

Alice in Wonderland Movie Review

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No wonder that when a magnificent work by Lewis Carroll “Alice in Wonderland” was finally adapted for the screen, it was Tim Burton who got down to filming it. Despite the fact that Lewis Carroll wrote his book more than a century ago, back in 1865, Tim Burton was a perfect match to implement and make a reality of the amazing atmosphere of miracles and wonders depicted in it.

Still, for those familiar with Burton’s filmmaking technique and his films in horror genre, it is hardly possible to imagine how enjoyable the new movie is.

First of all, the plot of the film differs from the one of the book to a great extent. The Wonderland does not seem to change a lot, but Alice is already a grown-up. She was brought up in Victorian atmosphere of duty and obedience, but she struggles to assert herself as an independent personality. Besides, neither she, nor the inhabitants of the Wonderland believe that she is the Alice who will save them from the cruel Red Queen. The screenplay was ingeniously reshaped by Linda Woolverton.

Another great advantage of Tim Burton’s film is the witty, brilliant cast. It comprises both starlets, like Mia Wasikowska, and such established stars as Johnny Depp (The Mad Hatter), Helen Bonham Carter (the Red Queen), Anne Hathaway (the White Queen), and Alan Rickman (the Caterpillar). Tim Burton’s choice of actors is perfect. Alice is performed by Mia Wasikowska, who used to be unknown to the wide audience, which enables us to perceive the character as she is envisioned by the author, without any references to the previous works of the actress. At the same time, such celebrities as Johnny Depp, Helen Bonham Carter and Alan Rickman brought the charm of their personalities to the movie.

Some characters are particularly worthy of attention. The Mad Hatter, the Caterpillar and the Red Queen are the most prominent ones. And yet, all of them are charming and a little

bit mad at the same time. Some, like Tweedledee and Tweedledum, cannot be bothered with such nonsense, but others may realize it. Thus, the Mad Hatter is concerned with a problem: “Have I gone mad?” he asks Alice. Her answer is affirmative and she adds: “I’m afraid so. You are entirely bonkers. But I’ll tell you a secret. All the best people are.”¹

These characters are unique, but at the same time they are all around us. “You always know the characters. Everyone knows the characters, and they’re very well-defined characters — which I always thought was so fascinating. Most people who haven’t read the book definitely know the characters and reference them,”² says Johnny Depp in his interview.

Special attention should be paid to outstanding visual landscapes of the Wonderland. These Alice’s adventures became so phenomenally bright due to the modern day special effects and innovative technology that made it possible for Tim Burton to give way to his boundless imagination. He used the original illustrations by John Tenniel and the production design of Robert Stromberg. Spectacular costumes that were created by a designer Colleen Atwood also greatly contributed to the vividness and brightness of the entire movie.

“Alice in Wonderland” does not resemble any other film of this type in the same way as the book by Lewis Carroll does not resemble any other fairy tales. Tim Burton and his crew created a masterpiece. Without a doubt, “Alice in Wonderland” is a cross-category Oscar contender.

Notes

1. *Alice in Wonderland*, directed by Tim Burton. (2010; Los Angeles, CA: Walt Disney Pictures, 2010), DVD.
2. Krystal Clark, "Interview: Johnny Depp for Alice in Wonderland," *ScreenCrave*, last modified March 5, 2010, <http://screencrave.com/2010-03-05/interview-johnny-depp-for-alice-in-wonderland/>.

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Bibliography

Alice in Wonderland. Directed by Tim Burton. 2010. Los Angeles, CA: Walt Disney Pictures, 2010. DVD.

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