

Newsday

September 23, 2011 – John Anderson's 3.5/4-star review runs with a still. Text is pasted below.

<http://www.newsday.com/entertainment/movies/the-mill-and-the-cross-a-work-of-art-1.3189773>

Plot: Polish director Lech Majewski uses state-of-the-art technology to bring viewers inside a 500-year-old painting. **RATING** Unrated

Bottom line: Visually ravishing and consistently absorbing.

Cast: Rutger Hauer, Michael York, Marian Makula, Charlotte Rampling, Mateusz Machnik

'The Mill and the Cross,' a work of art

Published: September 21, 2011 5:05 PM

By JOHN ANDERSON

Special to Newsday

An extraordinary achievement born of an extraordinary idea, "The Mill and the Cross" is certainly the answer to anyone who says there's nothing new at [the movies](#) -- a trip inside a painting that comes to life, immersing the viewer in time, art and allegory. Using live actors, horses, blue screen effects and 2-D backgrounds, the crowded canvas of director Lech Majewski's film features 500 historical, religious, contemporary and symbolic figures, with biblical representations depicted alongside the historical torments of the Flemish, persecuted by the Spanish Inquisition. Nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition. Or a movie this rich and surprising.

Flemish master Pieter Bruegel's 1564 "The Procession to Calvary" is an epic painting that depicts Christ's crucifixion as well as the brutalization of the artist's homeland by an army of occupation. Portraying key figures in the painting are some well-known faces -- [Rutger Hauer](#), who plays the artist himself, explaining aspects of his work and its hidden meanings; Charlotte Rampling, as a mother who symbolically doubles as the [Virgin Mary](#), and bemoans the loss of her son; and Michael York, a local bigwig complaining about the invasion, albeit from a position of wealth and lofty position.

Like Alexander Sokurov's "Russian Ark" (2002) -- which it recalls, only because it's audacious and about creativity -- "The Mill and the Cross" is a movie made possible by the most up-to-date technology, and yet explores a work 500 years old and the insoluble connections to humanity made by timeless art. "The Mill and the Cross" is itself a work of art. One can only imagine how and by whom it might itself be explored and examined 500 years in the future, but director Majewski's miraculous movie makes you wonder.

PLOT Polish director Lech Majewski uses state-of-the-art technology to bring viewers inside a 500-year-old painting. **RATING** Unrated

CAST [Rutger Hauer](#), Michael York, Marian Makula, Charlotte Rampling, Mateusz Machnik

LENGTH 1:35

PLAYING AT Cinema Arts Centre, Huntington

BOTTOM LINE Visually ravishing and consistently absorbing.