

"Ladies and gents.....this is the moment you've waited for...."

Just saw "The Greatest Showman". This massive modern musical is directed by Michael Gracey(This is his directorial debut). The film stars Hugh Jackman, Michelle Williams, Zac Efron, Rebecca Ferguson, Zendaya, Keala Settle, Paul Sparks, Austyn Johnson, Cameron Seely, Sam Humphrey, Eric Anderson, Daniel Everidge, Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, Ellis Rubin and Skylar Dunn.

My excitement for this movie has been unparalleled since it's first trailer dropped in late August. I was legitimately more excited for this than Star Wars. That's right. This was and has been my most anticipated film of 2017 hands down. My excitement level only grew after the first few songs were released and then eventually the full soundtrack. So with so much anticipation going in, did the film deliver?

It gives me so much joy to say the answer to that is a resounding YES! I love this film with all my being. I connected with this film on so many levels. The film's messages about courage and being accepted for who you truly are are nothing short of awe inspiring. It was uplifting and deeply inspiring to say the least. I love everything about this film so let's jump right into this!

Kicking it off with the film's performances. Jackman commands the screen as Phineas Taylor Barnum. He's been trying to bring this film to audiences for over 7 years and it's very apparent in the film. He put his heart and soul into this film and it shows. From his incredible and passionate singing to his infectious smile and overall presence, he captivated the screen.

That's not to take away from the other performances because they are all uniformly excellent. Efron and Zendaya have incredible chemistry together and their duet of "Rewrite The Stars" is a emotional powerhouse. Other standouts were that of Michelle Williams and Rebecca Ferguson. William's portrayal of Barnum's wife Charity was sincere and honest. Ferguson's "Jenny Lind" on the other hand brought a sheer elegance to her character that was unmatched. Lastly Keala Settle's bearded lady "Letty" was another welcome edition with a voice that could silence a room in an instant. She floored me every single time she opened her mouth.

Now that we've talked performances, we can move on to the music. This soundtrack is one of the greatest soundtracks I have ever heard. With 9 original songs and two reprises, "La La Land" lyricists Benj Pasek and Justin Paul have easily crafted their best work yet. The music is incredible from beginning to end. Simple as that. Not to mention the choreography which is amazing. Whether it's massive ensemble numbers like "The Greatest Show" and "Come Alive" to inspiring solo ventures like "A Million Dreams" and "This Is Me", the music took me over. It is a character in the film. I've lost track of how many times I've played the soundtrack. It's that good!

OK. So we've covered performances and music. What next? How about the cinematography and effects? This film holds up very well in both departments. This film

looks beautiful. The scenery and set design felt authentic and lived in. Seamus Mcgarvey(who worked on "Nocturnal Animals" and "Life") brings color and warmth to every shot of this film. As for the film's effects, I also thought they were very well integrated. The film used CGI sparingly and I think that was the right decision. It never took me out of the film once.

Alright then. I believe I've covered every aspect of the film. So in conclusion I love this film. Michael Gracey directed a great looking film with fantastic music and very powerful messages about acceptance and following your dreams. I cannot gush about this movie enough. It drops you into the magic and finishes just as strong. I don't recall the last time I've connected with a film this much. Please go see it and spread the word. This is a film about hope and imagination and deserves to be seen by as many people as possible. I'm going to give "The Greatest Showman" 5/5 stars.