnancy and a new best seller from the poet, which eventually creates anarchy.

The film really is blur of events rather than a straight ahead story. These events are part of a fuse that is burning towards the conclusion of the situation. At some points the fuse is doing a slow and imperceptible burn, at other points it's as bright as the sun. But following that burn and absorbing it is the key to how the film moves you, and having empathy for the young woman (will females interpret it differently than males?) is how the series of events will explain the explosive end of the fuse.

The actors have a sense of all of it with their approach to their characters, and every one of them contributes to the fuse. Michelle Pfeiffer, who has been absent from feature films for four years, returns with a razor sharp edge to her dodgy and annoying character, a yang to Jennifer Lawrence's yin. Javier Bardem's soft landing of the poet character is increasingly weird, especially as the situation nears explosion. Even Kristen Wiig, who plays the poet's "publicist," stirs the waters, playing her usual "Kristen Wiig" role, almost maniacally.



Guess Who's Coming To...: Michelle Pfeiffer in 'mother!'

Photo credit: Paramount Pictures

But the the biggest sensation is how Jennifer Lawrence carries all this baggage and circumstance around with her, while Aronofsky uses a documentary style to follow her around in close up, as if the unseen camera is tormenting her as well. She remains a confused little bird as the fuse burns, bravely taking on some of the angst, and slipping away to survival mode when the horror elements begin to happen. She reacts along with the audience, and in that reality we become her, or at least distill our feelings through her performance.

Darren Aronofsky proves that there are hundreds of stories in the human condition to explore, especially when the myth of religious-type fervency is applied. We are all searching for the force of our lives, and where it exists and whether we can get to it... which is a key inquiry in "mother!" To play out the review with that Mom song, "O" is for the other things she gave me.

"mother!" opens nationwide on September 15th. Featuring Darren Aronofsky Jennifer Lawrence, Javier Bardem, Ed Harris, Michelle Pfeiffer, Kristen Wiig, Domhnall Gleeson and Brian Gleeson. Written and directed by Darren Aronofsky. Rated "R"



[16]

By [PATRICK McDONALD](#) [17]

Writer, Editorial Coordinator

HollywoodChicago.com

pat@hollywoodchicago.com [16]

© 2017 Patrick McDonald, HollywoodChicago.com

Source URL (retrieved on Sep 23 2024 - 5:38am):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/27899/m-is-for-the-many-things-mother-gave-me>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/hankq>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/brian-gleeson>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/darren-aronofsky-jennifer-lawrence>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/deity>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/domhnall-gleeson>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/ed-harris>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/hollywoodchicagocom-content>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/javier-bardem>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/kristen-wiig>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/michelle-pfeiffer>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/mother-0>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/review.html>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/paramount-pictures>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/patrick-mcdonald>
- [15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/religion>
- [16] <mailto:pat@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#PAT>