

MADAME WEB: A FLAWED GEM OF ENJOYABLE HEROISM

By Elizabeth McLellan
staff writer

S.J. Clarkson's "Madame Web" may not have been the best 'Spiderman' spinoff but I enjoyed it. This new movie had a mix of seeing the future, helping strangers, and obviously fighting a supervillain. Cassie Web played by Dakota Johnson had a key role in this movie as an awkward paramedic who doesn't have a family.

The cinematography for this movie had explosions and spider webs shot across the screen. "Madame Web" is fast-paced and a bit intense. One of the characters, Julia Carpenter played by Sydney Sweeney, has a sensitive persona as she also has family trouble. Mattie Franklin played by Celeste O'Connor is our comedic relief character, who has too much freedom with her parents out of the country. My personal favorite of the three Anya Corazon, played by Isabela Merced, is independent and likes to have a plan. These teens didn't realize all they had in common until they were brought together in a fight for their life.

A lesson I think the "Madame Web" is trying to portray is responsibility. Cassie didn't have to help those girls, she could have just ran away and lived her life wondering but, Cassie stepped up to the job and helped them. Like the iconic quote from "Spiderman" "With great power comes great responsibility," Cassie found a responsibility which led her to great power.

"Madame Web" is set in Manhattan, New York during 2002. All the adventures Cassie and the three girls begin after Cassie has an unexpected accident which ignites her sixth sense. I really enjoyed getting to see the Cassie she lets people see, until the end we get to see the real Cassie.

The antagonist of the movie Ezekiel played by Tahar Rahim has a history with Cassie's mom which leads Ezekiel to Cassie. Cassie has all of this anger for her mother who died in Peru while on an exploration. Cassie doesn't understand the full story until doing some digging and exploring of her own.

I found it weird however, it seemed a lot of scenes were just trying to be squeezed into the movie. When Cassie travels out of the country we don't see any scenes of her traveling except her riding on a bus once she's already made it to the country. "Madame Web" has all the stereotypical parts of a superhero movie, I felt they could have added more detail if the director wanted "Madame Web" to stand out.

The first hour or so of the movie was enjoyable and made sense but as the movie went on it became unintentionally funny and cringey. Julia Carpenter was painful to watch, she was more emotional than she should have been. The two other girls Anya and Mattie had a more outgoing personality which brought Julia out of her shell.

Overall I really enjoyed watching this movie. The main part I did not enjoy however was the end-

ing, it was unexpected and I think it was uncalled for. I think "Madame Web" could have ended more happily, ending with Cassie, Anya, Isabela, and Julia becoming superheroes together without one of them losing one of their senses.



Usher's halftime performance leaves mixed reviews

By Liza O'Reilly
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The 2024 Super Bowl halftime show left some people thrilled and full of entertainment while others were less entertained. The Usher halftime show to some was a great success but to others, they thought it was chaotic and could have been significantly better. Millennials and Gen-Xers were the core group that felt that the show was amazing. Some of them have gone onto social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and X. To say things such as, "Usher's SuperBowl 2024 Halftime show was energetic and star-studded". Although some people enjoyed this halftime performance some did not share the same feelings. Some Gen-Z did not think this halftime show was as good as it could have been and voiced their opinions, for example, "The

half-time show this year was not it, compared to Rihanna's last year it could have been much better."

Some creative elements included in the show were the diverse colorful costumes, the different types of dancing, colorful lights, and the combination of different songs and artists. Guest singers Alicia Keys, Will.i.am, Jermaine Dupri, Lil Jon, and Ludacris helped bring the show together even more. Along with the outstanding musical performances, the illumination of colorful lighting added some character to the show. Some people felt that the dancing, roller skating, and acrobatic elements of the show created a fast-paced, innovative way to keep the viewer's attention.

Despite the fact that Usher himself, or any other Super Bowl performer, was not paid to perform at the halftime show, the NFL still had to pay the excessive costs of the show. The breakdown of all costs covered in

the show comes down to around 1 million dollars a minute. For Super Bowl 2024, this totals around 15 million dollars for the whole perfor-

mance.

To take it back home, the featured band "Sonic Boom of the South" was from Jackson State University. They were hand-picked in November of 2023 to join Usher on the field. This was a great accomplishment for their band and school as they worked very strategically to keep a prestigious band. This was not just an amazing accomplishment for Jackson State University but also for the state of Mississippi as a whole.

