

Review of the film Death on the Nile by the Seconde 7

On Thursday April 2nd we went to the Vox cinema to see *Death on the Nile*, in English. It is a film directed by Kenneth Branagh and adapted from a book by Agatha Christie *Death on the Nile*. It follows detective Hercule Poirot as he investigates a murder aboard a luxurious cruise on the Nile River. As secrets unravel among passengers, Poirot must recover jealousy and deception to reveal the murder. It's a surprising and unexpected ending.

The conflict starts during the couple's honeymoon where they are being followed by Jacqueline de Bellefort: Simon's ex-fiancée and Linnet's former best friend. Jacqueline is very angry and jealous because Simon broke up with her to marry Linnet. To escape from her, the couple decides to take a luxury cruise ship down the Nile River. During the cruise, tension rises between the passengers who all have a reason to hate Linnet. One night, Linnet is found dead in her cabin. Soon after a bunch of people who might have an idea on who might be the killer are murdered before they can reveal anything. All of a sudden detective Hercule Poirot locks all the remaining passengers in a room to find the killer.

Hercule Poirot is a very smart detective travelling in Egypt. He is known for his neat appearance and his moustache. He is a calm man who likes everything to be tidy. He observes people kindly to know who is guilty. Even though he is proud of his talent, he is kind and always wants to justice to be done.

Doctor Bessner is a serious man who wears glasses and very classic clothes. He has the appearance of an educated and professional doctor. He is calm and very intelligent. He is always ready to help others when they are sick or hurt. He doesn't talk much but he watches everything happening on the boat very carefully.

Linnet is the victim. She's the rich heiress: glamorous, elegant and beautiful. In the movie, she wears expensive dresses and jewellery which shows that she's a powerful woman, although she looks anxious because she's feeling like someone wants to kill her during her honeymoon cruise. She's extremely wealthy and is used to getting everything she wants. She's also charismatic but very arrogant, especially towards Jacqueline, that she betrayed by marrying Simon.

Simon is presented as Jacqueline's fiancé at the beginning of the movie: romantic, charming, tall, athletic and very handsome but poor, he's described as the perfect man by Jacqueline.

Jacqueline de Bellefort is presented as a passionate woman. At the beginning of the movie, she appears loving, loyal, and determined, ready to do anything for Simon, whom she deeply loves. She has a strong, almost obsessive personality, and her love makes her vulnerable. After Linnet and Simon betray her, she slowly changes: she becomes darker, unstable, and unpredictable. Her elegance and charm are still present, but they contrast with her deep inner suffering. She often seems emotionally fragile, even dangerous, because she is consumed by jealousy and a desire for revenge.

Rosalie Otterbourne is the niece of Salome Otterbourne, a famous singer, but also her business manager. She is determined, but sometimes she can also be stubborn. She really likes Bouc, despite the fact that her mother dislikes him. She hates Hercule Poirot, because he loves himself more than anything else.

Salome Otterbourne is a famous black Jazz singer. At the beginning of the film, she discovers Hercule Poirot. She is an important character, because she plays a key role in the love story between Bouc and Rosalie. We later discover that she likes Poirot, and she also plays in the opening scene as singer.

Bouc is Hercule Poirot's best friend; they met during a trip to Egypt at the pyramids of Giza. He appears formal and is well dressed. He's also in love with Rosalie, even if his mother disapproves of their relationship. At the end, he gets killed by Jacqueline.

The staging of *Death on the Nile* is based on an elegant and spectacular aesthetic. The decorations, including the boat and the Egyptian landscapes, create a luxurious atmosphere while reinforcing the closed-door of the investigation. The boat becomes an enclosed space that accentuates the tensions between the characters.

First, the movie starts with a World War I scene in black and white which makes a contrast with the rest of the story. These colors show the darkness and the seriousness of the war. This scene is like a memory to explain Poirot's past life and introduce him as a clever person with a good intuition.

The transition from black and white to colour marks an important break: black and white, more sober, evokes the past and a form of truth, while colour, richer and brighter, underlines the present but also its deceptive side.

Then, the jazz club scenes are well-represented with good music. The dim lighting, instruments, clothes, food, and music put the viewer in a 1930s atmosphere. In the first jazz club scene, the dresses show people's social differences. For example, Linnet's impressive dress grabs the viewer's attention and shows her importance in society.

The sets, immerse the viewer in an idealised Egypt: grandiose temples, bright landscapes and especially the boat, which becomes a real closed space. This enclosed setting contrasts with the immensity of the desert and reinforces the feeling of confinement of the characters.

Light plays an essential role. On the outside, it is warm and bright, almost too perfect, which gives an impression of unreality. Inside, it becomes darker and more contrasting, with shadow areas that translate the secrets and tension of the investigation.

The costumes, elegant and sophisticated, reflect the social status of the characters and participate in this idea of appearance: everything is beautiful on the surface, but hides conflicts and lies.

Finally, the music and songs reinforce the dramatic atmosphere. They accompany emotions and accentuate moments of tension, adding an almost melancholic dimension to the film.

Thus, the staging of *Death on the Nile* is very visually elaborate, even if its aesthetics can sometimes take over the detective plot and make the film quite superficial.

In conclusion, we enjoyed the movie because it is very beautiful to watch, even if some scenes look a bit artificial.