

Film review: The Artist

✘ The Artist

Romance/Comedy/Drama

Dir. Michel Hazanavicius

Cert PG.

Set in the roaring late 20s Art Deco drenched never-never 'Hollywoodland' of perpetual sparkling sunshine and matching teeth, silent-movie star, George Valantin, (Jean Dujardin) swash-buckles his way to adoring fans' hearts with derring-dos, wry-eyed twinkles and dashing pencil-moustache panache. Meanwhile, photo-shoot opportunist fan, Peppy Miller, (Berenice Bejo) beguiles her way in to a justified chance casting as a flapper-dancer. Her association and developing mutual affection, with George, ensures her star ascends rapidly. In an utterly forgivable nostalgia soaked homage to the glamour and glitz, rags to putting on The Ritz melodramatic romance of the silent movies' transition into 'Talkies' and the apotheosis of Fred Astaire tap-dancing into orbit, The Artist justifies the many Festival pre-release accolades bestowed and awards surely to follow. Not least, scene-stealing, ever faithful companion to George, Jack Russell terrier, 'Uggie' together with good and faithful chauffeur Clifton (James Cromwell). Keep an eye out for celebrity cameos as well as enjoying the pithily crafted dialogue cards.

There are moments of wry irony, sentimental but never kitsch, vignettes amongst the many set pieces. The scene where George's dream (a Hitchcock/Cohen Bros homage) becomes a surreal audio nightmare is both conceived and realised brilliantly. So many aspects of this film just seem to engage and intrigue but never pander or patronise its audience.

Ludovic Bource's luscious music score embraces and enhances the visual narrative whilst Guillaume Schiffman's cinematography provide soft-focused lines to both characters and sets whilst eschewing the cliché of gauze-lens indulgence. George's pride and prejudice against the 'Talkies' becomes his Nemesis and his inevitable downfall from champagne heights to bar-room bum is poignantly portrayed. But, alongside his life-saving faithful friend, a guardian angel watches over him.

A silent movie that speaks volumes: a must-see, cinematic delight.

The Artist is showing in Edinburgh at the following cinemas:-

[Cameo Cinema – Edinburgh](#)

38 Home Street,

□13:30□ □15:50□ □18:20□ □20:35□

[Cineworld – Edinburgh](#)

Fountain Park, 130/3 Dundee Street

□10:30□ □13:00□ □15:30□ □18:00□ □20:30□ □23:15□

[ODEON Edinburgh Lothian Road](#)

118 Lothian Road

□15:15□ □17:30□ □19:45□ □22:00□

[Vue Cinemas – Edinburgh](#)

Greenside Place, Omni Leisure Building, Leith Walk

□10:35□ □12:55□ □15:20□ □17:45□ □20:20□ □22:45□