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## Last Year Marilyn, This Year Hitchcock!

By Derek Zemrak



Photo Fox Searchlight Pictures

Hitchcock, starring Oscar Winner Anthony Hopkins (The Silence of the Lambs) as Alfred Hitchcock, is a movie that will surprise you. It is more about The Master of Suspense's relationship with his wife, Alma Reville, portrayed by Oscar winner Helen Mirren (The Queen), than his movie making magic. Mirren recently received a well-deserved Golden Globe Nomination in her role as Alma and I am sure an Oscar nod will be forthcoming for her. I had the opportunity to interview the director, Sacha Gervasi, who gives Lamorinda Weekly readers an inside look at this outstanding independent film.

DZ: How does it feel to have directed a film that is already getting Oscar buzz?

SG: I am happy to have made a film that I am really proud of in the Hitchcock style. We made it for an audience of people who are going to enjoy the experience.

DZ: As a director, how do you pull off a performance from the actors so you don't see Anthony Hopkins or Helen Mirren on the screen; you see their characters on the screen?

SG: It's all about casting, through the crew and actors. If you are lucky enough to get great actors to agree to work with you, honestly 90 percent of the job is done. You hire them for the reason that they are good. They are clearly connected to the material and they bring their intelligence, insight and experience to the role. You allow them to do their job. It's working with them on the material

and allowing them to explore things, and letting them find their comfort zone and physical position. It's very much "actor centric" the way I work, which is to allow the actors to find the space and record it.

DZ: The audience is going to learn a lot about not only Hitchcock but also his wife Alma and her involvement in his career. Can you elaborate on that?

SG: It is a fascinating story that not a lot of people know about. She was instrumental in his career. She was the one who demanded the music in the famous Psycho shower scene. Alfred Hitchcock was determined that there should be no music. She absolutely insisted and because of their 36-year marriage and the fact that he ultimately trusted her, and against his will, he went with the music. And god was she right because when you think of Hitchcock the first thing you think about is the shower scene and the second thing you think about is the music.

DZ: When the end credits roll what do you want the audience to leave with after seeing Hitchcock?

SG: Hopefully they walk away with a better understanding of Hitchcock and partially his wife's role in the creative genius. But also a connection to someone who is this iconic figure and an understanding that we are all the same, we all struggle with relationships; we all struggle with ourselves and within relationships. It may not be what they were expecting and they all tell their friends to go see it!

Hitchcock opens at the Orinda Theatre on Friday, Dec. 21. Do not miss this interesting and informative film.

Derek Zemrak is a Film Critic, Film Producer and Founder of the California Independent Film Festival. You can follow Derek on Twitter @zemrak for the latest Hollywood news.

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