

INFINITY AND BEYOND: A SAGA OF HEROES

An Avengers Infinity War Review



BY IAN VAN ORDEN
MANAGING EDITOR

With the release of Iron Man on May 2, 2008, an era began. Serving as the first entry in what would become known as the Marvel Cinematic Universe, Iron Man served as the introduction to what would become the most successful film franchise of all time. Over the next ten years, each entry in the MCU would serve as a building block towards one event: The Infinity War.

Now, that event has arrived. Released on April 27, Avengers: Infinity War seeks to conclude a story arc that has been built over the course of eighteen films, with two more on the way before we see the conclusion of the Infinity War arc in the upcoming Avengers film, set to be released next year. It is the culmination of a decade's worth of hints, teases, and end credits scenes, and the film displays its grand ambitions from its very first moments.

Nearly every major character introduced thus far appears in some form throughout the movie, with the only notable omissions being Ant-Man, who is set to appear in a standalone movie to be released in July, and Hawkeye, though both are mentioned briefly in the movie's narrative. The movie focuses specifically on just a few of these characters, though nearly every hero has their moment in the spotlight.

During the buildup to the movies' release, one of the greatest points of speculation revolved around which characters would not make it through the events of the movie, and Infinity War proves early on that it is going to be bloody. The first character death happens within the first ten minutes of the film and it doesn't stop there.

Visually, Infinity War presents exactly what the audience has come to expect from Marvel movies. From exotic locales to the truly epic battles this Avengers seeks to be truly awesome. Some of the most impressive moments revolve around Thanos as he wields the might of the Infinity Stones that he has acquired. Other notable visual displays are presented by Doctor Strange, Iron Man, and Thor.

Even the less fantastical fighting, highlighted by heroes such as Captain America, Black Widow, and the Winter Soldier, are perfectly choreographed, properly imparting the impact of each punch or kick as they weave throughout the battlefield.

Despite the inevitable darker tone set by the movie, the movie is not devoid of the humor that audiences have come to expect from a Marvel movie. Even in a war against the Avenger's greatest enemy, there is still time for a quip from Starlord or a sarcastic retort from Iron Man. For the most part, these lighter moments are executed well, serving as moments of levity in an otherwise bleak narrative. There is still the occasional Easter egg to be found throughout the movie as well, including the unexpected appearance of a blue painted character from a well-known comedy series (hint: pay close attention during the scenes on Knowhere).

Building on the music introduced in the previous Avengers movies, Infinity War's soundtrack is more than adequate, always serving as that additional, necessary element to properly convey the tone of a scene. Though much of the movie's music will sound familiar to fans of the MCU, each track is tweaked to fit each scene perfectly.

Possibly the only flaw presented by the movie is its lack of decisive ending. Instead, writers Christopher Markus and Stephen McFeely chose to end Infinity War with a cliffhanger, waiting to end the movie's story in the follow up film, Avengers 4. This choice is more frustrating than purely negative, as it forces viewers to wait over a year to discover the fate of their favorite characters. Not even the two upcoming Marvel projects set to be released before then, Ant-Man and the Wasp and Captain Marvel, will shed light on the events following Infinity War, as both are set before the events of the movie.

For those that have become accustomed to Marvel's signature end credits scenes, rest assured this tradition is continued in Infinity War. The scene itself presents interesting implications for the upcoming sequel.

Coming into this film, Marvel had the incredibly daunting task of wrapping up a generation of movies

before moving into whatever comes next for the MCU. Though audiences won't truly be able to measure their success until Avengers 4's release next year, Infinity War serves as an admirable starting point, making a solid case to be named the best of the three existing Avengers movies. Despite its longer runtime, the action will keep moviegoers on the edge of their seats throughout, somehow avoiding feeling overcrowded or rushed.

Now, the long wait for the conclusion begins.

