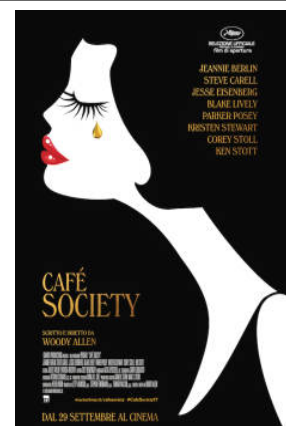


Movies & Languages 2017-2018

Café Society

About the movie (subtitled version)

DIRECTOR	Woody Allen
YEAR / COUNTRY	2016 / USA
GENRE	Comedy, Romance
ACTORS	J. Eisenberg, K. Stewart, S. Carell, B. Lively, P. Posey, J. Berlin, S. Lee, C. Stoll



PLOT

Set in the 1930s, the film's narrative revolves around Bobby Dorfman who leaves the constricts of his Bronx working-class parents for Hollywood, seeking work from his uncle Phil, a high-flying talent agent. Bobby rapidly falls for Vonnie, Phil's secretary, but fails to capture her full attention since she's too busy having a complicated love-affair.

After being spurned by Vonnie, Bobby returns to New York and finds himself thriving as a manager of a nightclub (owned by his gangster brother) and turns it into the hottest nightspot for the rich & powerful, the so-called "café society". Bobby soon marries a glamorous socialite though still pining for what could have been with Vonnie. In the end, everything seems to have fallen into place for Bobby until the night Vonnie walks into his nightclub.

Sharp, funny and moving, the film has sub-plots, the contrast between Los Angeles and New York, to Bobby's struggling, garrulous Jewish Bronx family, to the rough-and-tumble violence of New York gangsters, to the vibrant world of high society.

Like so many other Woody Allen films, it seems that "Café Society" focuses on the meaning of success, finding oneself, and coming to terms with love and the devastation it can sometimes leave behind.

LANGUAGE

Standard & Informal American English.

GRAMMAR

Writers & speakers frequently confuse the various forms of LIE (meaning "to recline or rest on a surface") and LAY (meaning "to put or place something").

LIE is an intransitive verb; it has no object: "The tax forms LIE on the table"

LAY is transitive; it takes an object: "Please LAY the tax forms on the table"

In addition to confusing the meaning of LIE and LAY, writers & speakers are often unfamiliar with the standard English forms.

Base Form	Past tense.....	Past Participle.....	-ing Form
to lie.....	lay.....	lain.....	lying
to lay.....	laid.....	laid.....	laying
**Sue was so exhausted that she LAY down for a nap.			
**The patient had been LYING in an uncomfortable position all night.			
**LAY the tent down on the grass and I'll show you how to put it up.			
**I'm sure I LAID the keys on the table, but someone probably took them.			

VOCABULARY

s.o. = someone, *Informal American English

The Bronx: a borough of New York City, north of Harlem. In the past, it had a reputation as a poor area with a lot of crime and drug dealing	*He dumped me: he got rid of me and ended the relationship
*Hooker: prostitute	To be in / of two minds: to have difficulty making a decision
To bicker: to quarrel	*Catty backstabbing: unpleasant things that people say or do to harm s.o.'s reputation
Choosy: take excessive care when making a decision, a choice	To succumb: to yield to s.o.
Fishy: suspicious	*To cheat on s.o.: to be sexually unfaithful
To fast: abstinence from food for religious reasons	A hothead: an irascible person; one quick to anger
Qualm: apprehension	Racketeering: obtaining or extorting money illegally or carrying on illegal activities
*A buck: a dollar	*A louse: a bad person, a hooligan
To be tied up: to be busy, occupied, engaged	A gangster: a criminal, a thug
To quit a job: to leave / resign a job	Notorious: disreputable, infamous
*"You're kidding": you're telling s.o. that you don't believe what he/she said. "I finally passed all the exams!" "You're kidding!"	*To send s.o. packing: you tell s.o. in an angry way to leave; scam!
*Cockamamie / cockamamy: ridiculous, incredible: "...of all the cockamamy ideas I have heard!"	To take a rain check on s.o.: to politely refuse an offer, with the possibility of accepting the offer in the future. "Thanks for the invitation but I'll have to take a rain check since I have an exam tomorrow"
Brunch: combination of breakfast & lunch (especially Sunday brunch)	The phrase " rain check " originated in the 1880's in the US in reference to baseball games. If it rained heavily enough for a match to be postponed, the ticket holders were given a "rain check" i.e. a voucher to attend another match.
Hold on: wait (such as a telephone connection)	Some Woody quips from the film: -"Socrates said that the unexamined life is not worth living, but the examined one, is no bargain" -"Live every day like it's your last, and one day you'll be right" -"Life is a comedy written by a sadistic comedy writer"
To be at sea: to be bewildered, confused	
Like a fish out of water: to feel uncomfortable in a new environment, a new city etc.	
*I'm game: I agree	