



MICHAEL KOHLHAAS

Spring
Season
2014

Release: 2013

Cert (UK): 15

Runtime: 122 mins

Director: Arnaud des Pallières

Screenwriters: Christelle Berthevas , Arnaud des Pallières from the novella by Heinrich von Kleist

Cast: Mads Mikkelsen, Mélusine Mayance, Delphine Chuillot



Mads Mikkelsen continues his domination of European art house films, this time taking the role of Michael Kohlhaas. Based on a sixteenth century folk tale as handed down via a novella written by Heinrich von Kleist in the nineteenth century, Kohlhaas is happy doing pretty well buying and selling horses until a local baron confiscates two of his horses as an illegal tax. When Kohlhaas demands them back, his world falls apart and he rides into history as a Robin Hood-like legend, fighting for justice and retribution.

The film plays on the manner in which he fought for this; how far is it justifiable to go to fight for justice?

As always, Mikkelsen gets good reviews, his subdued powerful way of acting fitting this part well, winning the French Cesar for best actor along the way. Denis Levant (who we saw in '*Holy Motors*' last year) also gets high praise for the small part he plays as a local priest.

The film is directed (and co-written) by Arnaud des Pallières, who only has a couple of films to his credit ('*Parc*' (2008), '*Adieu*' (2003)), but was nominated for the Palme D'Or at Cannes in 2013 for this one.

This all being said, the film has had mixed reviews, with some reviewers feeling des Pallières concentrated too much on the morals, not enough on the action. Whether Keswick will agree with this or not we will find out on Sunday.

