

Review: Lady Gaga's Golden Globe nomination for 'House of Gucci' is well deserved



CHENNAI: “House of Gucci,” which just earned lead star Lady Gaga a Golden Globe nomination, feels like the “Godfather” films and Lady Macbeth stirred into one. Directed by Ridley Scott, with a layered script by Becky Johnston and Roberto Bentivegna that is based on Sara Gay Forden’s 2001 book “The House of Gucci: A Sensational Story of Murder, Madness, Glamour, and Greed,” it has the allure of a high fashion thriller with a neat mix of style, substance, scheming and all that is seedy.

Despite the ear-grating attempt at an Italian accent, it is a wonderful piece of acting by Gaga, who turns from a comely maiden into a villainous schemer striving to clean up the mess made by the two Gucci brothers — Al Pacino's Aldo and Rudolfo (Jeremy Irons) — who between them have been emptying the fashion house's coffers. A commoner, Gaga as Patrizia Reggiani is a social climber and involves herself with the scion of the Gucci family, Maurizio — a tall, gawky man with oversized spectacles

played by Adam Driver (another painful attempt at an Italian accent). While she exudes an element of doleful mysteriousness, he is charmingly innocent with a foolish sense of trust that Patrizia capitalizes upon as she plans his assassination.

In many ways, "House of Gucci" has magical allure, mixing murderous machinations with catwalk creations. It is dramatic to be sure, spiced up with portrayals of a high society European family that lives off its rich legacy. The film is gaudily colorful and features a melodious jukebox of a soundtrack with Pavarotti, Tracy Chapman, Caterina Caselli and Blondie giving audiences something to tap their feet to.

It is led by able performances from a subtle but determined Al Pacino, but it must be said that Salma Hayek is wasted in her role as Tarot card reader Pina. Sadly we also learn little of the inner motivations of the cast of characters around Reggiani, they are simply bit players in her stage play spouting dramatic lines in exaggerated accents and generally being as hammy as possible.

The Gucci scandal is well known, at least to many of us, so the climax may not come as a great surprise and Ridley's effort to turn it into a fashion thriller only work to a point.
