

This Woman is King!

I drove for almost an hour and in heavy traffic to the AMC Hoffman Center theater to see *Avatar*, yes, to see the 2009 movie re-mastered. It was a limited re-release to the theaters and I wanted to experience it again and in IMAX 3D before seeing *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* to be released December 18<sup>th</sup>.

When arrived just before the 4 p.m. show, I was told it was not being shown. “What?! I’ve been waiting to see it all month and there is the Avatar poster on the wall!” The confused ticket taker walked over to the poster and replied, “It opens on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Ugh! What to do? I had read that Woman King was a good movie, “So when does it start?” I asked. “Now,” he replied, “they’re showing the previews now.” Okay, I was ready to be wowed. The show was practically sold out and I got one of the few seats remaining.

Wow! Viola Davis gave an Oscar-worthy performance as it Nanisca, the female general of the West African kingdom of Dahomey set in 1823. She’s a powerful, female warrior! I thought about Serena Williams, another powerful woman who gave it her all on the tennis court before retiring as a champion, and here was a movie celebrating the power, vibrancy, awesomeness of black womanhood fighting for her tribe against not only competing tribes, but the European slave traders. The message was clear: do the right thing and you will triumph!

Kudos to Lashana Lynch as Lzoglee of *No Time to Die* fame, Thuso Mbedu as Nawi, Sheila Atim as Amenza, and John Boyega as King Ghezo. In fact, kudos to the entire cast: every frame of that picture, through to the end, the epilogue and the music over the credits was superb filmmaking, directed by Gina Prince-Bythewood, and screenplay by Gina and Dana Stevens.

My neighbor on the right said she was going to see it again and I would see it again too just to savor the performance and the filmmaking that must’ve been done with love. This is a love letter to womanhood. We need this affirmation now more than ever when womanhood is under attack, even though the strong dutiful British monarch is being revered, mourned, and celebrated in all her power, she was never in our face--this warrior general is in in your face with power and no apologies!

I am woman hear me roar—Helen Reddy 1972, we hear your roar loud and proud and awesome. today Hands down the best movie so far this year!!!

C. TaBois September 17, 2022