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FILM CAPSULE: Singinâ?? In The Rain (Donen, Kelly, 1952): USA

Description

Viewed during the Santa Barbara International Film Festival. Reviewed by Larry Gleeson.

Singinâ?? In The Rain, is a Hollywood gem created under auspicious beginnings as the writers, Green and Comden, pushed themselves through the night to come up with a musical recycling some of the p but wonder!



The musical film contains toe-tapping tunes and choreographed dancing that are a pleasure to experience. The version I watched was in color and the colors were vivid and bright and complemented the tone of the film.

In addition, the musical had a significant industry milestone contained within as the transition from silent to talkies was showcased in a lighthearted, laughable, and fun manner as we see a camera hidden in a phone booth, a microphone placed in flower pot and the outcomes of such attempts as preview audiences laugh and guffaw at the attempts to synchronize and balance the recorded voices.

Even the filmâ??s climax brings laughter as the audience witnesses platinum blonde



bombshell, Lina Lamont, played to a tee by Jean Hagen, a prim a-donna of the worst sort, who has connived, bullied and blackmailed co-stars and executives alike in making her way to the top, being brought down as the curtain is raised showcasing a new rising star, Kathy, played by the effervescent Debbie Reynolds. The audience sees Kathy singing and Lamontâ??s contemptuous attempt at lip synching. When confronted Lamont speaks and the audience roars with laughter at her high-pitched Brooklyn accent.

The theme of contempt isnâ??t just introduced at the end. Itâ??s evident from the opening as Don, played by Gene Kelly, overwhelms a reporter as he details his rise to stardom with his partner Cosmo, played by Donald Oâ??Connor, with â??Dignity. Always Dignity.â?• Yet, the truth is the two struggled and scraped and clawed their way to the top working in pool halls, slapstick vaudeville sketches and even burlesque. Not one to be left out, Kathy gets in on the contempt as she tells Don sheâ??s a serious actor and then we see her jumping out of a birthday cake.



Meanwhile the studio is sending out press releases stating Don and Lina are a romantic couple. Hilarity ensues as Lina believes the press releases and is in hot pursuit of her man Don. And, studio executive Simpson, played by Millard Mitchell insists talkies will never catch on. Most everything gets turned this side of Tuesday as Don and Kathy become romantically involved, Lina finally gets whatâ??s coming to her (although one canâ??t help but sympathize with such a nitwit), talkies catch on and sound get

synchronized onto the film as itâ??s shot, and the project is a success.

Definitely a feel-good film from start to finish. I highly recommend this film the any cinephile as itâ??s a Hollywood treasure in respect to the industry at large and also because of the superb dancing and singing performances. Furthermore, I strongly encourage those interested viewers to watch this film on the big screen as itâ??s characters are larger than life.

Category

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