



WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE LOS ANGELES

Starring Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling, La La Land gloriously revamps the golden age of Hollywood musicals

Despite opening to a fairly lukewarm reception in 1943, *Casablanca* has become one of the most beloved, if not the most beloved, Hollywood films of all time. The film struck an unexpected chord in audiences, and it continues to do so, offering a bittersweet vision of love that is almost cosmic in its implications — a vision in which romantic possibilities remain only possibilities, and soul mates don't always mate. This is less tragic than resigned.

Life is sad, *Casablanca* tells us, but it's not the end of the world.

Such is the spirit that pervades writer-director Damien Chazelle's (*Whiplash*) wonderful new musical *La La Land*. In its unabashed adherence to the golden age of Hollywood, it succeeds in making the old new again, revealing something we've lost along the way. Call it dreaming, with all the sadly beautiful complications that word implies as it butts up against everyday life.

The film stars Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone, and its hard to imagine a better pairing. As Sebastian, a frustrated musician who believes the soul of jazz is being lost to watered-down schmaltz, Gosling is fantastic, a charmingly cynical purist. When he first encounters struggling actress

Mia (Stone, also excellent) in an L.A. traffic jam, she flips him off, setting the stage for the sort of romantic sparring perfected by Cary Grant and Katherine Hepburn. Rare nowadays is the feisty, sexy chemistry Stone and Gosling establish on screen.

Chazelle tells the story of their complicated affair in chapters divided among the four seasons, an ironic cue that tips us off to the emotional direction we're going; after all, L.A. doesn't have weather, it has climate, but even in that endless summer there are winters of discontent, hope springs eternal and pride goeth before the fall.

La La Land contains several instances of such doubling and layering — movies versus reality, success versus selling out, the idea of "la la land" itself — a tactic that digs disarming depths into the movie's bright and shiny surfaces. If you are of the mind that musicals are not serious entertainment, capable of moving you to laughter and tears, this film might change your mind.

The song and dance routines are well-heeled and fetchingly choreographed, and the music is at once nostalgic and modern; the theme song bears a not insignificant resemblance to *Casablanca*'s "As Time Goes By," one of several nods to past films that, should you be

susceptible to such things, has the nerve to properly break your heart. Gosling and Stone ain't exactly Astaire and Rogers, but who is? Both are superb actors, and they pull off their numbers with a confidence and exuberance that is completely intoxicating.

In both spirit and execution, *La La Land* restores some of that old Hollywood magic, and it does so without losing itself to easy sentiment; the film is wry and sharp about the myths it celebrates, and its sensibility finds a balance between the fantasies that propel us, and the way those fantasies suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.

At the end of *Casablanca*, Bogart and Claude Rains' Capt. Renault are left alone on the runway. As they walk into the night, Bogey says, "Louis, I think this is the beginning of a beautiful friendship." It's either the happiest sad line in cinema history, or the saddest happy line. Either way, it shows a hard-earned acceptance of fate that is neither fatality nor fatalism but, quite appropriately, a little of both.

La La Land captures — or re-captures — that exultant feeling of sad-happy resolution, and it feels like an affirmation of life itself, despite all it throws at us. Even in the city of stars, where every day is another day of sun, it sings like it's raining. (*Regal Valley River*)

BIJOU ART CINEMAS
 1/6 - 1/12
 492 E. 13th Ave
 541-357-0375
 MOVIES THAT MATTER
 bijou-cinemas.com
 Serving the Eugene Community for Over 35 Years!

LION (PG-13)
 A five-year-old Indian boy is adopted by an Australian couple after he gets lost in Calcutta. Years later, he decides to begin a search for them. Based on the memoir *A LONG WAY HOME* by Saroo Brierley.
 Friday - Sunday 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30
 Monday - Thursday 2:30, 5:00, 7:30

THE EAGLE HUNTRISS (G)
 Follow Aisholpan, a 13-year-old girl, as she trains to become the first female in twelve generations of her Kazakh family to become an eagle hunter.
 Friday - Sunday 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00
 Monday - Thursday 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00

COMING SOON:
 20th CENTURY WOMEN (1/20) • OSCAR SHORTS 2017 (2/10)
 LA LA LAND • PATERSON • NERUDA
 JULIETA • I, DANIEL BLAKE • THE RED TURTLE

Local beer, wine and cider... & now kombucha on tap!
 TICKET PRICES: MATINEE before 5pm \$6
 ADULT \$8 | STUDENT \$7 | SENIOR 62+ \$6 CHILD age 12 & under \$6

BROADWAY METRO
 "THIS IS ONE OF THE LIGHTEST HEAVY FILMS YOU WILL EVER SEE, OR VICE VERSA. EITHER WAY, IT'S NOT TO BE MISSED."
 RICK LEVIN, *EUGENE WEEKLY*

MANCHESTER BY THE SEA
 EXPANDED SHOWTIMES
 JANUARY 6-12

MANCHESTER BY THE SEA
 11:00 11:20 1:20 1:40 2:15 4:10
 4:35 7:00 7:30 7:45 9:25 10:10

MOONLIGHT
 11:00 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:45

NOCTURNAL ANIMALS (FINAL WEEK!)
 11:10 5:10 10:30

COMING SOON
 JACKIE ELLE
 THINGS TO COME TONI ERDMANN
 OSCAR SHORTS I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO

43 W. BROADWAY (541) 686-2458
 BUY TICKETS ONLINE AT BROADWAYMETRO.COM
 REGULAR ADMISSION \$9 ADULTS \$8 STUDENTS \$6 SENIORS/CHILDREN \$6 BEFORE 5 PM
 OPEN EVERY DAY

DAVID MINOR THEATRE
 TIX \$5 \$3 SUN TUES STUDENT & SENIOR DISCOUNT
 ALL AGES
 762-1700 | 180 E. 5TH AVE DAVIDMINORTHEATER.COM
\$3 TUESDAYS
 FRI JAN 6TH - THUR JAN 12TH

THE SECRET LIFE OF PETS 4:00
THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN 5:05*
CAPTAIN FANTASTIC 5:35
SULLY 7:40

HACKSAW RIDGE 7:10**
MAGNIFICENT 7 9:25
LOVING 9:35

*NO SHOW 1/6 **NO SHOW 1/11

VLT
88th SEASON!
 The Very Little Theatre presents
THE EXPLORER'S CLUB
 Hilarious Farce by Nell Benjamin
 Directed by Chris McVay
Jan. 13-15, 19-22, 26-28
 7:30 pm curtain; 2 pm Sundays
 Tix: \$19; \$15 Seniors & Students
 \$15 for everyone on Thursdays!
 Box office open 2:00-6:00 pm
 Wed.-Sat., 2350 Hilyard St.
 Tix on-line at TheVLT.com

Production Sponsor: **Essex** GENERAL CONSTRUCTION, INC.
541-344-7751