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Revisiting “The Hunger Games” [REVIEW]

Yiran Cao, Volunteer Reporter

In “The Hunger Games,” I see a brutal depiction of a dystopian world in which political darkness and social injustice are blatantly obvious. But behind this jungle world full of machinery and technology, the movie delves into the complexity and depth of the female characters in their struggle for love and survival. Especially the female protagonist, Katniss, who is portrayed not only as a warrior in the game of survival, but also as a symbol of women’s growth and the need and value of love.



Lionsgate Entertainment

The core of the movie lies in revealing that, even in a world strictly governed by rules, women’s vitality stems from love. In a society dominated by the rules of a cruel game, Katniss portrays the resilience of a strong courageous woman in an environment where we women are not expected to do so. Her coming-of-age story is not only about physical maturity, but also about awakening and self-discovery.

The movie’s sets are exquisitely designed, with each location having its own unique style and atmosphere, from the barren District 12 to the glitzy capital city. The bright colors and exaggerated styling of the capital city demonstrate an illusory and superficial society, contrasting with the simplicity and authenticity of District 12. While the grime and simplicity of District 12 reflect the poverty and oppression of the people, the opulence and excess of the capital symbolize the corruption and vanity of the ruling class. This stark contrast is not only visually striking, but also tells a story of social inequality without words.

Color plays an important role in the film. Katniss’ costumes go from initial gray and brown tones to bright and flashy. This shift in color not only reflects her transformation from an ordinary teenage girl to a public figure, but also symbolizes the change and growth of her inner world.

The movie's narrative is tightly paced and tense. The movie skillfully leads the audience's emotions to each climax; from the selection of contestants at the beginning, to the tense atmosphere of entering the arena, and then to each life-and-death battle. Especially in the arena scenes, the movie successfully creates a sense of urgency and danger through fast editing and tense music, making the audience feel as if they are in that cruel world.

The special effects and action scenes in the movie are equally impressive. Every fight and escape is full of excitement and shows the high level of visual effects the movie production team achieved. These scenes are not only a visual treat, but also heighten the theme of the movie—fighting injustice and pursuing freedom in a cruel environment.

The portrayal of Katniss is also a challenge to the traditional male hero role. In the movie, she is devoid of the heroic complex and sense of power that commonly characterize male heroes. Her success is not just a personal victory, but a challenge to the entire system of injustice. Her victory brings hope and proves that even in the darkest moments, the power of love and humanity can light the way forward.

In addition, Lynn Cohen, another female character in the movie, is more complex as a female dictator. Cohen seems to be driven by a desire for power and her character mimics male power figures. Her ending, dying in a trap she laid, reflects a critique of this desire for power.

The yellow dandelions that bloom in the spring at the end of the movie are not only a reminder of those who have died in the game, but also a symbol of new life. The life story of Katniss, who grows from a girl in a poor neighborhood to a warrior capable of changing the world, demonstrates the strength and courage of women in the face of difficulties and challenges.

The Hunger Games is not only a story of survival, it is also an extremely accomplished work both visually and narratively. It succeeds in presenting a world that is both brutal and beautiful through its exquisite set design, rich use of color and tight narrative pacing. Through Katniss' coming-of-age story, I see the strength and wisdom of women in the face of existential challenges as well as the complexity and depth of the struggle between love and survival. This movie is a profound exploration of the power of women, and it makes us rethink the role and value of women in the real world.