

# Regina King's directorial debut shines

BY MAKENZIE WHITTLE

The Bulletin

Regina King knows how to make an entrance. From starring in films stretching back to her debut in 1991's "Boyz N the Hood," she's given stunning performances for decades including her Oscar-winning turn in 2018's "If Beale Street Could Talk."

Now 30 years after stepping onto the silver screen, she steps behind the camera to deliver a powerful and gorgeously shot "One Night in Miami" as director (another successful first).

Inspired by a 1964 meeting between activist Malcolm X, singer Sam Cooke, footballer Jim Brown and boxer Cassius Clay in X's Hampton House Motel room after Clay's win against Sonny Liston, the details of which the film dramatizes as no one really knows what was discussed.

Kemp Powers, writer of the film and the play it's based on, imagined a deeply stirring conversation between the four great Black men at the height of the Civil Rights movement in the Jim Crow-era south.

We start out with the individual stories of each man: Malcolm X (Kingsley Ben-Adir) is considering leaving the Nation of Islam, Cooke (Leslie Odom Jr.) plays for a unreceptive all-white crowd at the Copacabana nightclub, Clay (Goree) loses a fight at Wembley Stadium, Brown (Aldis Hodge)



Amazon Studios/ABKCO Films

Clockwise from left: Leslie Odom Jr, Aldis Hodge, Kingsley Ben-Adir and Eli Goree in a scene from "One Night in Miami" (2021).

visits a warm but racist family friend in Georgia.

Their stories converge Feb. 25, 1964 in Miami, where Clay is named heavyweight champion of the world and the four return to X's motel room for a supposed party. But it turns out that they are the only ones X has invited. They spend the night debating over bowls of vanilla ice cream and sneaky sips from Cooke's flask about the movements taking place across the country, challenging X's ideas of absolutes, Clay's intentions

on joining the Nation of Islam and Cooke's embrace of inoffensive music to his white audience. The latter is the most interesting and powerful argument in the film — how celebrities can use their platforms as megaphones to important issues.

It is very clear that the film is based on a stage play and it's no wonder that Odom Jr. and Ben-Adir are the strongest in the already strong cast as they are the ones with the most stage experience of the four leads. They both play the swings of high motion

## More Information

"One Night in Miami"

114 minutes

Rated R for language throughout



and subtle introspections with such ease that pulls you in with their electric protraits.

It can feel a little long with a couple of moments of exposition in the opening scenes that feel slightly forced, but the bulk of the one-room film shines through it, thanks to King.

She really directs the hell out of this, keeping the four leads in frame and cleverly uses the space to keep the audience engaged in everything around them — much like a play — sometimes focusing away from the main action briefly to study what is happening in the background.

Even with a couple of liberties taken with historical accuracy and the timeline, "One Night in Miami" remains consistently present and relevant thanks to King's stunning direction, Powers's beautiful script and solid acting throughout, leaving you with a gut-punching ending that sticks.

■ Reporter: 541-383-0304, mwhittle@bendbulletin.com

## TV review: 'WandaVision'

BY MAKENZIE WHITTLE

The Bulletin

It's been a year and a half since we had a Marvel Cinematic Universe property to stick in our eyeballs. Given the amount of time that has passed it's easy to feel downright giddy when you see the Marvel Studios

title card pop up with that iconic music.

Then "WandaVision" starts and you may be left wondering, "what is going on?"

It is a complete departure from everything the MCU has produced up until this point the series sets up a world apart from reality.

This is nothing new in the comic book realm, alternate universes, realities and storylines are common, but this is the first look we're getting of something different on screen.

The first episode starts with a jaunty tune reminiscent of those classic '50s

multi-camera sitcoms like "I Love Lucy" and "The Dick Van Dyke Show" and by episode two, we jump forward to the '60s "Bewitched"-style. Everything including the aspect ratio, sound and color design, sets, "commercial break," even down to the

Continued on next page



Check out our website to see real time information about our listings!



"Serving all of Central Oregon"



Heidi Olson-Dunlap

Broker Associate

LIC#201225768

406-539-5088

heidi@mountainlivingreg.com

www.mountainlivingreg.com



Willamette Valley Bank

Tami McLaughlin

Loan Officer  
NMLS#272540

O: 541-250-4095

C: 406-539-5938

F: 541-414-6627

tami.mclaughlin@wvbk.com

wvbk.com/tami-mclaughlin



"25 years of experience, specializing in jumbo & unconventional lending"

