



The Main Feature

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US 1932 82 minutes

Director	Ernst Lubitsch
Screenplay	Samson Raphaelson
Adaptation by	Grover Jones
From a play by	Aladar Laszlo
Cinematography	Victor Milner
Art direction	Hans Dreier
Costume design	Travis Banton

Cast:

Lily	Miriam Hopkins
Madame Mariette Colet	Kay Francis
Gaston Monescu	Herbert Marshall
The major	Charles Ruggles
François Filiba	Edward Everett Horton
Adolph J. Giron	C. Aubrey Smith
Jacques	Robert Grieg



Trouble in Paradise is a witty and racy comedy that tells the story of two master con-artists (Herbert Marshall and Miriam Hopkins) who fall in love after trying to pull cons on each other.

Ernst Lubitsch (1892-1947) was an established character actor with Max Reinhardt's Deutsches Theater in Germany before he was 21 and started working in the cinema in 1913. He was one of the world's most accomplished directors when, in 1923, he was lured to Hollywood, a decade before Hitler drove most of Germany's leading film-makers into exile. Visual wit, a sophisticated worldly view of mankind's follies and fashionable urban settings in continental cities were the hallmarks of his work, and *Trouble in Paradise*, one of his greatest films, is widely considered to be flawless.

Lubitsch ruled at Paramount in the late 1920s and 1930s (he was head of the studio for a year), embracing the advent of sound with a series of musicals that often starred Jeannette MacDonald. "Trouble in Paradise" was his first non-musical sound comedy and is generally considered his best film, but there are advocates for his version of Noel Coward's "Design for Living" (1933), with Gary Cooper, Fredric March and Miriam Hopkins; "Ninotchka" (1939), with Garbo, a definitive adult; "The Shop Around the Corner" (1940), with James Stewart and Margaret Sullavan as bickering co-workers who don't realize they're romantic penpals; and "To Be or Not to Be" (1942), with Jack Benny and Carole Lombard in a comedy aimed at Hitler.



The sexual undertones are surprisingly frank in this pre-Code film. When the title rolls out at the film's opening, it's in front of a bed, and the title pauses on *Trouble in* before revealing... *Paradise*, making it clear that the film concerns the sexual. Characters allude to sex and sexual promiscuity at every turn, and Gaston shares lustful stares with both leading ladies throughout the film. This may seem a bit shocking to those who are used to the slightly later American movies made during the reign of the Hays code, where everything had to be of a certain moral fibre, and scripts were not permitted to include explicit innuendo (another reason why these Lubitsch films have

fallen out of sight). In the opening scene Gaston tells his butler that for dinner "It must be the most marvellous supper. We may not eat it, but it must be marvellous," - he's obviously not talking about anything else.

Even pre-Code, the European setting and languages allowed Lubitsch a sexual and moral laxity that would have troubled U.S. audiences if set in America. However once the Hays code became an absolute in Hollywood in 1933, this type of film would have no place in the mainstream. Indeed in 1935 the film was not approved for reissue and was not seen again until 1968.

Trouble in Paradise is the most fondly memorable—if rarely seen—Hollywood screwball comedy. Its combination of suaveness, hilarity, and sexiness has had a mighty influence. There would be no *Bringing Up Baby*, no *The Lady Eve*, no *Pat and Mike*, without the delicious trouble Ernst Lubitsch and screenwriter Samson Raphaelson stirred up. What's called "The Lubitsch Touch" is, essentially, sophistication.

US 2015 79 minutes cert 15

Directed and written by Paul Weitz

Music by Joel P. West

Cinematography by Tobias Datum

Edited by Jonathan Corn

Cast:

Lily Tomlin Elle Reid

Julia Garner Sage

Marcia Gay Harden Judy

Judy Greer Olivia

Laverne Cox Deathy

Elizabeth Pena Carla

Nat Wolff Cam

Sam Elliott Karl



The film's budget was \$600,000, a figure that may have been helped by the fact that the car in the movie is a 1955 Dodge Royal that is actually owned by Lily Tomlin. One day Weitz said, 'I'm going to go look at an old car for Elle to drive,' " says Tomlin. "I said, 'Well, I've got an old car — and it's kind of snazzy-looking.' "

Tomlin told USA Today that she bought it in 1975 for \$1,500. She said, "It's not a prize car. It's not a car that people yearn for. But it has a nice look to it. . . . The car is almost a character in the movie. I knew I kept that car for a reason." The car is named 'Dora Bannister' after a character in the 1953 noir *Wicked Woman*, which Tomlin saw as a fourteen-year-old usherette at the Avalon Theatre in Detroit. "My first job in entertainment!" she laughs.



Commenting on the financial aspect of the film, Weitz stated: "I think that even if you're working with the best studio, if you have any guilt mechanism, you feel concerned about spending a lot of money on a movie and worried about it, if you're going to make the studio back their money. You start to worry about things other than purely whether the movie is as good as possible. For me, this was definitely one of the progressions.

In this case, it was just a story that I thought was really interesting, and then, when I started writing it with Lily's voice in my head, I knew it was going to be funny. I feel like humor is the one thing that's relatively irreducible. It doesn't matter what budget you have, as far as whether the thing's funny or not or whether the acting's good or not. In this case, I was able to be really pure about it, but also though, I grew up in sort of the periphery.

My grandfather was an agent and a producer in the golden era of Hollywood and was friends with people like Billy Wilder. In terms of Wilder, during the last say 20 years of his life, he still was trying to get movies going, but trying to get them going through the studio system. I always wondered, "Okay, what if he actually had the capacity to make a truly independent film? What if he'd just gone and taken Jack Lemmon and

whoever, Walter Matthau, and gone and made a low-budget film?" That would've been a really interesting film and probably a really good one.

