

Empire Of Light

It was announced in April 2021 that Sam Mendes had set his next film, which he would write and direct himself at Searchlight Pictures. Olivia Colman was in talks to star and Roger Deakins was announced as cinematographer [4] Colman was confirmed in July, with Micheal Ward also joining the cast.[5] In December, Colin Firth, Toby Jones, Crystal Clarke and Tanya Moodie were added to the cast.[6] Tom Brooke and Hannah Onslow were confirmed to star in late February [7] Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross composed the film's score.[8] *Empire of Light* premiered at the Telluride Film Festival on 3 September 2022.[14] It received a limited theatrical release by Searchlight Pictures in the United States on 9 December 2022 and was released theatrically in the United Kingdom on 9 January 2023.[15][16] The story is set in the fall and winter of 1980-81 in the seaside town of Margate, Kent, around a palatial two-screen Art Deco theater that shows films that were new back then (including "Raging Bull," "Stir Crazy," and "9 to 5") and that fed the imagination of young Mendes, who based parts of the script on his youth. The result keeps seeming as if it's about to fully commit being another "Behold The Magic of the Movies" movies (we get a couple of those a year, at least; film awards voters like them) as well as a quasi-memoir that puts a new frame around an established director's work (there have been several of those recently as well; sometimes they're the same movie). And in the first third of "Empire of Light," there are many warning signs that the film is going to amount to nothing more than an Oscar campaign for itself. There's a projectionist played by Toby Jones who demonstrates how a projector works and talks about the persistence of vision and how light can shut out darkness. Various characters keep urging the heroine, the lonely, workaholic duty manager Hilary Small (Olivia Colman), to go sit in an auditorium once in a while, and let cinema transport her away from her miseries (one guess as to whether she takes their suggestion). Mendes and his cinematographer Roger Deakins use the panoramic screen shape to emphasize how ordinary lives unfold within a landscape of history that the tiny figures in its foreground can't fully comprehend. The problem is that, at first, all the characters are written Small, not just Hilary, figurines of "ordinary people" that would seem condescending if the performers didn't give them life through body language and intonation, and if Mendes and Deakins didn't frame and light them with such care. In 1953-1954, artist René Magritte painted **The Empire of Lights**. It is the only time that Magritte used a title that was not his own. The intriguing oil painting displays a beautiful house lit up by its interior lights, and surrounded by the darkness of the night. Especially surreal is that the sky above the house and treeline is a daytime sky full of brightness and plump white clouds. It is a serene, mysterious scene.In **Empire of Light**, numerous versions of which exist, a dark, nocturnal street scene is set against a pastel-blue, light-drenched sky spotted with fluffy cumulus clouds. With no fantastic element other than the single paradoxical combination of day and night, René Magritte upsets a fundamental organizing premise of life. Sunlight, ordinarily the source of clarity, here causes the confusion and unease traditionally associated with darkness. The luminosity of the sky becomes unsettling, making the empty darkness below even more impenetrable than it would seem in a normal context. The bizarre subject is treated in an impersonal, precise style, typical of veristic Surrealist painting and preferred by Magritte since the mid-1920s. This poignant and emotional love story is set on the southern English coast in the turbulent 1980s. The film is centered on a rundown old cinema; the Empire. With its outmoded art deco and its peculiar staff, the movie theater is a constant in a time of social upheaval and political change. Poring over the pictures is the projectionist Norman, who guards his craft with love and precision. As the light beams onto the screen in the auditorium and the moviegoers witness the picture at play all of the is magic happening elsewhere. The relationship between Hilary and Stephen, the manager and her new hire grows into a testing but tender romance. Can their burgeoning love survive the rising tide of racism and the aching personal loneliness of a theater manager who has never seen a movie in her own cinema? The characters are the employees of a slightly shabby two-screen movie theater in a British seaside town in 1980. They tear off ticket stubs, they sweep up popcorn in the aisles, they do crossword puzzles in the breakroom. But Mendes and the legendary cinematographer Roger Deakins shoot them if they were movie stars. Every image is a masterpiece of light and shadow, the warm Art Deco stylings of the Empire theater contrasting against the bleakness of the sand and sea out the front window. **Trent Reznor & Atticus Ross** (The Social Network, Watchmen, Soul, Gone Girl, Mank, The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo) have recently been scoring the upcoming drama **Empire of Light**. The film is written and directed by Sam Mendes (American Beauty, 1917) and stars Olivia Colman, Michael Ward, Colin Firth, Toby Jones, Tom Brooke, Tanya Moodie and Crystal Clarke. The movie is set in an English seaside town in the early 1980s and tells a story about human connection and the magic of cinema. Mendes is also producing the project with Pippa Harris (Penny Dreadful, Call the Midwife) for Neal Street Productions. Empire of Light will premiere next month at the Toronto Film Festival and is scheduled to be released in U.S. theaters on December 9, 2022 by Searchlight Pictures.

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