How to Steal a Million

Date Watched	17 Nov 2026
Poster	
Notes	Remember in 1998 when multiple movies about astroids hitting Earth, or 2000 when we have multiple movies about Mars missions that went south? There are just some years when you get variants of the same movie. In 1996, it was How to Steal and Million and Gambit. Romantic, comedy, heist films. Odd couple pairing of a fashion knock out with a heart of gold and a suave Englishman. Exotic locals. Forged statues. A very specific plot device around electronic eyes set in an eleborate canopy and the floor triggering an alarm for clymatic results. It is impossible to have watched the both and not compare them. While both were released in 1996, How to Steal a Million feels older, more dated. Maybe it is the more classic setting of Paris vs the chic bustle of Hong Kong and some mythical middle east kingdom. The directing of HtSaM leans more into the stylized movies of the 60s, with intercuts of various paintings giving reaction shots and tempo to quick scenes. Hepburn's looks are used to full effect from her nighties, to her lacy mystery women, to being a comedic cleaning lady. The film is pretty straightforward narrative. The chemistry between Hepburn and O'Toole is more comedic than emotional. Meanwhile, Gambit is the superior film. The narrative device makes it as much a story about the inner worlds of the characters as it is how they deal with the real world. Like a good Christie novel, a rediculous plot is just an excuse for real human psyche. Gambits' fashions, sets, music, and direction come off fresher and more modern. The chemistry between the characters is just as comedic but also warm. The dialog is also snappier, where as HtSaM comes off more as a period peice. Maybe is is a good movie. It has 100% on rotten tomatoes. but Gambit ruined it for me.