So that stuck in my head, that that was an option. I was a little anxious about it. I remember right before I did it, I did get someone to invest in it, and I said, "We'd better do this fast before I change my mind or get cold feet." So yeah, I was a bit anxious about it, but it was really an incredible experience making it."

For anyone who has followed Weitz's career – he directed American Pie and About a Boy, both with his brother, Chris, and has made fun, sly movies such as In Good Company and Admission – a comedy with intriguing characters is not exactly unexpected. What is a departure is the film's gritty, non-studio vibe.

"It's totally unusual for me. I've gone the reverse route [more] than most," Weitz says. "I had done a lot of movies about male mentorship," he says. "And I thought it would be interesting to do something about a woman in her 70s who was kind of punk rock, Patti Smith-esque, and had the opportunity to teach her granddaughter to stand up for herself. I also like the idea that the mentee could teach the mentor."

Weitz acknowledges the stretch it took for a man to make such a female-focused film, and he says he checked the material with Tomlin.

"I spend time with people," he says. "And when you do something like this, you are actually learning by doing. Because there have been a lot of movies in the past which were unwilling to even use the word, despite millions of women having abortions, statically I've read a study which says a third of women have had abortions by the time they reach menopause. So I just wanted it to be real.

And the film isn't really about abortion, it is about how we care about each other and the primary message of the film is to not judge, and we aren't talking about statistic, we are talking about people. But I also didn't want to take the subject lightly, which is why Lily, who is staunchly pro-choices, asks her "have you thought about this, because it is something you will think about at some point in your life every day." Which I think is a real thing and the women I know who have had abortions did not take the decision lightly."



After starring alongside Dolly Parton in '9 to 5', in Robert Altman's 'Nashville', and with Bette Midler in 'Big Business'. 'Grandma' is Tomlin's first lead film role in 27 years.

She said "It was Paul's idea, Paul's story, and he brought it to me saying that he had been motivated to finish it from the work we did on Admission. I'm very, very fond of Paul. The first thing that happened, when he said, "I've written

this with you in mind," I thought, "Oh god, I hope I like it," because when you like somebody and you want to work with them and they say they wrote it with you in mind, it just adds a lot of trepidation to the equation. But I loved it—I thought it was a great idea, I thought the character was somebody I understood; I like that it was 19 days, it was going to be really fast. We hit the ground running and everyone who came on board was just so terrific—my granddaughter (played by) Julia Garner, and of course Sam Elliott was just knockout, and Judy Greer, Laverne Cox, and John Cho. Marcia Gay (Harden) was brilliant. Everybody bought their best game to the table."

Asked about his own grandparents, the director stated:

"One of mine is still alive at 105 years old, living in the same house she's lived in for 85 years, with a glass of tequila every night. My grandmother is actress Lupita Tovar, and she starred in the first talking picture made in Mexico, and was in the Spanish language version of 'Dracula.' She doesn't take any crap, which is similar to Lily's character. The moment you think she's totally out of it now, she'll give me a kiss and ask, 'why haven't you shaved?' [laughs] Her nickname in the film industry was 'The General,' but she called herself 'The Witch.' She was a formidable lady."

Iain McGlashan

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Comments and reactions to: **Mystery Road**

Who were the baddies in the end? A lot lost in translation and poor sound

Sound problems made it hard work – Shoot out reminiscent of Djano Unchained!

Turned out to be a real mystery as had great difficulty hearing nearly everyone except main character – improved in the second half

Fine when nobody was talking – pity no subtitles, as missed a lot of dialogue and therefore how the plot was developing

A shame that I missed a lot of the dialogue

Long slow building – climax “unbelievable”

A bit slow – but I found it gripping!

Awful film – what was the point? Wasted evening

Really captured the feeling of the place

I am still trying to work out “Who Dunnit”

Interesting to see the Queensland landscape

Really good and will need to see again – liked the pace and space

We have seen some good Australian films but this was not one of them!!

Strange depressing film – I will not be visiting the Australian outback for a holiday

Liked the photography + the ochre colours! Improved as it went on to the end of the road

Awful! How did he drive that car when it had been shot to blazers!? Waste of an evening

Stunning cinematography – always enjoy Australian dramas and this thriller did not disappoint

A subtle exploration of rural alienation with the director deftly handling the story and not reducing the native Australians to stereotypes. Brilliant colour and cinematography enhanced the effect

Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	2	1	5	1	6	5	7	8	4	~	~

No of reaction slips received = 39

Average Score = 4.95

Position	Film	Average Score
1 st	Bridge of Spies	8.24
2 nd	Spotlight	8.17
3 rd	Suffragette	7.89
4 th	Brooklyn	7.85
5 th	Eddie the Eagle	7.79
6 th	The Good Lie	7.5
7 th	Lemon Tree	7.35
8 th	Carol	6.97
9 th	Gunfight at the OK Corral	6.9
10 th	The Big Parade	6.82
11 th	Hector	6.44
12 th	Comme Une Image	5.82
13 th	Mystery Road	4.95



Next on 27 April we show Ex Machina:

“The dazzling directorial debut of Alex Garland is a can't-miss sci-fi thriller.”

“It is a gorgeous, thought-provoking story and a triumph in every way for Garland, who casts three rising stars to make a small film full of big ideas.”

“it is the notable sort of science fiction film that is far more reliant on ideas than effects.”