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Published June 4th, 2014 'Maleficent' By Derek Zemrak



You know summer is approaching - communities are preparing for Grad Nights, proms, graduations and blockbuster movies. This past weekend Disney released "Maleficent," which has all the elements for a major summer blockbuster - it was made with an estimated \$200 million budget.

"Maleficent" stars Angelina Jolie - two-time Oscar recipient for the film "Girl, Interrupted" and a Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award she received at the 2014 Academy Awards. She stars as the evil villain Maleficent who was first introduced in the 1959 Disney classic "Sleeping Beauty." The movie tells the story - in the style of the Broadway play "Wicked" - of how Maleficent became the person she is now. Maleficent was once a good, kind horned fairy who was loved and admired in the fairy kingdom where she lived. Everything changed when Maleficent experienced how cruel humans can be as a result of greed. She must learn

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unconditional love in order to return to happier days. Ellen Fanning ("Super 8," "We Bought a Zoo") plays Aurora, the Sleeping Beauty.

Maleficent is a spectacular, visual piece of art that should be experienced in the theater and not on an iPhone. The film is directed by two-time Oscar winner Robert Stromberg, who won his Oscars for art direction in "Alice in Wonderland" and "Avatar." This is Stromberg's directorial debut. His illustration of the beauty of filmmaking is visible in each scene as his strong direction comes through in the performances of both Jolie and Fanning.

Seven-time Oscar recipient and 12-time Oscar nominee Rick Baker ("Ed Wood," "An American Werewolf in London," "Men in Black") is the special makeup effects artist on the film. Baker is the master of his craft and I predict another Oscar nomination for his work in "Maleficent." The makeup in the movie is astonishing.

For all you trivia buffs - "Maleficent" will go down in history as the first movie role for Vivienne Jolie-Pitt, daughter of Jolie and Brad Pitt, as she plays Aurora at age 5.

"Maleficent" is rated PG with a total running time (TRT) of 97 minutes. The film's battle scenes, green smoke and the dark forest trees maybe too scary for the little ones.

Listen to Derek every Saturday morning at 8 a.m. on Real to Reel, 1450AM KEST.

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