Pettigrew surpasses the preview

With its bang-on acting, Miss Pettigrew deserves more than just a trailer

**Film Review**

**Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day**

Directed by Bharat Nahrri

Starring Frances McDormand, Amy Adams, Mark Strong, Tom Payne, and Leo Pace

**KELSEY TANSKÉK**

Arts & Entertainment Stuff

Going into Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day, there wasn’t information around to hint at what to expect. With a newly seen and rather uninformative commercial, the less synopsis an attentive viewer could offer would be “some kind of period chick-flick.” However, once you’re seated in the theatre and the lights dim, you’ll find that Miss Pettigrew deserves a much more telling synopsis.

Miss Gillianumm Pettigrew (Frances McDormand) is a new and frequently unemployable governess (a nanny or babysitter, for those not up with old-fashioned dickens). After being verbally given the boot by her employment agency, Pettigrew strikes a business card of a potential employer. Later that morning, she finds herself on the doorstep of a doury aspiring access and troublemaker, by the name of Delysia Lattes (current film darling Amy Adams).

Arguably the best chick flick to hit theatres in a very long time, Miss Pettigrew is a movie that can easily entertain both genders; it’s genuinely funny, with all the necessary drama to keep it moving. And not to worry gentlemen, there’s only one short make-over scene in the entire film; it’s even a believable one.

Arguably the best chick flick to hit the theatres in a very long time, Miss Pettigrew is a movie that can easily entertain both genders; it’s genuinely funny, with all the necessary drama to keep it moving. And not to worry gentlemen, there’s only one short make-over scene in the entire film; it’s even a believable one.

**Of course, if it were a pretty boring chick flick without substance, and Delysia has plenty of bachelors hanging around. First there’s the “snake,” Nick (Mark Strong), Delysia’s rich and frequently one-of-a-kind man whose apartment she lives in. Then there’s Phil (Tom Payne), the daddy’s-boy come-home-producer that Delysia’s seducing to get a starring role, and finally, there’s the heartbreak of Michael (Leo Pace), whose heart of gold landed him in the slums for drunkenly trying to steal a better engagement ring for Delysia.

Miss Pettigrew spreads the day trying to help Delysia navigate her love life as her “social secretary,” all while trying to masquerade as someone accustomed to high society. It would be hard to believe if not for the strong will and lively spark that McDormand works so hard to portray.

The costumes are completely easy-going, and the sets transport you right back to 1939. If you had to pick out the one thing that truly makes Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day shine, it would be the casting. You’d be hard-pressed to find a better actor for any of the roles: McDormand is charming, funny, and occasionally heartbreaking in her role as a frequently misunderstood but determined pauper. K’s Pettigrew’s quiet reserve that complements the character of Delysia in an unexpected, but no less entertaining way. Adams is right on target in her portrayal of a 40s style, blocking that strong suit of innocence and sexuality that gave screen stars like Marilyn Monroe their charm.

Though similar to her performance as Giselle in Disney’s Enchanted, Adams still manages to keep the two characters from being mirror images. She’s also aided greatly by McDormand’s performance, as it’s Miss Pettigrew that grounds Delysia, and makes what could have been an annoying character quite believable.

When the potentially lightweight comedy is placed against the sense background of brewing war, it bears a lot more weight. And having the right actors to portray the contrast between the glitzy lives of 1939’s socialites and the gloom of war only strengthens the film. Miss Pettigrew is a movie that has a lot more going for it than what you can see from the previews.