

Film Title and Release Date: *The Red Shoes* (2021)

Length of Film in Minutes: 96 Minutes

Film Genre: Music, romance, drama and dance film

Reviewer Name and Grade: Marwan G., 11th Grade

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Filmed at Sadler's Wells Theatre, *The Red Shoes* comes full circle. Inspired by the 1948 Powell and Pressburger film, Matthew Bourne's theatrical reimagining of *The Red Shoes* has met with critical and popular acclaim, with this 2020 production giving access to a wider audience.

The ballet tells the story of Victoria Page (played by Ashley Shaw) – a young, ambitious dancer given the chance to audition for the prestigious Lermontov Company. Victoria argues with the pianist; composer Julian Craster (Dominic North). Seeing himself as a cut above accompanist, Craster and Page bicker. Both are stunned when Lermontov's assistant confirms that they are in. Lermontov (Adam Cooper) – a brooding, egotistical presence – is tired of the old repertoire. With Craster and Page, he develops a ballet based on the Hans Christian Andersen fairytale, a story about a dancer's desire for fame, and the price to be paid. As Craster, Lermontov and Page work together, Victoria and Julian fall in love. Lermontov, infuriated at being passed over, dismisses them from the company. As director and choreographer, Bourne examines their relationship as they struggle for work – stints at a music hall are the best they can get. There are too many omissions from the blessings of the page. She dreams of returning to Lermontov in her red shoes at all costs.

Red shoes capture the post-war energy of the Powell and Pressburger films. She sits in front of the piano and digs for hours. This ballet is about both pursuing creativity and mastering it. Les Brotherston's award-winning costume design also shines on the camera. It's a moment of temptation for Victoria and us when the page shows off her coveted red top.

The Red Shoes offers an encyclopaedic view of dance, referencing *Rites of Spring* and *Les Sylphides*, among ballet's greatest hits. The production reveals endless asides and nods – it is Bourne's most self-referential work. In an accompanying documentary, Bourne admits his first introduction to ballet was through film. This sideways step into an elitist world makes sense when we are watching *The Red Shoes*. The virtuosity is there, but so are the big, cinematic feelings: desire, ambition, obsession. A distinctive blend of Bourne's classic and contemporary techniques is accentuated by the soundtrack of composer Bernard Herrmann. Impressed by its "bittersweet, romantic" quality, Bourne puts awkward sounds at the heart of his red shoes. When the show dances seemingly lyrical and sensual, Harman's dazzling spiral reflects her trauma when she realizes she's no longer in control.

This work is the second incarnation of Bourne's red shoes, resulting in sharper and more focused editing. By cross-referencing Powell and Pressburger with the beginning of the fairy tale, the red shoes become crazy and intense. The desire to dance to a new world while being drawn into a much darker and older world gives *The Red Shoes* a clear advantage. The ambiguity that love

letters and warning sirens, red shoes see themselves, is why it excels at all levels. It's full of melancholy beauty, not out of place.

This film should have 4 stars I enjoyed this film and found it worthwhile to watch but it's recommended for the people who love to watch : music, romance, drama and dance film, because it's all in this movie.