

Hail Caesar! – Film at CONCA VERDE on 26.09.16 – Delivered by Elliott Brett

Hail Caesar! was written, produced, and directed by one of Hollywood's most famous duo, the Coen Brothers. Born and raised in Minneapolis the brothers achieved academic success, and have had numerous successes with their films over the past three decades. Their films include many academy award winners such as Barton Fink, Fargo, No Country for Old Men, and last year's excellent film starring Tom Hanks, Bridge of Spies. With 33 academy award nominations, and seven wins, you can be sure that the brothers deliver quality films! One interesting piece of information on why their movies are often classed as 'unique' is due to their unusual writing process of not only avoiding outlines, but of not even concerning themselves what their story is about or who their characters are before beginning to write their screenplays. They will simply begin writing any scene they think up that they find to be interesting. Then, if they think of an interesting idea for a following scene, they will write that one, and then another, and so on until they have a first draft, discovering what the story is along the way.

Hail Caesar! is set in 1951, a difficult time for the movie industry as the American Supreme Court ruled that movie theatres should no longer be owned or run by movie studios; cutting a long story short, movie studios lost the ability to control movie theatres. This had a very dramatic effect on the movie business in America, as television threatened to bring people home, away from the local movie theatre. Hollywood's reaction was simple: make big, high budget, dramatic films that television could not compete with. Talking of that era of movies, Joel Coen said, "We loved that stuff. We just didn't realize we were watching crap." Hail Caesar! focuses on exactly that, terribly fake movies. But it also looks into, and loosely bases itself on a key figure of that darker time in Hollywood's history, a time when one man in particular, Eddie Mannix who was a movie studio executive and producer was also known as a 'fixer'. When a movie star suffered anything deemed negative by the public, or by the movie studios themselves, Eddie Mannix's job was to cover up, hide, or twist the truth – he was paid to make sure that movie stars looked good in their private lives too. His network of contacts in the police, media and hospitals allowed him to cover up almost anything, including Judy Garland's drug use, Greta Garbo's bisexuality, and Lupe Vélez's love life and eventual suicide. In Hail Caesar! Josh Brolin plays this figure, yet he is portrayed as a good guy, a loveable family man, the guy there for everyone. You could say that Hail Caesar! is the film that Eddie Mannix would have made of himself, fixing his own image, making himself the hero. This film is filled with Hollywood stars, who all portray a figure of those wonderful years, or, the Golden Age of Hollywood. It is a comedy, but the joke may be that what you see, is how it really was.

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The film show

This is the first film in English this year. The next film will be in Spanish – the Spanish title being SILENCIO and distributed in Italy as JULIETA followed by the film in English is A ROYAL NIGHT OUT – Una notte con la regina. There are 12 films altogether till Xmas – 6 in English, 1 in French, 1 in German and 4 in Spanish.

Enjoy the film!