

FEATURES

‘THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA

*is runway-ready and
savagely on-brand*

Brian Truitt USA TODAY

Rifle through all the fabulous fashion that you naturally expect in “The Devil Wears Prada 2,” and you might be surprised – and, if you type for a living, rather excited – to find a thoughtful examination of modern journalism.

We’re not talking “All the President’s Men” with a Dior tag here. The breezy follow-up reuniting Anne Hathaway and Meryl Streep – and bringing back scene-stealers Stanley Tucci and Emily Blunt – mostly sticks to the formula that worked in 2006’s first “Devil” and tosses in plenty of Easter eggs for movie fans and fashionistas alike. However, director David Frankel’s comedy (in theaters May 1) is honest and clear-eyed as it digs into a media world where story clicks increasingly matter more than quality.

It’s been 20 years since spunky young Andy Sachs (Hathaway) weathered all the withering glares and icy insults working for imperious Runway magazine editor-in-chief Miranda Priestly (Streep), eventually tossing her phone into a fountain and getting a newspaper job. But she finds herself back where she started, in a sense.

After she and the staff at New York Vanguard get axed via text message, Andy makes a stirring speech championing the importance of journalism. At the same time, Priestly’s magazine gets embroiled in a sweatshop scandal that does a number on their PR (Miranda gets meme’d on Instagram and it’s not pretty). To help fix the situation, the ethical Andy is hired to be the new features editor, though when she shows up to work, it’s news to Miranda, who pretends to not know who Andy is. Or doesn’t actually remember, because she’s still a mercurial piece of work.

Andy reunites with Nigel Kipling (Tucci), Miranda’s close confidant who’s as kind and joyfully caustic as ever, and also Emily Charlton (Blunt), Andy’s frenemy from the first film who has traded in magazines for retail because that’s where the money is now. Runway’s best days are far behind it, and while Miranda’s up for a big global promotion, she also fields angry calls from her bosses that the digital numbers aren’t great. Andy also feels the soul-crushing heat, getting lambasted for no one reading her stories before lining up an exclusive interview with a wealthy, reclusive philanthropist (Lucy Liu). Who knew “Prada 2”



From left, Andy Sachs (Anne Hathaway), Miranda Priestly (Meryl Streep) and Nigel Kipling (Stanley Tucci) are out to save their magazine Runway in the sequel “The Devil Wears Prada 2.” PROVIDED BY MACALL POLAY/20TH CENTURY STUDIOS

‘The Devil Wears Prada 2’

Rated: PG-13 for strong language and some suggestive references.

Star rating: ★★☆☆

would be where journalists feel most seen?

Don’t be turned off by all that, fashionistas. There’s plenty for you as Miranda and Andy navigate their workplace’s existential crisis. There are fun cameos from celebrities and supermodels, and so many colorful clothing choices that the jeans-and-a-tee crowd might be impressed, too.

What this “Devil” doesn’t need, though, is to run back so many plot points and so much narrative direction from the first film. It’s enjoyable seeing Streep and Hathaway vamp off each other, but Andy having to work this hard to win Miranda

over again just feels repetitive. And the third act of the film feels way too close to the OG as well.

While Hathaway and Tucci have a warm chemistry that they’re able to rekindle, the real throwback that works best is Andy and Emily’s relationship. There’s bonding, butting heads and everything in between as the movie works to develop Blunt’s character a little more, and it makes up for the stuff that doesn’t work. Like a forced relationship angle with Andy and nice-guy Australian contractor Peter (Patrick Brammall). He’s a forgettable addition whereas Justin Theroux is a standout as Blunt’s hilariously awkward, AI-loving tech bro love interest.

Like so much of this sequel, he interestingly feels inspired and real among the fiction. That, and a soft spot for reportage, may not seem fashionable for a “Devil Wears Prada” movie, but we’ll take it.