



***Mamma Mia!***  
**Directed by Phyllida Lloyd**  
**Adapted Screenplay by Catherine Johnson**  
**(Based on her Musical Book)**

***Mamma Mia!***, directed by Phyllida Lloyd, is the film adaptation of a hit Broadway musical by Catherine Johnson. This film had all the elements to be a fun and entertaining movie, but somehow it did not really reach its potential. With the outrageous yet humorous plot, the catchy songs (from ABBA), and Meryl Streep in the main role, this movie should have been much better.

The movie begins with "Sophie" (Amanda Seyfried) and her two best friends reuniting the day before Sophie's wedding. In all the excitement, Sophie tells them that she has read the teenage diary of her mother, "Donna" (Meryl Streep), and invited three men who she believes could be her father to the wedding. Sophie has never met her father because she was the result of a summer fling her mother had twenty years before, and even her mother was unsure about Sophie's paternity.

Of course, all three men "Sam," "Harry," and "Bill" (played by Pierce Brosnan, Colin Firth, and Stellan Skarsgård, respectively) accept Sophie's invitation, and coincidentally arrive at the remote Greek island where Sophie and Donna live at the exact same time. Sophie has the opportunity to meet and bond with all three of her potential fathers, and she's excited they've all come to attend her wedding, despite the fact that her mother is not so delighted about this unexpected surprise. The rest of the story follows a fairly predictable plot line, but it's still somewhat entertaining (as long as the viewer is not distracted by the choreography). However, the ending ruined the whole movie for me.

Simply put, the choreography and singing throughout the entire movie was bizarre. It is not unusual for the cast to break out into song or dance in a musical, but in this case most of the time it was simply distracting. The plot would become serious and it seemed like a big moment was about to unfold,

but then suddenly a song would begin and the cast in the background would do some strange dancing that did not necessarily fit with the story happening on screen.

In one instance, Sophie and her fiancé (Dominic Cooper) are having a somewhat serious discussion on the beach, when they start singing to each other. Then, suddenly, men appear out of nowhere, dancing on the dock, wearing flippers and snorkel masks! This sort of thing was typical throughout the entire film.

And yet, despite all the negatives, Meryl Streep still found a way to shine as Donna. I was thoroughly impressed by her ability to play a role that so drastically different from her normal dramatic characters. Since she was playing a character so different from the nun in *Doubt* or even the editor in *The Devil Wears Prada* (and with singing and dancing too), I believed she was setting herself up for failure. But she exceeded my expectations greatly—Streep was both entertaining and humorous.

Otherwise, I was just disappointed by this film. I really thought this was going to be a movie I would buy and watch many times. But it was not that at all; it was an average movie with an average plot and strange dancing and singing numbers.

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