Charlie Chaplin – City Lights

Chaplin’s genius shines again in this “Little Fellow” 1931 film. Chaplin lends his brilliant treatment to induce a side splitting; tear jerking film that again does its’ best to be relevant to societies struggles as possible. This is the main reason why this and most Chaplin films are timeless. The film begins with a satirical representation of the common man struggling with modern and everyday political pros. Chaplin’s character is introduced by appearing to be asleep on a freshly unveiled monument, a clear gesture of the separatism between the public and the government. Chaplin then continues to run into mishap after mishap, from run-ins with the police to runarounds with a street newspaper boy. These everyday situations set the pace for showing the mundane moments the average “trap” lives.

Chaplin is suddenly stricken by the beauty and sad struggle of a young blind flower girl selling her wares corner side. She mistakes him for a wealthy man after Chaplin is misbelieved to be exiting from an automobile (from that period one could be mistaken as wealthy). Chaplin continues to develop the characters inner structure through showing the inner and external struggle each has to deal with. The flower girl is not only blind but he finds her bed ridden with sickness. He has an opportunity to collect the funds she would need to have an operation done to cure her blindness. Chaplin continues his comedic antics in attempting to draw up the money needed to help his muse. Chaplin creates one of his most memorable scenes in the boxing fight. Used over and over throughout cinema history he sets up a slapstick nuclear explosion.

Like in most Chaplin films the story is a bit reused/abused. Penny less trap slams into romantic/emotional situation must deal with overwhelming circumstances, stumbles over sudden solution in which turns the tables on tramp and then ends with the trap heralded as a savior. I do enjoy the genius of Chaplin’s setups and payoffs. What he learned from his time spent in an orphanage with his brother as a youth and later from vaudeville comedy troupe *Casey's Court Circus* and *Fred Karno pantomime troupe* Chaplin has mastered the gag. Every film he touches becomes better positioned as a masterpiece.