

The King's Speech

By Dottie Knapp, Board Member, Cape May Film Society

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The King's Speech is about George IV (the current Queen's father) and his triumph over stuttering. It isn't often that you get to see Mr. Darcy, Capt. Barbossa, Bellatrix Lestrange and Wormtail as well as Adam/Felix (one of my favorite Drag Queens) all in the same movie. Colin Firth as the Duke of York may not be as dashing as he was as Mr. Darcy in the many hours of Pride and Prejudice (BBCTV), but the stiff upper lip is still there, and you hold your breath as you agonize with him willing him to form the words as he tries to overcome his impediment. Geoffrey Rush as the therapist also isn't as dashing without his pirate hat, but is so charming that you envy his family.

I'm not a fan of Helena Bonham Carter but it is because she is so evil as Bellatrix, and yet here she is matronly, adoring, kind, everything we've come to believe the Queen Mum was. What can I say but the transformation of Wormtail (Timothy Spall) into the character of Winston Churchill--amazing. Guy Pearce gets to give up the throne for the woman he loves, and as you watch him play the sycophant to a domineering Wallis, you are hoping that the next movie will be about them (and no he doesn't try on any of her clothes).

The movie is really a buddy movie, even though it is about royalty. The writer had asked the Queen Mum if he could make a movie about the King's problem and she asked that he not do so until after her death as it was too painful a period. The movie makes you understand what she felt. It is also not what we have come to expect of period drama, so if you want opulent sets, and lavish clothing, you aren't going to get it here. Most of the scenes are in very restricted surroundings, and while the clothing is lovely, we are talking about the House of Windsor here, so it is - tasteful.

There are so few movies for anyone with vocabularies of words with more than two syllables that when one comes along that is about dialogue and not car chases they seem like a whole new genre. Support it. Maybe they'll make more.

And if you're looking for a Valentine treat, come to the Cape May Film Society's screening of "For Roseanna," starring Mercedes Ruehl and Jean Reno. The film starts at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, February 12 at Cape May Stage, and the evening comes complete with champagne and chocolate. No reservations needed, but you can call 609-884-6700 for details.