



41st SEASON

ENGLISH FILM CLUB 2019 - 20

Massagno, LUX ART HOUSE

18.15

Friday, 22nd January 2021

A LITTLE CHAOS

2015

116 minutes

Directed by Alan Rickman

Starring: Matthias Schoenaerts, Kate Winslet, Alan Rickman

The year is 1682. Sabine De Barra (Ms. Winslet), a strong-willed and talented landscape designer, fulfils her chosen vocation in the gardens and countryside of France. One day, an unexpected invitation comes: Sabine is in the running for an assignment at the court of King Louis XIV (Mr. Rickman). Upon meeting with her, the King's renowned landscape artist André Le Notre (Matthias Schoenaerts) is initially disturbed by Sabine's distinctive eye and forward-thinking nature, but eventually chooses Sabine to build one of the main gardens at The Sun King's new Palace of Versailles. Under pressure of time and as she charts her own course, Le Notre comes to recognize the value of a little chaos in Sabine's process.

While pushing herself and her workers to complete the Rockwork Grove as an outdoor ballroom, Sabine negotiates the perilous rivalries and intricate etiquette of the court. As she challenges gender and class barriers. Sabine forges a surprising connection with the King himself, and wins a vote of confidence from the King's brother, Philippe (Academy Award nominee Stanley Tucci). As she gradually comes to terms with a tragedy in her past, Sabine's professional and personal interactions with André bring out honesty, compassion, and creativity in both of them.

Critics' comments:

While the plot might sound like a run-of-the-mill costume snooze, the actors bring it to life so that the esoteric customs of the past make sense among real people.

(Asia Frey – Lagniappe (Mobile AL) – August 23, 2018)

A Little Chaos doesn't quite convince as a depiction of life as a 17th century French aristocrat, and is longer than it needs to be, but Madame de Barra's story is an interesting one, and there's plenty to charm green-thumbed film-goers.

(Francesca Rudkin – New Zealand Herald – April 27, 2016)

We get ready for the sparks to fly, but the scenes between Winslet and Schoenaerts fall flat. In fact, we pay more attention to the beautiful costumes and art direction than to any exchange between the two romantic leads.

(David Lewis – San Francisco Chronicle – June 25, 2015)

It's a shame such a talented artist couldn't create a more memorable film, but the overlong "A Little Chaos" bogs down in a lackluster love story.

(Stephanie Merry – Washington Post – June 25, 2015)