

# ***“Mama Mia! Here We Go Again”***

*By Helen Lutz*

Have you ever heard of a Godwink? The closest synonym might be a coincidence, a really odd and meaningful coincidence – in my case, Syalvan. Normally I try to review films much closer to their opening dates, but life got in my way. I was frantically trying to prepare to leave on vacation, spent 12 days totally enjoying myself, and have been trying to catch up with work ever since my return.



During our vacation we decided to forgo a trip to Florence and instead chose a private tour of the Amalfi Coast and the ruins at Pompei. The sights were amazing and unforgettable as was our tour guide Ms. Syalvan. She was a retired teacher, friendly, knowledgeable and very European (and I do mean European – wastes no Euros on razors). All over Europe I saw motor scooters. They pay little or no attention to the laws of the road – or anything else for that matter. The scenic winding mountain road along the coast is almost wide enough for two cars. When one of the scooters had an accident, traffic came to a standstill and that’s when I first paid attention to Syalvan saying “Mama Mia!” with her Italian accent and in context. I found it to be one of her favorite catch phrases which made me grin every time I heard her thinking of “Mama Mia! Here We Go Again.” I wanted to break into an ABBA song each time.

If you enjoyed “Mama Mia!” ten years ago with the music of ABBA, then you have a treat in store for you. In “Mama Mia! Here We Go Again” we return to the Mediterranean where Sophie (Amanda Seyfried) prepares for the grand re-opening of her mother’s dream hotel. The story is best described as a fairy tale – don’t expect any drama since the story wraps around some very old ABBA lyrics and takes us back into Donna’s (Meryl Streep) past explaining just how little Miss Sophie came to be. Young Donna played by Lily James along with best friends young Rosie (Alexa Davies) and young Tanya (Jessica Keenan Wynn) delight as we imagine the original cast in their youth (not too difficult since Julie Walters and Christine Baranski also have major roles as grownups).

Director Ol Parker takes us on the journey of Donna’s life. We explore the ups and downs as we meet the loves of her life (young as well as older), how she obtains the hotel, how she raises a child as a single parent – how she lives a full life and how her legacy continues. Filled with the music of ABBA and wonderful choreography, I wanted to break into song; however, out of respect to other movie goers who were singing, I spared them my vocals.

We know the story of “Mama Mia!” The sequel “Mama Mia! Here We Go Again” brings the original story to life on the big screen in a delightful way. If you are a fan of the first movie or the Broadway show, you’ll enjoy this one; if not, then it’s nice that modern metroplex theaters offer a variety of shows. On a scale of one to four Hart Beats I give “Mama Mia! Here We Go Again” FOUR HARTS. I left the theater and bought the sound track eagerly awaiting its release on Blu-Ray. In the words of Syalvan – “Mama Mia!”