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# *Casablanca—Movie Review*

*By Ashton Odom*



*Casablanca* was a cinematic breakthrough in its time. *Casablanca* was released in 1942 by Warner Brothers. The film was directed by Michael Curtis and starred Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman.

This film takes place in Casablanca during WWII. The audience meets our main character Rick (Humphrey Bogart) who owns a nightclub. Rick's club is the spot in Casablanca for refugees and corrupt axis officers. Rick's prickly exterior keeps him out of danger and isolated. One fateful night the audience meets Ilsa and Victor. Rick immediately recognizes his ex-lover and is wary of her company. The audience follows Rick and Ilsa as they sort out their rocky past and possibly a hopeful future, all while the chaos and danger of Casablanca echoes around them.

*Casablanca* has been deemed a classic by many in Hollywood for good reason. The movie has impeccable music, acting, casting, lighting, and screenplay. All these qualities, and many more, have made *Casablanca* a timeless classic in cinema.

The music is both effective and beautiful throughout the entirety of the film. The score of the film creates the perfect atmosphere featuring the jazz style that was popular in war time and the '40s. The score successfully reflects the mood of each individual scene from action packed chases to soft tender romantic scenes to the emotional heartbreak when Ilsa does not meet Rick at the train station.

The performances by Bogart and Bergman are flawless. They portray a love that is undeniable, and that is what draws the audience deeper into the story. The actors did not interact much off screen, and that makes their on-screen chemistry unbelievable. They were completely able to step into their characters, and their lives became the narrative showing the actors' skill.

The casting in the film was renowned for its diversity. Demonstrating the reach of WWII, the casting being truly international reflected the war; actors from all over the world came together to make a film just as soldiers from all over the world came together to fight for peace.

The lighting in *Casablanca* was essential in creating the mood needed in each scene. Some prime examples of lighting being used to supplement the story are when: low-key lighting is used in the scene when Rick is in the bar trying to drink his sufferings away. The low-key lighting creates shadows and dimension and mirrors the depressing and hostile emotions felt by Rick (Belton). Later in this scene, Ilsa appears in the darkness and has a large backlight behind her illuminating her entrance like a beacon. Her perfect angel-like appearance creates this feeling of hope in the dark, gloomy environment emulating the hope and happiness Rick and Ilsa once had had. High-key lighting is used in many flashbacks that are bright and happy. These flashbacks are before their involvement in the war and before the couple's devastating heartbreak. The lighting helps differentiate between the past hope and happiness, and the present despair and misery.



***Low key lighting creates shadows and dimension to mirror emotions.***

I absolutely adore this film and would recommend this it to any viewers that love classic cinema or that enjoy war/romance films. I would not recommend this film to the typical teenager due to many teenagers having a bias against B&W films, but I would still attempt to persuade them to watch it. Overall, I love this film and hope many others will too.