The Age of Innocence

The Age of Innocence (film)

The Age of Innocence is a 1993 American film adaptation of Edith Wharton's 1920 novel of the same name. The film was released by Columbia Pictures, directed by Martin Scorsese, and stars Daniel Day-Lewis, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Winona Ryder.

The film won the Academy Award for Best Costume Design, and was nominated for Academy Awards for Best Actress in a Supporting Role (Winona Ryder), Best Adapted Screenplay, Best Original Score and Best Art Direction.

The film was dedicated to Martin Scorsese's father, Charles Scorsese, who died before it was completed.

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Plot

Newland Archer (Daniel Day-Lewis) is an affluent lawyer in 1870s New York, engaged to May Welland (Winona Ryder), a beautiful but conventional socialite. Newland begins to question the life he has planned for himself and care more and more deeply for Ellen, having convinced her not to press for a divorce, he becomes increasingly disillusioned with the society to which he belongs and the idea of entering into a passionless marriage with May.

Cast

- Daniel Day-Lewis as Newland Archer
- Michelle Pfeiffer as Countess Ellen Olenska
- Winona Ryder as May Welland
- Alexis Smith as Louisa van der Luyden
- Geraldine Chaplin as Mrs. Welland
- Mary Beth Hurt as Regina Beaufort
- Alec McCowen as Sillerton Jackson
- Richard E. Grant as Larry Lefferts
- Miriam Margolyes as Mrs. Mingott
- Stuart Wilson as Julius Beaufort
- Joanne Woodward as Narrator (voice)
- Jonathan Pryce as Rivière
- Tamasin Day-Lewis as Admiring woman
- Daniel Day-Lewis (cameo) as Photographer
- Charles and Catherine Scorsese (cameo) as Train station patrons
- Norman Lloyd as Mr. Letterblair

Production

Daniel Day-Lewis, Michelle Pfeiffer and Winona Ryder were all Martin Scorsese's first choices for the lead roles. The Age of Innocence was filmed on location in New York, USA, and in Paris, France. The opera scenes were filmed at the Philadelphia Academy of Music. A large number of sets were built, including a grand social gathering at the Beaufort residence.

The opening title sequence was created by Elaine and Saul Bass. The famous paintings featured in the film were high-quality reproductions by Troubetzkoy Paintings Ltd.

Reception

Box office

The film was not a commercial success, making a domestic total of $32,255,440 from a $34 million budget. The Age of Innocence was critically acclaimed, with many praising the performances and the film's evocation of a bygone era.
In addition to his Academy Award and Golden Globe Award nominations, Martin Scorsese won the National Board of Review prize for Best Director for his work on The Age of Innocence, as well as a nomination for the Directors Guild of America Award for Outstanding Directing - Feature Film.

In addition to her Academy Award and BAFTA Award nominations and Golden Globe Award win, Winona Ryder won the National Board of Review Award for Best Supporting Actress and the Southeastern Film Critics Association Award for Best Supporting Actress.

At the British Academy Film Awards (BAFTAs), "There's an alert, thinking presence behind the camera. And, in front of the camera, performers Daniel Day-Lewis, Michelle Pfeiffer and Winona Ryder suffice this saga of repulsive adultery and - yoda-esque - dowager; Stuart Wilson, a quasi-rival of Day-Lewis's for Pfeiffer's affections; and the wonderfully eccentric Richard E. Grant as Larry Lefty Leffus, a fussy catalogue of the social ups and downs of New York's upper strata... Known primarily for modern street pictures, such as Pulp Fiction,Good Will Hunting, and The Cider House Rules, Martin Scorsese, with his visual style, and only on a second viewing will you realize the subtlety with which his camera does, indeed, bring out the most characteristic moments of a grand passion."

Peter Travers in Rolling Stone wrote: "The performances are excellent, while the director employs all the tools of his trade to bring his characters and situations vividly to life... Everything here serves to express an erotic fervour, implored by Marc Savlov in the Austin Chronicle: "Despite the uniformly excellent performances by Day-Lewis (who's beginning to sound more and more like John Malkovich these days), Ryder, and Pfeiffer - as Newland Archer, I so go floss. At two hours and 13 minutes, Scorsese has allowed himself enough time to follow Wharton's book to the letter, and also enough time to include long stretches of painfully weighty seasame societies function and banter.

At the Academy Awards, The Age of Innocence won the Academy Award for Best Costume Design (Gabriella Pescucci), and was nominated for the awards for Best Supporting Actress (Winona Ryder), Best Adapted Score At the Golden Globe Awards, The Age of Innocence won the Golden Globe Award for Best Supporting Actress - Motion Picture (Winona Ryder), and was nominated for the awards for Best Motion Picture - Drama, Best Director At the British Academy Film Awards (BAFTAs), The Age of Innocence won the BAFTA Award for Best Actress in a Supporting Role (Winona Ryder). The film received another nomination in this category, for Winona Ryder's performance as Little May. In addition to her Academy Award and BAFTA Award nominations and Golden Globe Award win, Winona Ryder won the National Board of Review Award for Best Supporting Actress and the Southeastern Film Critics Award for Best Supporting Actress.

In addition to his Academy Award and Golden Globe Award nominations, Martin Scorsese won the National Board of Review Award for Best Director and the Elvira Notari Prize at the Venice Film Festival (shared with Meryl Streep). 

Eileen Bernstein was nominated for the Grammy Award for Best Instrumental Composition Written for a Motion Picture or Television

References


External links
As a cinematic exercise, The Age of Innocence is technical mastery of the highest order, yet as emotional catharsis it never quite delivers. Apr 23, 2018 | Rating: 4/5 | Full Review… Christopher Machell. Sadly, The Age of