

## Far from the Madding Crowd – Review

Starring Carey Mulligan as Bathsheba Everdene, Thomas Vinterberg's **sumptuous** adaptation of Thomas Hardy's 1874 novel marks the fourth time it has been depicted onscreen, and it is a **rousing success** for the Danish director, whose career has **endured** as many high points (2012's gripping *The Hunt*) as it has lows (like 2003's critically **maligned** *It's All About Love*).

Hardy's novels are sweeping romances that explore the state of Victorian Britain, in which he examines the divisions in social class and hypocrisies of those in power with a **deft**, assured **hand**. He also had a talent for love stories, and *Far from the Madding Crowd* is the author at his very best.



Everdene discovers that her late uncle has left her his **farm** in his will, and **proves** herself an adept and popular **mistress** to those who work there. She attracts three very different **suitors**: Gabriel Oak (Matthias Schoenaerts, of 2013's *Rust and Bone*), a **sheepherder** who she offers a **job**, William Boldwood (Michael Sheen, as good as usual), her rich and prosperous **neighbour**, and Sergeant Frank Troy (Tom Sturridge, *The Boat that Rocked*) as a **roguish** army man.

Hardy's talent for **plotting** and characterisation is built upon by the rich, **captivating** performance of Mulligan as Everdene; it isn't difficult to see why she inspires such devotion in three very different men, and the complexities and **heartache** this leads to results in a moving, **accomplished** story, and one which Vinterberg tackles with **gusto** and verve.