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The Last Jedi is the latest installment of Disney's newest Star Wars trilogy. Taking place after Episode VII, The Force Awakens, The Last Jedi continues the story of Rey, Finn, and Kylo Ren in the conflict between the remnants of the First Order and the Resistance.

Familiar faces make a comeback as both Carrie Fisher and Mark Hamill return to reprise their roles as General Organa and Luke Skywalker, respectively.

The Last Jedi is, without a doubt, the most visually striking film in the Star Wars series. The effects are sharp and realistic, the space battles are rendered gloriously with multiple camera angles and masterful shot design, and the vistas of the latter half of the film are stunning. Few other movies contain these many jaw-dropping spectacles.

While the performances range from very good to passable.

Mark Hamill as Luke Skywalker steals the show, as expected. Hamill is an odd, ambiguous character in this film, which is a stark contrast to his characterizations in previous films, and Hamill plays it very well. The most entertaining scenes in this film involve Luke, namely the precious few scenes where he is training Rey.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the writing. Characters are poorly written with motivations that either doesn't make sense or just don't exist, plotlines go nowhere or end up being unnecessary, and several plot points from the previous film are either changed, directly contradicted or avoided altogether.

This could be a fault of the previous director, J.J. Abrams's "mystery box" directing style which deliberately leaves things mysterious for the audience, but this film's director, Rian Johnson, is certainly a contributor.

One thing that you should know before watching this film: The Last Jedi, for better or for worse,

subverts every expectation. Do not get excited about wherever it may seem that the story is currently going because you will find that not only does it not go in the direction that you might expect, but the results you are left with are inevitably disappointing.

The Last Jedi has a few marks that reveal Disney's behind-the-scenes influence. The awkward attempts at humor and forced romance between returning character Finn and new character Rose are only two examples.

There are also a couple of poorly implemented moral messages that just feel out of place. The negative emphasis placed upon war profiteering and animal cruelty was not only unnecessary but were just not entertaining. For these reasons, the film does not feel like it fits within the Star Wars series.

That all being said, casual fans or even uninitiated moviegoers can expect to find a great experience with this film.

In an almost ironic fashion, the lack of connection that this film has with its predecessor can be attractive to new viewers, as there is very little necessary background information that isn't conveyed within this film.

In some ways, Episode VIII is better for those who have not previously watched Episode VII, or any other Star Wars media, for that matter.

Star Wars: The Last Jedi is being shown in the Bonnie on March 29th, 30th, and 31st.



Showings
 in
 Bonnie
 Auditorium

Thursday:
 Mar. 29
 8PM

Friday:
 Mar. 30
 8PM

Saturday:
 Mar. 31
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