HOLLYWOODGLEE, LLC
1226 N Salsipuedes Unit C 1(805)704-5994 |https://hollywoodglee.com Larry@HollywoodGlee.com



Night of the Kings At Hollywood Legion Drive-In Cinema

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

It was a beautiful Friday night evening in the heart of the movie-making capital of the world with the NEON production, *Night of the Kings*. I hadnâ??t been to a theatrical screening since I viewed Christopher Nolanâ??s *Tenet* on the silver screen at the Metropolitan Fiesta 5 this summer in downtown Santa Barbara, California, with five other mask-wearing moviegoers â?? the screening theatre was air-conditioned.



The Hollywood Drive-in Cinema, in the heart of Hollywood, Calif., moments before the opening scene of the special screening of Philippe Lecoteâ??s epic drama, Night of the Kings, Friday, January 8, 2021. (Photo by Larry Gleeson)

Night of the Kings, written and directed by Philippe Lecote, was screened outdoors at the Hollywood Legion Drive-in Cinema, and the soft and cool breeze present throughout the film laid down an atmospheric ambiance that no indoor theatre could match. Blazing cinematography with vibrant red, orange, and yellow hues from cinematographer Tobie-Marier Robitaille rivaled Roger Deakins Academy-award winning work from *BladeRunner 2049.* Robitaille and *Night of the Kings* received Best Cinematography and Best Sound Awards from the 2020 Chicago International Film Festival.



Night of the Kings

With a surreal tone, *Night of the Kings* was set inside an infamous Ivory Coast prison, MACA. And, in a similar fashion to the 2017 *Shot Caller,* the prison seems to be run by a well-heeled influencer inmate. MACA is run by Blackbeard, a large man past his prime who appoints a storyteller for the annual â??Night of the red moon.â?• The guards refer to the storytelling ritual in shamanic terms and that the inmates will be â??in tranceâ?• all night long.

Enter actor, Bakory Kone, a young, fresh inmate who catches the eye of Blackbeard. Blackbeard anoints the young convict, â??Roman.â?• Roman is the term used to describe the criminal who must entertain the prison population with a nighttime story. The only non-person-of-color (white) actor, Jean Cyrille Digbeau, is a half-baked loser walking around with a pet chicken perched and squawking upon his troubled spiritâ??s shoulder. But, Digbeauâ??s character, Half Mad, provides the key to the provocative evening-ending salvation.

Night of the Kings made its world premiere at the Venice Film Festival, the oldest film festival in the world and a launchpad for the Academy Awards season, and *Night of the Kings* is slated as a Spotlight premiere feature on February 1st at 1:00 P.M., for the upcoming, mostly virtual, 2021 Sundance Film Festival, January 28 â?? February 3rd.

Night of the Kings turned out to be a special night at the drive-in. In addition to the relaxing atmospherics, exceptional cinematography, epic (literally and figuratively) production design, the stalwart performances, and the classic narrative combined with the writing and the seemingly spontaneous, dynamic, choreographed song and dance routines send this feature film into the stratosphere. Highly recommended!

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Hollywood Drive-in Cinema in the heart of Hollywood, Calif., for the special screening of Philippe Lecoteâ??s epic drama, Night of the Kings, Friday, January 8, 2021. (Photo by Valerie Rapalee)

Category

1. Foreign-Language

Tags

1. Hollywood Legion Drive-in Cinema
2. Night of the Kings

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hollywoodglee