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“Doctor Strange” provides visual splendor, stale plot



[Carter Diggs](#), Entertainment Editor

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The first Marvel film released since “Civil War”, “Doctor Strange” had some big shoes to fill. But, with the “Sherlock” lead Benedict Cumberbatch heading the film and the promise of some of the best visuals seen in a Marvel film, “Doctor Strange” sets out to supply audiences with a fun film filled with lots of flair.

“Doctor Strange” follows the story of neurosurgeon Stephen Strange who loses the use of his hands after a devastating accident. Through a chain of desperate actions, he eventually finds himself studying under a group of sorcerers who seek to defend Earth from interdimensional threats. These sorcerers command a visually impressive set of powers, including, but not limited to, materializing a plethora of weapons, creating portals between worlds, and turning their surroundings into pieces of abstract art.

Cumberbatch does a commendable job as Stephen Strange, capturing in equal strides the quirkiness and ceaseless drive of the character. His role is doled out with a nice helping of charisma that lets the audience still sympathize with Strange when he’s at his low points (which occurs surprisingly often).

The other characters do their job in relation to the plot with variances in quality and how memorable they are.

Chiwetel Ejiofor as Mordo was a good foil to Strange’s character, but didn’t really become interesting until the later parts of the movie. Tilda Swinton as the Ancient One acted as a Strange’s mentor and provided some nice philosophical ideas, but much like Mordo her interesting traits are introduced much too late in the movie. When compared to other mentor characters, she was just kind of another drop in the water. Mads Mikkelsen played Kaecilius, the villain of the film, and while he had a stereotypically dark and edgy disposition, it’s easy to see where his character comes from and why he opposes the heroes.

Although the movie muddles in its cookie-cutter characters, it shines in its visual presentation. Everything in this movie possesses a stylish flair to it, only made better by the fantastic visuals. The magic used by the characters crackles and fizzes with life, making each action scene pulse with energy and vigor.

Even better is the way the movie works with the environment. The setting itself bends and shifts under the power of the characters. A wall can take on the pattern of an ever-shifting kaleidoscope, and the skyscrapers and streets of New York can be twisted into a giant iron maze. These segments are the best part of the movie and exhibit the height of its visual design.

Contrasting the complex and brilliant visuals, however, is a fairly uninventive plot. To put it simply, this is just another superhero origin story. If you’ve seen other origin movies for Marvel heroes, you will probably notice a lot of recurring plot points and character roles. Some welcome themes like faith in the unknown and human mortality are introduced, but they are only developed as far as you’d expect a two hour superhero movie to do so.

Criticisms can also be directed towards the film’s resolution, as while the final confrontation is resolved in a smart manner, it doesn’t have the same satisfying feel that one might come to expect from other Marvel movies.

If you are looking for something more innovative in terms of plot or interesting characters, then it might be best to move along. On the other hand, if you’re looking for a fun, visually impeccable treat, then “Doctor Strange” would be for you.

Genre: Superhero, Fantasy

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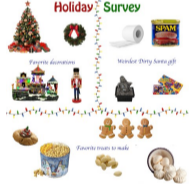

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