

Epic Comic Book Story in ‘Avengers: Infinity War’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on April 27, 2018 - 8:43am

- [Avengers: Infinity War](#) [2]
- [Benedict Cumberbatch](#) [3]
- [Black Panther](#) [4]
- [Captain America](#) [5]
- [Chadwick Boseman](#) [6]
- [Chris Evans](#) [7]
- [Chris Hemsworth](#) [8]
- [Don Cheadle](#) [9]
- [Guardians of the Galaxy](#) [10]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [11]
- [Iron Man](#) [12]
- [Mark Ruffalo](#) [13]
- [Marvel Studios](#) [14]
- [Movie Review](#) [15]
- [Patrick McDonald](#) [16]
- [Robert Downey Jr.](#) [17]
- [Scarlett Johansson](#) [18]
- [Spider-Man](#) [19]
- [Stan Lee](#) [20]
- [Tom Holland](#) [21]
- [Walt Disney Studios](#) [22]



Rating: **3.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – Coming off the multi-textured “Black Panther,” Marvel Studios now turns its assignment towards an Avengers movie, and man, everything is on the table. This overstuffed, somewhat overindulged journey of a tale never loses its flavor, and has surprises around every corner. Anticipate “Avengers: Infinity War.”

One of the difficulties of doing the Avengers or Justice League or just any gathering of multiple heroes who need to be in a story is that it tends to dilute the coherence of the plot. The strength of this Avengers chapter is that it manages to balance all the costumed warriors – assuming that the audience has knowledge of them – and delivers a ripping comic book-type yarn. Unlike “Black Panther,” who took the symbolic elements of history/social consciousness within its confines, “Avengers: Infinity War” is a flashlight-under-the-covers type comic book page turner, committed to giving the heroes their due and taking the Marvel Universe to a another level.

Thanos (Josh Brolin) is the villain, having destroyed Asgard, the home planet of Thor (Chris Hemsworth). He is seeking the “Infinity Stones,” which possess the emotional and physical realm of the cosmos, and can control everything once put together. Dr. Strange (Benedict Cumberbatch) holds the Stone of Time, for example, and he becomes a target. He reluctantly calls upon Tony “Iron Man” Stark (Robert Downey Jr.) to help protect New York City as it is being attacked.



The Gang is Flanked by Iron Man (Robert Downey Jr.) in 'Avengers: Infinity War'

Photo credit: Walt Disney Studios

To protect the Earth, the split factions of the Avengers must come together, including Captain America (Chris Evans), Black Widow (Scarlett Johansson), Falcon (Anthony Mackie), Scarlet Witch (Elizabeth Olsen), Hulk (Mark Ruffalo), Black Panther (Chadwick Boseman) and Vision (Paul Bettany), who is embedded with the Mind Stone. The Guardians of the Galaxy (Chris Pratt, etc.) is teaming with Thor to prevent the Reality Stone from getting into Thanos' collection, and Iron Man is paired with the Amazing Spider-Man (Tom Holland). It takes an infinity of superheroes to save this universe.

I'm leaving out important side characters in that description and it's still a massive two paragraphs. The film is easier to digest if you know the other Marvel films or comic book characters, but on its own it still gives a sense of the mythos of the Marvel Universe, especially in a scene in which Thor has to single handedly affect the building of his new hammer. There is a little spice for every taste in this story, even when it gets a little stuck. The good news in that case is there will be another scene or adventure coming right up.

The MVPs of the Avengers always seem to be Iron Man, Captain America, Hulk, Spider-Man, Thor and the addition of Black Panther. The heroes that they represent, and the actors who portray them, are all top drawer in this outing. Benedict Cumberbatch's Dr. Strange is good for both laughs and heroics as well, and the actor particularly likes the superhero "pose," as he wreaks havoc on the scene. The women heroes get their moments as well, especially Gamora (Zoe Saldana), a Guardian of the Galaxy, who possesses a key secret past.



Chadwick Boseman, Chris Evans and Scarlett Johansson in 'Avengers: Infinity War'

Photo credit: Walt Disney Studios

The film is 30 minutes past two hours, and with films generally getting shorter, it's only the superhero movies (it seems) that keep pouring on the minutes. There are some dead spots in the narrative, especially in the early story exposition, and the whole film probably could have benefitted from another pass through the editing machine. But it's a scene-by-scene type of comic book adventure... each "page" that is turned is ripe for astonishment. It's a veritable surprise party of a film.

Summer films have begun, even in the Chicago cold of April. Time for sunburns, hot dogs and cold air conditioned trips to the local movie house. If "Avengers: Infinity War" is a harbinger of summer films to come, it should be another hot season. Fake Spoiler Alert: Ant-Man was so small in this movie, we didn't even see him. His evil nemesis... a giant magnifying glass.

"Avengers: Infinity War" opens everywhere in IMAX, RPX and regular screenings on April 27th. See local listings for IMAX/RPX theaters and show times. Featuring Robert Downey Jr., Chris Hemsworth, Mark Ruffalo, Chris Evans, Scarlett Johansson, Don Cheadle, Benedict Cumberbatch, Tom Holland, Chadwick Boseman, Chris Pratt, Elizabeth Olsen, Zoe Saldana and Josh Brolin. Screenplay by Christopher Markus and Stephen McFeely. Directed by Anthony and Joe Russo. Rated "PG-13"



[23]

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- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/black-panther>
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