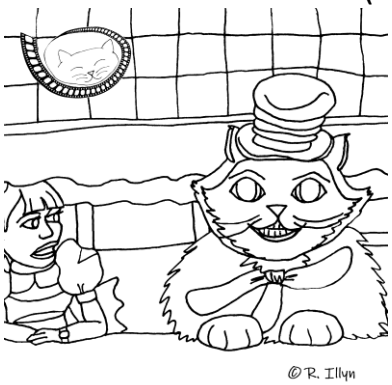
Cats on Film Pod

Transcript

Cats on Film Pod Episode 33
Dr. Seuss' The Cat in the Hat (2003)



SKIPPER
meows

INTRO JINGLE

RAY
Hi everybody! Welcome back to *Cats on Film Pod.* I'm Ray Ilyn, here with my co-host, Skipper.

SKIPPER
Meows

RAY
Thank you for joining us every Tuesday as we review cats in film. You can support the show at https://pod.fan/catsonfilmpod

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Meows

RAY
Spoilers ahead!
Today, we're reviewing *Dr. Seuss' The Cat in the Hat,* from 2003; riding on the success of Jim Carrey's *Grinch* movie. Let's recap!

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RAY
Mike Myers plays a furry, black and white tuxie-type cat-person who makes an unexpected visit to a couple suburban white kids.

CLIP FROM *THE CAT IN THE HAT*
SALLY
That *was* a giant cat.
CONRAD
But that's impossible, isn't it?
CAT
It's entirely impossible.
Look, I'm a cat that can talk. That should be enough for you people!

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Hard to tell. There's a brief shot of a "Spayed & Neutered Certificate" that lists his species as "Feline *question mark"* and breed as "Unknown". And yet he still gets hot for blonde white human ladies – both Joan and Paris Hilton in her rave cameo.

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RAY
Recognizing that iconic hat's influence on the rave scene is a great visual joke in the pulsing crowd of dancers.
Anyways, the Cat himself also wears a red bow around his neck and cartoony white gloves. There's a prosthetic nose that looks like what they used on the Whos of Whoville in the *Grinch* movie.

SKIPPER
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RAY
I think they managed to keep him from looking truly monstrous. And the expressive wiggly ears and swishy tail look great. They really add to the performance.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
True, his behavior isn't very feline. He's got basic stereotype feline characteristics such as not liking dogs and disrespecting fish, but he completely lacks cat-like grace when he falls from the ceiling.

CLIP FROM *THE CAT IN THE HAT*

CAT
Little-known fact: cats always land on their tushie. *Laughs*
CONRAD
I thought they always landed on their feet.
CAT
Oh, sure, now you tell me. Harrumph! *Laughs*

RAY
The Cat doesn't have a feline-sounding voice, either. He's mostly doing a kind of vaudeville comedian voice with a bit of Bert Lahr's Cowardly Lion mixed in. Then there are all the 20th century pop culture references that would not be entirely socially-acceptable nowadays and maybe shouldn't have been in 2003. They include a Carmen Miranda, a Spanish matador, and a Rastafarian stoner. And why so much disrespect for Mrs. Kwan? She's the one named character who's not white and she gets thrown around and sat on in most of her scenes.

SKIPPER
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RAY
Yes, back to the cat-person.
He's not the only cat shown in the movie, although the others get little screen time.

SKIPPER
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RAY
I agree, the birthday party piñata shaped like a giant black cat is all kinds of disturbing. So relieved they tied the rope around his torso and not his neck!

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Oh, the other cat is an actual live cat. It's a fluffy white kitty who's onscreen for just a few seconds. When the lead characters are leaving downtown in a yellow convertible, the kitty is in the arms of a middle-aged white guy in a pink suit and hat. He looks startled by the giant Cat in the Hat behind the wheel of the car.

SKIPPER
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RAY
Yeah, and the red and blue Things 1 and 2 in back.

Then after the Cat and kids get back to the house, there's a brief gag of the Cat hitting a tennis ball off-screen that triggers sound effects for crashing glass and a yowling hurt cat!

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Yep, both hacky and using violence against cats for so-called comedy.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Certainly didn't make me laugh, either. He *does* silently mouth an apology, but that doesn't make up for perpetuating a harmful trope. And right after calling out the cruelty of forcing cats into bags! Not cool.

SKIPPER
meows

RAY
Overall, how do you rate the feline representation in *Dr. Seuss' The Cat in the Hat?*

SKIPPER
Meow, meow

RAY
Two out of four paws for this Cat in the Hat. He's certainly got the cat-person look down, but very little feline behavior. Plus some anti-cat violence.

SKIPPER
meows

OUTRO MUSIC

RAY
Thank you for listening to *Cats on Film Pod,* which is voiced & produced by Ray Ilyn, with music by The DōsMan, and additional sounds from FreeSound.org.
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