

Film Review: A Hilarious Combination of Crass and Class in 'The Favourite'

Submitted by [JonHC](#) [1] on November 29, 2018 - 9:14pm

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CHICAGO – Looking through auteur Yorgos Lanthimos' filmography, you'll recognize a style that combines both visual beauty and narrative absurdism. The Lanthimos effect, or Lanthimo-nium as I like to call it, elevates any piece of work to such a high degree that often times the meanings go over our heads. In his most mainstream effort to date, "The Favourite" will likely become your favorite of his works.



Rating: **4.5/5.0**

This time around, Lanthimos uses the early 18th century as his playground as he explores the later years of England's Queen Anne (Olivia Colman), which were filled with war, scandal, and decadence. It is well-documented that Queen Anne had an interest in the fairer sex, keeping close confidantes like Sarah Churchill (Rachel Weisz) and Abigail Masham (Emma Stone). Anne was known for having a myriad of health, and possibly mental health, problems, all exacerbated by the typical sense of entitlement that royalty tends to feel. There have been so many period dramas about the aristocracy that, at face value at least, "The Favourite" seems like it might just be another droll affair. Instead, Lanthimos plays the film out like a "Real Housewives" reality show, complete with "Jerry Springer"-style bouts. "Regal Housewives" if you will.

In the perfect marriage between crass and class, the film offers up the expected visual opulence of Victorian architecture and aristocracy with a tone that mirrors our current society. Not only does this seemingly odd combination prove to be a refreshing take, but it also makes the film palatable to the average audience; something most of Lanthimos' past films have failed to do. Although the film focused on the monarch of an entire country, Lanthimos directs the film with an affected, agoraphobic intimacy that is as beautiful as it is devastating. In a film that easily passes the Bechdel test, "The Favourite" never veers far from its female focus, making sure that in this time period overwhelmed by patriarchy, we know that the entire country was ruled/controlled by women.

"The Favourite" opens in Chicago on November 30th. Featuring Olivia Colman, Rachel Weisz, Emma Stone, Nicholas Hoult, James Alwyn, and Mark Gatiss. Directed by Yorgos Lanthimos. Written by Deborah Davis and Tony McNamara. Rated "R"



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