

Miss Julie

Miss Julie is a filmic version of the classic August Strindberg play from 1888, directed by eclectic Englishman Mike Figgis (whose last film outing was the award-winning *Leaving Las Vegas*). This is essentially a two-character drama, wherein--on a midsummer's night--the restive daughter of the Count, Julie (a stately Saffron Burrows), physically and verbally duels in the family kitchen with the sinister Jean (Peter Mullan), the family valet.

It is a battle of the classes as well as the sexes, in which—as suits the naturalistic vision of Strindberg--the underclass wheedles, threatens, and eventually triumphs. The haughty—but ultimately cowed—Julie gets not only her comeuppance but her defilement.

The film, like the play, is an hermetic experience, shot entirely within one closed (if spacious) kitchen set and giving off all the atmosphere of two scorpions in a bottle. This is a decent adaptation of a major theatrical work, highlighted by Mullan's icy performance, best seen by someone who would like an introduction to the play.

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