

The Little Mermaid

Not many people understood why I wanted to see the remake of *The Little Mermaid* and no one wanted to come with me to see it when it opened in the theaters. I just loved the animated version, and from what I read and viewed about the live-action remake, I was looking forward to seeing it and not be disappointed like I was seeing the remake of *The Lion King* a few years ago—the animated version is still king!

I will not dignify the criticisms of having a black actress in the lead—get real, she’s a mermaid, so get over yourself! It’s a fantasy where all is possible and as it should be in today’s world with diversity of its citizenry.

Honestly, I was a bit underwhelmed initially when I saw *The Little Mermaid*—it could’ve been the din of people chomping on their food (complete meals), the little ones being restless, the small screen in a small theater, and with closed captions. With the animated version and their iconic songs seared in my memory banks, it was understandable. So, I decided to see *The Little Mermaid* again with no distractions on a weekday afternoon, in a larger theater, large screen, and just a few folks who wanted to enjoy the afternoon of escapism. And it was wonderful. This remake left the animated version in the dust. This is *THE Little Mermaid* version that will stand the test of time.

Ariel, Halle Bailey, is a stunning vocalist, actress, and swimmer! Just a wondrous performance. Prince Eric, Jonah Hauer-King, was a worthy prince and partner for our Ariel.

Sebastian, the red, Jamaican-accented crab, King Triton’s advisor, was a standout in the animated version. Initially, I was disappointed with Daveed Diggs’ accent—an authentic Jamaican accent is hard to nail down for non-native speakers. However, the new Sebastian is now THE Sebastian. Most honorable mentions to Javier Bardem as King Triton, Awkwafina as Scuttle, Melissa McCarthy as Ursula, Jacob Tremblay as Flounder, and Noma Dumezeni as the elegant Queen Selina.

So, if you want to re-awaken your childhood wonder, run, no swim to see *The Little Mermaid!*

C. TaBois June 1, 2023