

entertainment

Joyous romance to break your heart

La La Land (M)

★★★★★

REVIEW: PIER LEACH

My last five-star review was for Ken Loach's heart-breakingly bleak film, I, Daniel Blake.

Damien Chazelle's *La La Land* is its opposite – joyous and gloriously romantic movie magic, even if it might just break your heart.

Chazelle, the gifted 31-year-old writer-director who made the whip smart 2013 drama *Whiplash*, reunites Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone (*Crazy, Stupid Love*) in a sublime musical homage to Hollywood.

It's at once nostalgic – drawing on classics like *Singin' in the Rain* as well as the musicals of Jacques Demy and Michel Legrand

– and yet is entirely new.

They fairly sizzle as a couple of present day showbiz hopefuls who get off on the wrong foot in an LA traffic jam, and then again in a bar, before falling in love.

Stone is Mia, an aspiring actress who makes ends meet as a barista between auditions. Gosling is Sebastian, a jazz purist who can't quite stick to the prescribed set list without free forming his own kind of piano magic – cue the sublime, beautifully melancholic tune, *City of Stars*, that captivates Mia but swiftly gets him fired by the manager (*Whiplash*'s Oscar-winning JK Simmons).

When they fall in love the sparkling city is at their feet; it's just the beginning of a heady romance that has them literally dancing

on clouds before, of course, reality starts to bite.

We always knew Gosling and Stone could act, but Chazelle brings out the triple-threat in both as they channel a little bit of Fred and Ginger and sing their hearts out – making up for what they lack in vocal strength with beguiling vulnerability and sheer heart.

The music by Justin Hurwitz, with lyrics by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul, soars, while Swedish cinematographer Linus Sandgren (*American Hustle*) swirls his camera through a fantasy LA.

A film about ambition, chasing dreams, and the tyranny of bad timing, *La La Land* is a movie to fall in love with.

Its highs are euphoric, and when it hurts, it hurts so good.



■ *La La Land* opens on Boxing Day with advance screenings at Luna cinemas December 16 to 18.

■ Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling have little romantic Fred and Ginger moments in this interesting, non-traditional love story.



■ Pippa Candido hires herself out with her champagne cart to serve drinks.

Bring in the bubbles

SARAH McNEILL

Wife, mother, entrepreneur, hotelier, author and champagne lover Pippa Candido has combined all her skills to create Perth's first mobile champagne cart.

"My idea for a champagne cart comes from my own love of champagne and celebrations," Pippa said.

She came up with the idea during her sister's wedding at Matilda Bay, where dessert at the reception was served from an Italian ice-cream cart.

"I thought then how lovely it would be to have a cart serving champagne," Pippa said.

She did some research and discovered there was no one doing it in Australia. So she designed her own.

The one-of-a-kind, hand-crafted cart is in the shape of a vintage car and comes equipped with an ice-well fitted into the stainless counter, wooden spoked wheels, a cooler under the bonnet and brass racks fitted into the roof that hold up to 150 glasses. The cart is narrow enough to fit through doorways so it can be used inside or out.

The Little Champagne Cart comes with glassware, ice, tubs, and gold bollards

I know that people are going to be happy wherever I go.

with black velvet ropes, and Pippa had a glossy black trailer custom made so the cart arrives at a party in style.

Pippa runs the mobile bar which can offer a complete drink service.

Pippa has two children, aged three and five.

"I've been a stay-at-home mum for a couple of years," she said.

"So I was looking for a new way to get out and work.

"This is the perfect answer, because I know that people are going to be happy wherever I go.

"I'm cheerful and I've got a good sense of humour and I believe in impeccable service."

She and her husband, Trevor, have been involved in hospitality for more than a decade and are co-owners of the Universal bar, in Northbridge, and Hotel Darwin, in the Northern Territory.

She said of her new party business: "Champagne is all about indulgence, glamour and fun."

For more information, go to thelittlechampagnecart.com.au.



■ The Little Champagne Cart is Pippa's own design.

critics' PICKS

What the critics are saying...

■ **Dancer (M)** ★★☆☆

"Ukraine-born ballet superstar Sergei Polunin loves to dance but doesn't always know why he's dancing. That internal conflict is at the heart of Steven Cantor's sensitive, luxuriantly filmed documentary about the princely, magnetic Polunin ..." says the LA Times. The Seattle Times reckons it's a "pleasure to wallow in the talent of a ballet rock star" even if it is an "unfinished story" that feels "as if we're abandoning a book mid-chapter".

■ **Rosalie Blum (M)** ★★☆☆

"A prematurely balding hairdresser starts stalking the mysterious fortysomething owner of a provincial corner shop in *Rosalie Blum*, a quirky, cockles-warming adaptation of the eponymous graphic-novel trilogy by French artist Camille Jourdy," says The Hollywood Reporter. The Sydney Morning Herald loved it: "It's funny, it's melancholy and it's sometimes both at once."

■ **Julieta (M)** ★★☆☆

PIAF Somerville
Monday to Saturday December 19 to 24
"Spanish auteur Pedro Almodovar's latest, his most moving and entrancing work since 2006's *Volver*, is a sumptuous and heartbreaking study of the viral nature of guilt, the mystery of memory and the often unendurable power of love," says The Guardian. The Australian agrees he "has come up with another fine film to add to the 19 he's already made – less overtly camp than some and less emotionally powerful than his masterpieces ... but nevertheless, a completely satisfying drama".

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