

'Rise of Skywalker' wraps up the new Star Wars trilogy

By Sam Hipp
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The final film in the nine-part Skywalker Saga has been released and there is a result of mixed reactions. Many loved this encore to their beloved series and others saw this as the final nail in the coffin of "Star Wars." I saw it as somewhere in the middle.

It should not come as a surprise that this film brought back Emperor Palpatine, the big bad of "Star Wars," as advertisements for this film were heavy-handed in making sure we all knew he was back for the final film. Great way to invalidate Anakin's sacrifice at the end of "Return of the Jedi."

This film follows the trials of Jedi-in-training Rey (Daisy Ridley) and her friends in the Resistance, who struggle against the plastic-clad space Nazis of the First Order, led by Supreme Leader Kylo Ren (Adam Driver).

The first act of this film brings a fast-paced, non-stop adventure of scenes that lasts no longer than three minutes because there was too much to cram into this film. Included in the first half of the film is a subplot where C-3PO's Google Translate abilities are useless in finding a thing to lead to another thing to lead to the big thing, so the heroes travel to a desert planet where some Lovecraftian aliens are celebrating Mardi Gras on a poorly-lit planet that seemed to reuse set pieces from previous "Star Wars" films. To politely say, this is a bit of a mess.

This film also introduces new characters who add nothing much except to build a little upon the stories of the main characters or, for some, throw away lines. Whether to give Finn someone to briefly connect with or a lady Boba Fett for

Poe to have the hots for, these characters seem like a needless addition this late in the trilogy. These new characters also seem to distract our heroes from the urgency of their constant scene-hopping.

While the first half of the film truly suffers, the second half truly shines. Rey facing her confrontations with Kylo Ren, the Emperor and herself were enjoyable to watch and drew me into the film.

A favorite scene of mine was one of her seeking advice from the now incorporeal space wizard, Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill), who decided to remain old in his ghostly appearance, instead of looking young again like his father did when he became one with the force. Instead, he decided his "The Dude" Lebowsky look would convey a greater sense of wisdom to Rey and help her on her journey.

The final battle is a true spectacle and one of the greatest strengths of the film. Seeing the galaxy rise up against tyranny was wonderful to behold, and it conveyed the message that it won't be one special person, but many ordinary people, who will ultimately triumph over evil.

The battle also had some nice touches by adding in a few memorable characters from the original trilogy such as Lando, Wedge and Nien Nunb. It truly excited the big "Star Wars" geek that I am.

This film is an unplanned mess with horrible pacing issues. Those issues aside, I still had an enjoyable experience viewing this movie at the theater. This film still shines in its effects, music and acting, the latter being mainly in part to the wonderfully talented Adam Driver.

It was an overall fun "Star Wars" experience somewhat bogged down by issues of pacing and writing in some areas, which is why I give this film three out of five stars.

World famous hypnotist visits BC campus

Sailesh, the world renowned hypnotist, visited Brevard College last Wednesday night. The show took place in Ingram Auditorium in Dunham Hall around 7 p.m.

Sailesh explained to the audience that anyone can be hypnotized and they can even hypnotize themselves. One example of hypnotism he gave is that everyone is capable of is daydreaming.

The performance was based on participation from volunteers in the audience. At the beginning of the show, Sailesh explained that the audience could still take part in the hypnotism experience if they wished, they just had to listen to his instructions. Soon after, a member of the audience, Xandria Colbert, was hypnotized and put into a deep sleep. Then Sailesh invited her to come up on the stage to join the show.

"I don't remember getting up on the stage," Colbert said. "While being hypnotized it felt like he was speaking to my inner self in my thoughts. I feel like I have a lot of energy now after the show. I encourage everyone to experience hypnotism if they can."

Sailesh made his performance a memorable one with his humor and energy. He gave the audience a sense of wonder as he instructed the volunteers on stage. In one of the most unforgettable acts of the show, he convinced the volunteers they were on a TV talk show and they were there to tell a bad habit a friend of theirs had. Three of the onstage volunteers told hilarious lies about one of the Clarion's layout designers, Margaret Correll.

At the end of the performance, Sailesh reminded the audience that the stars of the show were the volunteers on the stage and insisted that applause be directed to them. The applause exploded in the auditorium as the magical night came to a close.



A still from "Rise of Skywalker", featuring characters Rey and Kylo Ren.

— Amber Vance