

Transcript видео к статье «Film and book review in English» (www.engblog.ru)

The first in a trilogy of adaptations from Suzanne Collins' widely popular and critically acclaimed box series of the same name, this science-fiction action drama directed by Gary Ross was released on March 23rd, quickly grossing over \$150 million dollars on opening weekend, the most ever for a non-sequel.

The film stars Jennifer Lawrence and Josh Hutcherson as a pair of so-called "star-crossed lover" teenagers who live in a poor district of a dystopian nation-state set sometime in the distant future that's ruled by wealthy individuals in the capitol. After a great deal of exposition and shaky-camera fanfare, the titular "Hunger Games" are set into motion following a lottery drawing that selects our heroes as two lucky "tributes", forced to fight to the death against 22 other teenagers for reasons only poorly, and quickly explained. But first, they're literally paraded around to the world, giving the nation more time to place their bets on who might win.

Elizabeth Banks, Woody Harrelson, Stanley Tucci, Lenny Kravitz, and Donald Sutherland round out the supporting cast, which despite lending a great deal of wisdom and credibility to the script, are mostly wasted in their smaller roles. I say mostly, because Tucci's scene-chewing role as The Hunger Games TV-host was a fun and memorable one - it's not often we get to see an accomplished Oscar-nominated actor wearing ridiculous outfits and sporting a giant blue hair-do.

Borrowing heavily from stories of yesteryear like "The Most Dangerous Game", "Lord Of The Flies", and even "The Running Man", the focal-point of this picture is the gladiator-style no-holds-barred competition amongst 24 teenagers, apparently broadcast live on televisions across the nation. Inherently, the reasons behind why such a competition exists is what makes this story fascinating, and interesting - unfortunately, though, the film adaptation does little to explain anything that happens. Instead, watching kids murder each other for the 74th-consecutive year in a row for a supposed "sacrifice" is treated with merely cursory emotions, the audience forced to simply accept that these barbaric rituals not only make sense, but serve as universally accepted entertainment in a post-apocalyptic environment.

While none of the acting here is unbelievable, I was definitely expecting more from newcomer Lawrence who was amazingly impressive in last year's Academy-nominated "Winter's Bone", on-screen here for nearly the entire 142 minute runtime, rarely does she exhibit anything close to that earlier performance. Based on the best-selling novel that relies heavily on gruesome violence and the struggles of surviving in the wilderness, never once does this PG-13 film adaptation come close to satisfying these more R-rated themes, leaving the movie feeling like a watered-down basic-cable edit of a much more ambitious film. Far too much time here is spent developing the concept, and the run-up to the "games", and very little is spent developing any of the other teenager gladiators, all of whom die one-by-one without so much as a mild reaction from the audience, or their co-stars.

While it's easy to consult the book for these missing developments and backstory, it is important, no, essentially - that as an honest and accurate film review, one must ignore all outside medium, and judge this picture solely on the merits contained within. If "The Hunger Games" is required reading to truly appreciate, and grasp the importance of its film-adaptation, then such a film hasn't actually accomplished its goal effectively, has it?

Besides meaningful characters, a well-paced script, or a satisfactory back-story, the other thing sorely missing from this movie is a sense of scope. We're repeatedly told these games are a

national phenomenon, but the true celebrity status of the contestants is very difficult to appreciate when you're forced to imagine it entirely for yourself.

Couple that with an overused and downright motion-sickness-inducing camera and editing style early in the movie, and what you're left with is a very interesting concept that's rather haphazardly executed. Younger audience, and fans of the book will find plenty to enjoy here though, as the script stays decently faithful to its source-material, especially given the restrictions of the shorter format, and PG-13 rating. An intriguing look at a twisted future-society, fun action sequences, and a simple romance sub-plot will keep this movie interesting, but is it decidedly a far-cry from the "masterpiece" blockbuster many fan-girls are touting it is. "The Hunger Games", "Exciting and enjoyable, but unimpressive". Now that you've heard my review, let's check out some of yours in the YouTube comments.

Here's the Rate-O-Matic for "The Hunger Games"... a SIX and a NINE. Those of you who hadn't read the original book really enjoyed this film for its action, the story, and the main characters - and those that were familiar with Collins' novel loved it even more, citing it as a decently faithful adaptation. Your scores averaged to an "Awesome". I liked this movie, and it was a fun way to spend two hours... but given the level of hype it received, I was positively underwhelmed by the been-there-done-there treatment of the murder-as-entertainment focus. And the violently fast camera and editing work really made this movie painful, and confusing to watch at times. I thought it was Good though.