**Doctor Strange**

“Doctor Strange” is yet another super hero film based on a Marvel Comic character. It is directed by Scott Derrickson and has Benedict Cumberbath in the dominant lead as Doctor Stephen Strange.

Although I have once had lunch with some of the Marvel Comics artists in Los Angeles, I have never been a Marvel fan and I have never read a Marvel comic book. Furthermore, I have never particularly liked any of the few Marcel Comics-based films (such as Spider-Man, X-Men, Hulk and Thor) that I have watched. Still I wanted to see “Doctor Strange” because of its good reviews and because I’m a big fan of Benedict Cumberbatch, but to be honest my expectations were low.

In the film, we follow the talented but arrogant neurosurgeon Doctor Strange (Cumberbatch) who loses the use of his hands in a car accident and travels to Kamar-Taj in the Himalayas to be healed. Under the guidance of the Ancient One (Tilda Swinton), he learns the secrets of hidden worlds of mysticism and alternate dimensions and befriends sorcerers Mordo (Chiwetel Ejiofor) and Wong (Benedict Wong). Eventually Strange & Co. must save the Earth from the evil sorcerer Kaecilius (Mads Mikkelsen) and the powerful Dormammu of the Dark Dimension (who is actually Benedict Cumberbatch, too!).

Let me tell you straight away: I loved the film! “Doctor Strange” is highly entertaining, action-packed and so funny that the audience (me included) roared with laughter several times. The special effects are *marvel*-lous, bending and turning whole universes inside out, which left me totally dizzy. Benedict Cumberbatch is perfect as Strange and it is a stroke of genius to make the Ancient One a woman instead of an old, bearded man. It is not the first time that we see Tilda Swindon in a male role, by the way, just think of Orlando in “Orlando” and Gabriel in “Constantine”.

All in all the casting is great, although it is difficult for me to watch my fellow Dane Mads Mikkelsen in the role of Kaecilius. I’ve never quite understood what Hollywood sees in Mikkelsen as he only has one facial expression! The only moderately entertaining thing to come from his casting was him jokingly complaining about Benedict Cumberbatch in Danish papers, wanting revenge because Cumberbatch first killed his older brother (the very talented Lars Mikkelsen as Charles August Magnussen) in “Sherlock” and is now battling Mads himself as Kaecilius in “Doctor Strange”.

Still, Mikkelsen is not enough to ruin “Doctor Strange” for me and I can’t wait for the sequel. It was just such a pleasant surprise that a Marvel Comics film could be that intelligent, entertaining and funny that I have to give it four out of five stars: \*\*\*\*

© Lise Lyng Falkenberg, 2016