



FILM: **PROBLEMISTA**

FDG RATING: 1.4 ☹️○○○○

Film Discussion Group (FDG) Scale is 1-5 (5 is best)

Julio Torres: *director, writer*
Julio Torres: *actor, Alejandro*
Tilda Swinton: *actress, Elizabeth*

DATE: July 21, 2024

DISCUSSION SUMMARY: **PROBLEMISTA**

Julio Torres is the writer, director, and star of the 2023 film *Problemista*, an American surrealist, comedy, adventure, drama. Torres is a Salvadoran immigrant himself, and the film is about Alejandro, a Salvadoran immigrant in New York City who is trying to renew his work visa. The film maker said the term "problemista" refers to people who are compelled to create nightmare scenarios for themselves. That's what happens to Alejandro, an aspiring toy designer who's struggling to bring his unusual ideas to life. When his work visa runs out, he takes a job assisting an art world outcast maniac, Elizabeth, (Tilda Swinton) as his only hope to stay in the country and hopefully realize his dream.

Elizabeth is meticulously organizing and curating her deceased husband's paintings of giant Eggs, a collection of 13 artworks. Swinton's character was way over the top in the opinion of several discussion participants and one thought she was seriously over acting. It was a weird movie according to many discussion participants. Note that Elizabeth has frozen her husband cryogenically and Alejandro accidentally unplugs the machine on his first day working for her.

Published film critics liked the commentary on our flawed immigration system. One reviewer said the film is a surreal adventure through the equally treacherous worlds of New York City and the U.S. Immigration system. Torres points out the insanity of the immigration system he endured as Alejandro is required to submit a \$6000 filing fee with his visa application even though it's against the law for him to work in the US.

Most of us found little to like about the film. Negative comments included that it really wasn't clever, the creative visuals added nothing, it was 2 hours of screeching antics, completely discombobulated.

Problemista received a problematic score of 1.4 on our scale of 1 to 5. (5 is the best.)



See you at the movies!
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