

Dickinson: An AppleTV+ Review

I recently got a subscription to Apple's new streaming service AppleTV+ and was curious to take a look and what kind of content they offer. Since Apple is a tech producing company rather than a television and content provider, I was questioning whether or not the shows they make would be any good. When thinking about streaming services, Netflix and Disney+ come to mind, definitely not Apple. But through boredom and curiosity, I decided to take a look.

After skimming through the different shows, such as *The Morning Show*, *For All Mankind*, *Truth Be Told* and many, many others, I decided to watch *Dickinson*. I vividly remember seeing advertisements for this show in Times Square sometime in a pre-COVID world but had forgotten about them until I saw the title on my screen again. The show stars Hailee Steinfeld as Emily Dickinson, one of the most famous American poets in history.

Dickinson was born in 1830 in Amherst, Massachusetts and wrote 1,800 poems that went widely unnoticed until her death in 1886, with her fame coming posthumously. The show is about her life living in Amherst with her parents, her sister Lavinia and brother Austin. The show revolves around Dickinson's poems, with the fictional situations in the show causing her to write some of her most famous work. The plot seemed to be built on the shoulders of her poems rather than a plot being created and then having her poems thrown in there. Emily's words are the backbone of the show and gives audiences a dramatized version of the situations that may have caused the real Emily to write what she did.

Although living in the 19th century may not sound like the most fun time period to live in, and definitely not a type of show a lot of people would want to watch, *Dickinson* uses modern language and music and presents a beautiful balance of past and present. That is one of my favorite aspects of the show. Modern language and slang is widely used in *Dickinson*, making the show's teenage characters much more relatable and funny. Rap and hip-hop music is also used in the show, with that genre being used as a background for dance and ball scenes. The funniest part of the show is watching men and women in period outfits dancing to modern hip-hop music. Apple does an amazing job at taking a real time period and making it relatable and appealing to present day viewers while also keeping an accurate depiction of what life was like 200 years ago.

Although *Dickinson* is definitely a show people can laugh at, the first season brings to the table a lot of issues that women had to deal with in the 19th century. Some of the issues discussed are women's roles in society, how women are supposed to be caretakers and mothers while the husbands work and get an education. This societal concept is the backdrop of season one, and audiences get to watch Emily navigate those hardships while creating her work throughout it all. This causes family struggles and internal struggles within herself, to be a woman who only wants to be a poet. *Dickinson* offers a small look into what life was like for women so long ago.

Dickinson brings laughs, tears and frustration at the situations presented in the show. It is something anyone can enjoy, even if historical television shows aren't really your thing. It is an enchanting show with gorgeous costumes, scenery and writing. The entire first season is available now on AppleTV+, and season 2 episodes are being released each week. Happy watching!