

Nine: Love “Chicago”, You Might Really Like “Nine”

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A Review by
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Daniel Day-Lewis emerges in his first film role since winning his second Oscar for “There Will Be Blood” (2007) to portray Guido Contini, an Italian filmmaker circa 1965 who is struggling with his personal relationships and directing a film in just days with only one problem: he has not yet written the script.

But there is one flaw in this film that prevents a glowing review: and that is a good number of the songs. Some of them leave you wondering just how much time they spent on lyrics. Marion Cotillard, who won the Academy Award last year for her role of the French icon, Edit Piaf in the film *La Môme*, played the part of Guido’s wife, Luisa, but her song was uninspired. The same is true for Penelope Cruz’s song as Guido’s mistress.

Still, two songs are definitely worth the price of admission. Judy Dench, whose had a long and wonderful acting career but most people will only know her as “M” in the new James Bond films (sorry to say), plays Contini’s costume designer. Her song is a treat on the eye. But nobody steals the show like Fergie. Her son, “Be Italian,” is the show stopper. We just wish there were more show stoppers.

There is no way you can help but compare “Nine” to Rob Marshall’s hit musical film, “Chicago.” But don’t. Yes, it’s easy because he employs many of the same techniques he perfected in “Chicago” here. But there’s no comparison. In “Chicago,” each song was more than simply a character study—they moved the plot long and embodied the interpersonal relationships between the characters. All while keeping you happily entertained by outstanding score and unmatched lyricism. The soundtrack of “Chicago” tells the story on its own with no need for the images from the film. You fall in love not only with each song but the winding of songs into a story. “Nine” simply doesn’t compare.

If you like musicals, and if you’re in the mood to see a spectacle of color and dancing, see this film. Or see it if you’re simply nostalgic to see a figure like Sophia Loren back on the big screen (and you don’t mind that screen to be shared with Nicole Kidman in a role not meant for her). If you’re hungry for another success such as “Chicago,” then go see “Chicago” again... but then go see this film.