The Intouchables (2011)

Dir: Olivier Nakache, Eric Toledano

5/5

Genre: Biography, Comedy, Drama

Once I discovered what ‘Metamodernism’ was, I wondered that was there any post-modern film in my favourites - yes, there is but I don’t think I did dig that on the first viewing so let’s rewatch it!

The Intouchables is a genuinely funny and subtle arthouse movie. So what is Post-Modernism? It describes a broad movement that developed in the mid to late 20th century across philosophy, arts, architecture and criticism marking a departure from modernism; it is defined by an attitude of scepticism, irony and distrust towards ideologies and orthodox dogmas - an act of disobedience with universalism and notions like reason, progress, truth, reality, etc. Henceforth, literature and films have been influenced under this movement - that tends to breaking of all the rules of film-making. In cinema, in the late 50’s Post WWII the Hollywood was dominating all the theatres in Europe, thus as an act of resistance the French directors tried to subvert the process entirely - pioneered by ‘Breathless’ (1960) which broke all the rules of shooting and narration and that gave origin to a train of films known as ‘French New Wave’.

Intouchables itself is a French film and can be categorized under ‘French New Wave’, we get that in the starting itself as Driss (Omar Sy) speeds up the car beyond limits whilst Philippe (Francois Cluzet) lies paralyzed in the side and then a police chase with Einaudi’s sublime ‘Fly’ playing in the background - we notice that it is about disobedience to authority and making beautiful memories by taking risky choices. I mean it’s so refreshing to see a long drive in Barbados at Paris. We see the most noticeable motif of the film is rejecting all the classical arts, music and austere way of thinking (despite of it being the theme itself) with modern stuff. See, I’m the admirer of classical stuff myself but still it looks so good - for instance the music of Earth, Wind & Fire is excellent and it seems okay on how Driss dumps ‘Vivaldi’s Four Seasons’ against it - so funny. Speaking of symbols - we see cigarettes many times - now that’s not just as if they’re chilling out but it represents a deep thought often described by Edvard Munch in his paintings, check out this video:

<iframe width="560" height="315" src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/Iu2L7oA9QRg" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen></iframe>

There are also several shots that describe a classical painting for instance a shot represents Edward Hopper’s ‘Nighthawks’.

Another thing being this film is very realistically funny and very few are this subtle. Driss is so humorous and so is his alter-ego Phillipe but austere at times which is a great duo. I can’t stop laughing. The cinematography is breathtakingly beautiful while the soundtrack is so sublime - a combination of classical and modern music. The shots are incredible - it displays Paris in totally different angles that I’ve ever seen and the house of Phillipe is so artistically eye-catching. I completely love this film and it’s my 2nd favourite French film.