

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Anna

Sarah Elgart · Wednesday, January 18th, 2017

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Post *La La Land*'s sweep at the Golden Globes – almost always a reliable template for what to expect at the Oscars – and as Sundance prepares to open in Park City with new and as yet unknown adventures in cinema, I thought it fitting to feature **Anna**, a slightly older Emma Stone dance vehicle from way back in the pre-Trump good ole' days of 2015.



Emma Stone delivers as “Anna”

Choreographed by the visionary *enfant terrible* of commercial contemporary, Ryan Heffington, **Anna** is an epic, whimsical, mini-musical on meth that uses the Queen Mary as both location and context and delivers a *much less tame* (and to me much preferable) dance punch than the recent runaway film hit. Featuring a back up ensemble of rhythmic sailors, with Ryan making a customary appearance on camera as the ship's Captain and music by Arcade Fire's Will Butler, Emma Stone *kills it* as a crazed and money hungry, sexed up babe dancing down halls, atop counters and up staircases. No wonder she was ready for her hit dance feature.



Three sailors bring it home in “Anna”

What I love about **Anna** is that it is entirely choreo-centric. With great camera work and frenetic finishing touches that are part of Heffington's signature movement, the whole short seems to have been created entirely around the dance. And isn't that how a musical should be? The sweeping shots of sea and the iconic ship shine, the lighting and editing are perfectly in tune with the song and the ample movement in both camera and dance, and it has a sense of joy and pure crazy fun that at once harkens back to classic Hollywood musicals and fast forwards with abandon into the 21st century.

While **Anna** caught my eye some time ago, it seems more apropos than ever now. Directed by Brantley Gutierrez, shot by Eric Ulbrich, edited by Lauren Sorofman and produced by Kyle Schember for Subtractive Inc., please enjoy **Anna**.

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