

CatsonFilmPod

Transcript

Cats on Film Pod Episode 31 Zootopia (2016)



SKIPPER
Meows

INTRO JINGLE

RAY
Hi everybody! Welcome to *Cats on Film Pod*. I'm Ray Ilyn, here with my co-host, Skipper.

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Thank you for joining us every Tuesday as we review cats in film. You can support Skipper & me at <https://pod.fan/catsonfilmpod>

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Spoilers ahead!
This week, we're wrapping up our special "Lions in Winter" series of animated lion films. Our final episode of the month is about *Zootopia*, which came out in 2016 to the glee of everybody who loves talking animals.

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Meows

RAY
Exactly.

Let's recap! The film begins with an elementary school production of the foundation myth of Zootopian society – where all types of mammals peacefully coexist. It's performed by a bunny and a leopard dressed in orange and black tiger stripes, with another little feline cub performing live music.

CLIP FROM *ZOOTOPIA*

BUNNY

Predator and prey live in harmony. And every young mammal has multitudinous opportunities.

LAMB

Yeah, I don't have to cower in a herd anymore. Instead, I can be an astronaut.

CROWD

Applauds

CUB

I don't have to be a lonely hunter anymore. Today, I can hunt for tax exemptions. I'm gonna be an actuary!

CROWD

Ooo!

RAY

All the animals are cartoonishly realistic except for walking on two legs and wearing clothes, even pants. The co-director & co-writer, Byron Howard, said that Disney's *Robin Hood* was his favorite film as a child, and it shows. Not only is one of the lead characters a charming, crafty fox, but the Mayor of Zootopia, Leodore Lionheart, looks like they just swapped King Richard's royal robes for a business suit!

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Meows

RAY

It *does* look uncomfortably tight.

All the animals are fully clothed (although shoes are optional), except at the "Mystic Spring Oasis", a naturalists club full of nudists, including a black panther licking itself clean. There are all kinds of felines all over Zootopia – tigers, leopards, jaguars—

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Good eye—I didn't even notice the lack of domestic cats.

SKIPPER

Meows

RAY

Well, if there are no humans, that branch of felines wouldn't have evolved, right?

SKIPPER

Meows

RAY

Yes, I'm glad for domestic housecats, too, my sweet snuggle kitty!

SKIPPER

Purrs

RAY

Yeah

SKIPPER

Purrs

RAY

Mmmm— Back to Zootopia, a lot of comedy comes from stereotypes about animals, such as the chubby, donut-munching Sargeant Clawhauser, a leopard who's expected to be speedy, but who's outrun by an otter because he's in such poor health. Then there's Mr. Manchas, a big, strong jaguar who was overpowered by another otter – who happened to be drugged into violently aggressive behavior.

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RAY

True—most of the behavior throughout the movie is more human-like than anything else. They have to act like humans to make the point about how bigotry is bad among humans.

SKIPPER

Meows

RAY

Yes, a lovely sentiment. Much better than the predators versus prey dichotomy that leads a sheep to conspire to get all the predators locked up for being "savage".

SKIPPER

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RAY

Yes – that unexpected museum display of a big cat being hunted by rabbits with spears shows that prey working to harm predators isn't anything new in their world.

SKIPPER

Meows

RAY

Not at all fair! Mayor Lionheart didn't hurt anybody that we see, at least, not until so many predator animals began "going savage". When that happened, he ordered them locked up and experimented on. But, y'know, kidnapping them for their own good, he argues.

CLIP FROM *ZOOTOPIA*

LIONHEART

Did I falsely imprison those animals? Well, yes. Yes, I did. It was a classic "doing the wrong thing for the right reason" kind of a deal.

SKIPPER

Meows

RAY

Oh yeah, a rabbit gets him arrested for it! Prey animals aren't nearly as weak as that sheep likes to pretend, especially as they outnumber the predator animals. But eventually it all works out when a cure for the savage-inducing poison is administered and everybody celebrates at a Shakira Gazelle concert. Her backup dancers are tigers wearing tiny shorts and lots of glitter on their bodies that look a whole lot like human bodybuilders.

SKIPPER

Meows

RAY

Yes, with tails and ears and stripey fur. It's like they crafted this film especially for the Furry community.

SKIPPER

Meows

RAY

Skipper, what's your rating of the feline representation in *Zootopia*?

SKIPPER

Meow, meow

RAY

Just two out of four paws for these very human-like big cats who are just more stand-ins for human political issues.

SKIPPER
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RAY
Yes, very cute, though!

OUTRO MUSIC

RAY
Cats on Film Pod is voiced and produced by Ray Ilyn, with music by The DōsMan, and additional sounds from FreeSound.org.
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