

Midnight in Paris

Cert 12A USA/Fr 2011 94 mins

Crew

Director/writer	Woody Allen
Cinematography	Johanne Debas Darius Khondji
Film Editing	Alisa Lepselter
Original Music	Stephane Wrembel

Cast

Owen Wilson	Gil
Rachel McAdams	Inez
Michael Sheen	Paul
Marion Cotillard	Adriana
Kathy Bates	Gertrude Stein
Tom Hiddleston	F. Scott Fitzgerald
Adrien Brody	Salvador Dalí
Carla Bruni	Museum guide

Synopsis

Paris, the present. Gil and Inez, a young American engaged couple are visiting the city in company with Inez's parents, who are on a business trip. Gil is a writer, and is hoping to find inspiration to help him finish his first novel.

Late one evening Gil goes for a stroll on his own, and is persuaded to join a happy crowd in a vintage car who are on their way to a party.

There, to his astonishment, he finds famous writers and artists from the Paris of the 1920s, being entertained by Cole Porter at the piano. Next night, unsure of how – or whether! - all this happened, Gil returns to the rendezvous point again.....



- The film premiered at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival, and has gone on to be Allen's highest grossing box office success. It recently won the Golden Globe and Oscar awards for Best Original Screenplay.
- Woody Allen's debut as a writer, *What's New Pussycat* (1965), was set in Paris. He has said "...if I didn't live in New York, Paris is the place I would live."



Reviews

....It's a simple, amusing moral yarn with the odd hint of Allen's comic anarchism of old. It's familiar, but breezily so, and the cast appear much more at ease than the recent *'You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger'*. Owen Wilson especially makes a charming, laidback Allen alter ego.

'Midnight in Paris' is a love letter to a city and, like *'Manhattan'*, opens with an adoring montage, set to jazz, of the city by day and night....There are ideas afoot about idolising past cultural figures and falsely imagining golden ages, but Gil's line 'I'm having an insight now, it's a minor one' best sums up the film's simple but honest vision.

Allen aims for mild surprise and amusement rather than anything more heady. It's all very recognisable but not tired, and the film's lightly-played time-travelling element gives *'Midnight in Paris'* a hint of boldness lacking in too many of Allen's recent films. It's fun and it's most welcome.

Dave Calhoun, Time Out

....With greater ease than of late, and an elegance that escaped his ragged lay-off in London, Allen has made an adorable bagatelle, soft as a daydream, happy to wear its intellectual hat at a cocked angle.

....What makes the central gag so buoyant is that Allen's icons are trapped in their own clichés. Corey Stoll, as robust, handsome Hemingway, extols flinty aphorisms ("All men fear death!"). As surrealist Dalí, Adrien Brody is dutifully potty, exclaiming "Da-lee" in a chorizo-thick accent as if expecting applause. Allison Pill, lately Scott Pilgrim's drummer, suffers suitable fits of emotional instability as Zelda Fitzgerald, F. Scott's (Tom Hiddleston) volatile spouse. The film is mocking its own pretensions; Gil even stops to pitch *The Discreet Charm Of The Bourgeoisie* to a bemused Buñuel.

There is wisdom at work here. Nostalgia is a form of denial, chides Allen. Every era glances back to another as the ideal. Grasp your own time. Something Gil begins to realise when transported back to the Belle Époque to meet Lautrec and Matisse. Hence, *Midnight In Paris* is not a magical return to Woody's heyday, rather a director thriving in the present.

Ian Nathan, Empire Magazine