

Chicago 2002 questions movie review

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



1.

The opening sequence of the film features Velma Kelly (Catherine Zeta-Jones) alone on stage singing "All That Jazz," while Roxie Hart (Renee Zellweger) watches. In many ways, Roxie sees a role model in Velma, as she presents herself strutting confidently and sexily across the stage. By taking ownership of her femininity, Roxie finds the courage to kill Fred and try to make it in the business. In the closing sequence, in which Velma and Roxie are performing together, Roxie finally reaches the level of strength and poise that is contained by Velma, and they both exhibit it on the stage.

2.

I found Chicago to be immensely satisfying and entertaining - the acting and musical sequences were well-made, and the overall atmosphere was incredibly interesting. I would recommend it to those who are interested in the early 20th century Chicago aesthetic, and the confluence of show business and real life that the film's themes delve into. As for its impact, I believe the film itself will go down as an incredibly successful and artsy way to do a musical without betraying verisimilitude, which I will discuss in question 5. It does not raise any evocative political questions, but it is a nice piece of spectacle that I would highly recommend.

3.

I decided to watch the very opening sequence of the film, in which the first shot is of Roxie's eyeball, which is zoomed into to form the second C of 'CHICAGO.' Suddenly, a mouth moves (saying '5, 6, 7, 8') as if to signal the beginning of a song, and the movie by proxy. Next, a series of fast, quick cuts of musicians playing, spinning, whirling pans around lights, and crowds

of people commiserating are seen. The effect is dizzying, as if to show just how busy and frenetic the nightlife of Chicago was at the time, as well as the work that goes into creating shows in this venue.

4.

In the " Cell Block Tango," scene, the movements and the various bits of business with the other inmates are paralleled in the musical sequence as well as the real-world explanation of their crimes. The stamping of feet on the stage is juxtaposed with the clanking of shoes on the metal grated floors of the prison, and the rhythmic lighting of matches of one of the inmates creates a searing, visceral reaction to her crimes. The clacking of cards is paralleled in the second inmate's story, being paired with the hard SLAP of bodies hitting the floor. This creates the effect of showing the viciousness of their crimes, as they tell Roxie (and the audience) that they " would have done the same."

5.

With the exception of " All That Jazz" and a couple of others, the songs in Chicago are not presented in the typical stage-y method common to film and stage musicals, where characters spontaneously go into song and dance within the world of the film. Instead, many of the film's songs happen in people's heads, Roxie in particular; they sing the song with backup dancers on an imaginary stage, keeping the musical sequences to the cabaret setting. This is interesting, as it keeps the film relatively grounded while still allowing for these fantastical, presentational elements to come forth.