



Peterborough Arts Cinema

Films that make you think

**Thursday 9th Oct.
7:30 pm**

The Phoenician Scheme

15, 101 mins US, 2025

Director; Wes Anderson

Stars; Benicio del Toro, Mia Threapleton, Michael Cera

Wealthy businessman Zsa-zsa Korda appoints his only daughter, a nun, as sole heir to his estate. As Korda embarks on a new enterprise, they soon become the target of scheming tycoons, foreign terrorists and determined assassins.



Del Toro moved from Puerto Rico to Pennsylvania as a teen. His breakout role was as a mumbly, small-time crook in *The Usual Suspects*.

Interview: *You and Wes Anderson actually collaborated on this.*

Del Toro: Wes is a great director, and we know him as a director, and we know his films. But really, he is maybe a better writer. And what I meant by that is, like, I think actors look for characters that are layered, and by that I mean may contradict themselves. They break the stereotype - let's put it that way - if they contradict themselves. And then, you know, when you get a character that has an arc, like Zsa-zsa in "The Phoenician Scheme" has a hell of an arc, then as an actor, you're doing interpretations, right? So now you're almost in the cockpit of the character and of the story. You're part of this - of what's happening, and you're looking at the arc, and you're making sure that it's believable where the character is going to end up. So it's a real rich character to tackle.

So much is said about Wes Anderson's aesthetic

Yeah, I mean, he works with an incredible art director, Adam Stockhausen. He's worked with Wes, I think, most of his films. And they collaborate amazingly, and these things come to life. And it's like you're in fantasyland, but you're in real fantasyland. Wes doesn't use CGI that much. I don't think so. I think very little, really. But the first thing you're trained to - if you do film, you train yourself - is to erase the camera. It's not there. And when you find yourself in the moment and you're acting, the set will not get in the way. You know, the camera is not going to get in the way. What does happen in a Wes Anderson film is when you walk in, the set will embrace you to really feel that you are in this room, in this dining room, in this airplane.

Wes got real artwork in several of these scenes. And, you know, I remember there was a Magritte there that actually belonged to me between action and cut, so it was kind of nice. There was a Renoir as well. It's in the bedroom of my daughter's room, Liesl, that's played by Mia Threapleton. The paintings came with security guards. You know, there were a couple of people there watching the painting and making sure no one was touching them or, you know, the light were not too close to the painting, et cetera.

Milena Canonero is the wardrobe designer. She's won four Oscars. She worked with Stanley Kubrick. She is incredible. I mean, everything is from the time. And, you know, sometimes you build your character from the shoes up, from the bottom up. And it's like the shoes will just make you stand and walk in a particular way. And the shoes of Zsa-zsa were like, you know, good, strong, big shoes (laughter).

I can imagine there's sort of an energy to being a part of an ensemble cast like "The Phoenician Scheme" and, really, any Wes Anderson film. You're on set with all of these people. That energy, can you describe it?

It's part of the experience of doing a Wes Anderson film. He has an incredible cast in this film that really motivates you and inspires you. You know, it's like, working with Tom Hanks and Bryan Cranston, Riz Ahmed...

