Oscar Wilde

The Picture of Dorian Gray

Movie Guide

Dorian Gray Hurd Hatfield

Lord Henry Wotton George Sanders

Sybil Vane Angela Lansbury

Narrator Sir Cedrick Hardwicke

Director Albert Lewin

Gladys Donna Reed

David Stone Peter Lawford

( 1945 )

1. Are the three principals, Dorian Gray, Lord Henry, and Sybil Vane well cast? Evaluate the actors’ physical appearance, carriage, voice, and mannerisms. Do they fit the novel as you read it? Be specific about your reasons. Who would you cast in these three roles now in a new movie version of the novel? Why?
2. Watch carefully for changes in the plot of the novel. List at least two that you think change the story. Do they improve the story, weaken it, or simply change it? Why might the director have made those changes?
3. Evaluate the music used in the movie. Name two specific scenes in the movie, explain what effect you would want those scenes to have on an audience, and what music you would use to achieve that effect.
4. Director Albert Lewin uses a narrator to fill in some of the information that the novel’s narrator gives. Does the technique of a “voice over” narrator work in movies generally? Does it work in this one? Would you use one in your version, and, if so, for what information? If you don’t want a narrator, how would you communicate the information to an audience?
5. Evaluate the design of the movie. You might want to consider the costumes, but concentrate on the sets. Choose two scenes and explain what changes, if any, you would make in the sets for your version.
6. Explain specifically one other aspect of Lewin’s movie that your team has a strong opinion, pro or con, about.