

Jupiter Ascending



Jupiter Ascending is a visually stunning science fiction film directed by the Wachowskis, known for their groundbreaking work on "The Matrix" series. Released in 2015, the film attempts to blend epic space opera with a classic Cinderella story, exploring themes of destiny, identity, and the exploitation of resources and beings. While it received mixed reviews from critics and audiences alike, it has developed a cult following for its ambitious scope and unique aesthetic. This article delves into the film's plot, characters, production, themes, and its reception, providing an in-depth analysis of this ambitious project.

Plot Summary

At the core of Jupiter Ascending lies the story of Jupiter Jones (played by Mila Kunis), a young woman of Russian descent living in Chicago. Struggling with a mundane life as a house cleaner, she discovers she is far more than just an ordinary human.

Introduction to Jupiter

- Background: Jupiter is introduced as a hardworking immigrant who dreams of a better life. Despite her efforts, she feels trapped in her routine.
- Inciting Incident: Jupiter's life takes a dramatic turn when she is attacked by alien bounty hunters. She is rescued by Caine Wise (Channing Tatum), a genetically engineered soldier with canine traits.

The Revelation of Her Heritage

- Royal Bloodline: Caine reveals that Jupiter is the reincarnation of the matriarch of the powerful Abrasax family, a dynasty that rules over various planets and harvests life across the universe for a process called "harvesting."
- Conflict of Interest: The three siblings of the Abrasax family, Balem (Eddie Redmayne), Titus (Douglas Booth), and Kalique (Tuppence Middleton), are all vying for control over Jupiter's claim to Earth and its resources, leading to a power struggle.

Main Characters

The character development in Jupiter Ascending plays a crucial role in driving the narrative. The film features a diverse cast, each contributing to the story's complexity.

Jupiter Jones

- Character Arc: Jupiter starts as a passive character, but as the story progresses, she evolves into a decisive figure who learns about her true identity and the responsibilities that come with it.
- Motivation: Her character is driven by a desire for freedom and purpose, ultimately leading her to reclaim her rightful place in the universe.

Caine Wise

- Role: Caine serves as both a protector and love interest for Jupiter. His character embodies loyalty and courage, often risking his life for her safety.
- Background: As a genetically modified being, Caine struggles with societal acceptance and personal identity, enhancing the film's exploration of what it means to be human.

The Abrasax Family

- Balem Abrasax: The primary antagonist, played by Eddie Redmayne, Balem is cold and manipulative, willing to do whatever it takes to maintain control over the family's empire.
- Titus Abrasax: A charming yet deceitful character, Titus seeks to court Jupiter for his own gain, illustrating the various ways power can be sought.
- Kalique Abrasax: Representing a more nurturing aspect of the family,

Kalique's role adds complexity to the dynamics of the Abrasax siblings.

Production Details

The production of Jupiter Ascending was a massive undertaking, marked by innovative visual effects and ambitious world-building.

Visual Effects and Aesthetic

- Design: The film's visual style is a hallmark of the Wachowskis, featuring elaborate sets, stunning CGI, and a vibrant color palette.
- Spacecraft and Worlds: From the intricate design of the spacecraft to the lush environments of alien planets, the visual effects team created a vivid universe that draws viewers into its grandeur.

Filming Locations

- Chicago: Many scenes were filmed in and around Chicago, utilizing the city's architecture to portray a realistic Earth setting.
- London: Several of the film's more fantastical elements were shot in London, where studios provided the necessary facilities for special effects and set design.

Music and Score

- Composer: The score, composed by Michael Giacchino, complements the film's epic tone, enhancing the emotional weight of key scenes and action sequences.
- Themes: The music reflects the film's themes of adventure and discovery, perfectly aligning with Jupiter's journey.

Themes and Symbolism

Jupiter Ascending is rich in themes and symbolism, making it a film that invites deeper analysis.

Destiny and Identity

- Self-Discovery: Jupiter's journey is one of self-discovery, emphasizing the importance of understanding oneself and one's place in the universe.

- Reincarnation: The concept of reincarnation plays a significant role in the narrative, suggesting that our past lives influence our present circumstances.

Exploitation and Resources

- Resource Extraction: The film critiques the exploitation of resources, drawing parallels between the Abrasax family's harvesting practices and real-world environmental issues.
- Human Value: It raises questions about the value of life and the moral implications of commodifying beings for profit.

Love and Sacrifice

- Romantic Elements: The relationship between Jupiter and Caine adds a layer of emotional depth, showcasing themes of love transcending societal boundaries.
- Sacrifice: Characters are often faced with choices that require personal sacrifices for the greater good, reinforcing the film's moral messaging.

Reception and Legacy

Upon its release, Jupiter Ascending received a mixed response from critics. While some praised its ambition and visual effects, others criticized its convoluted plot and pacing.

Critical Response

- Critics' Opinions: Some appreciated the film as a bold and original work, while others deemed it overly pretentious and lacking coherence.
- Audience Reaction: Despite mixed reviews, the film garnered a dedicated fanbase, leading to discussions about its themes and aesthetics long after its release.

Box Office Performance

- Financial Outcome: Jupiter Ascending struggled at the box office, grossing approximately \$183 million against a production budget of \$176 million, which was considered disappointing.
- Cult Following: Over time, the film has gained a cult status, with fans celebrating its unique vision and artistic choices.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Jupiter Ascending stands out as a complex and ambitious film that intertwines a classic fairytale narrative with grand science fiction elements. Its exploration of identity, love, and exploitation resonates with many viewers, making it a subject of analysis and discussion. While it may not have achieved commercial success, its artistic merit and imaginative storytelling continue to captivate audiences, ensuring its place in the realm of modern science fiction cinema. The film serves as a testament to the Wachowskis' vision and creativity, inviting viewers to ponder the vast possibilities of the universe and our role within it.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main plot of 'Jupiter Ascending'?

'Jupiter Ascending' follows Jupiter Jones, a young woman who discovers she is the reincarnation of a powerful intergalactic queen. She becomes embroiled in a battle for control of Earth as she learns about her royal heritage and the dangers that come with it.

Who directed 'Jupiter Ascending'?

'Jupiter Ascending' was directed by the Wachowskis, known for their work on 'The Matrix' series.

What themes are explored in 'Jupiter Ascending'?

The film explores themes of destiny, power, class struggle, and the idea of ownership over planets and resources, reflecting on the value of human life in an expansive universe.

Who are the main characters in 'Jupiter Ascending'?

The main characters include Jupiter Jones, played by Mila Kunis, and Caine Wise, played by Channing Tatum. Other notable characters are Balem Abrasax, portrayed by Eddie Redmayne, and Jupiter's family members.

What visual effects technology was used in 'Jupiter Ascending'?

The film utilized cutting-edge visual effects technology, including extensive CGI and practical effects, to create its rich, detailed universe and intricate action sequences.

How was 'Jupiter Ascending' received by critics and

audiences?

'Jupiter Ascending' received mixed reviews from critics, with some praising its visual style and ambition, while others criticized its plot and character development. It has gained a cult following over the years.

Are there any notable references or inspirations in 'Jupiter Ascending'?

The film draws inspiration from various sources, including classic science fiction literature, fairy tales, and mythology, particularly in its themes of royal lineage and the struggle against oppressive forces.

What is the significance of the title 'Jupiter Ascending'?

The title signifies Jupiter's journey of self-discovery and her rise to power within an intergalactic hierarchy, symbolizing her transition from an ordinary life to one filled with extraordinary challenges and responsibilities.

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