

Disney's new live action film stunningly visual, wonderfully diverse

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Beast. Watson lacks the vocal intensity of Broadway powerhouse Paige O'Hara, the original voice of Belle, but manages to win over audiences with her charming personality and similarity to the appearance of the character.

The film itself is no less visually stunning, with fantastic CGI animation for the household characters of Mrs. Potts, Lumiere, and Cog-

sworth. As of late, Disney Pictures has been on the path of remaking their animated classics into live action movies, finding success with hits like *Maleficent* (2014), *Cinderella* (2015), and *The Jungle Book* (2016). Most recently, they tackled the 1991 hit *Beauty and the Beast*.

Emma Watson (*Harry Potter*, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*) and Dan Stevens (*Downton Abbey*, *Legion*) take to the screen as Belle and

sworth. Musical numbers like "Be Our Guest" are truly brought to life, paying wonderful tribute to the original iconic scene.

Slight changes in characterizations are found when the two movies are compared. The Beast in 2017 is more human in appearance, with storyline changes that allow audiences a deeper look into his past. Belle, who is more headstrong in the remake, reminisces on her mother and her relationship with her father, a route that was less explored in 1991.

The Gaston of the remake is more cruel, with more evil in his character than the animation. In the 2017 film, Gaston's sidekick LeFou is a likeable character, portrayed as funny, admiring, and openly gay. The confirmation of LeFou's homosexuality by director Bill Condon stirred controversy amongst conservative fans - but what's more unrealistic: a gay Frenchman or a storyline where a teenage girl falls in love with a humanoid buffalo?

Disney Pictures successfully managed to cast people of color - a film aspect they've failed on in the past. Fantasy films that manage to have magic should also manage to have non-white actors, and Disney finally delivered. Unless a purely historical adaptation is being made on the History Channel, diversity is necessary.

Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* is a hit, and audiences should be prepared to sit back, relax, and be transported to a fantasy world of fun and excitement where the message is clearly delivered: true beauty lies within.