

***Joker* is less of a *tour de force* and more of tragic caricature**

 By [Natalie Le Clue](#)

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I am as big a champion of the villain's story being told as you could hope to find. My academic research and vast collection of Evil Queen memorabilia can attest to this.

It stands to reason then that the first standalone film for Batman's greatest nemesis, *Joker*, would be a thrilling prospect. Unfortunately, *Joker* was more predictable than a daytime soap and, in sum, the film bordered on the edge of being a tragic caricature instead of a *tour de force* that most hoped it would be.



I like Joaquin Phoenix, and think he is a great actor, and while his performance is far from terrible there is also no shade or real complexity to his iteration of the character.

Little payoff and no climax

The tone of *Joker* is dark for all of its two-hour running time. What's more is that at the end of it, there is little payoff and absolutely no climax. And if you're expecting big plot surprises you best look elsewhere.



It is clear what director Todd Phillips attempted to do. He, along with the writers, tried to deliver a complex character study of a very disturbed man. It wants desperately to be edgy but there is no genuine nuance to the character nor it is subtle enough to be truly sleek.

The unwieldy screenplay, too, translates into a film that suffers from pacing issues.

One message that is likely to resonate with audiences is that society may be so desperate for a hero that they are willing to embrace anyone who presents themselves as being *for* them, even if that figure is a villain in many respects. And whether the filmmakers know or acknowledge this fact, the film is highly political for that reason.

Despite the well-edited preview to this film, it is not nearly as compelling as some would have you believe. It's back to the drawing board for DC.

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Pop culture enthusiast and writer

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