



fish

Golden Voices (Kolot Reka)
(Israel 2019)

Spoiler alert: You may prefer to read these reviews after the screening

DIRECTOR : Evgeny Ruman
RUNNING TIME : 88mins
RATING : M

Synopsis:

A Russian couple who were employed dubbing foreign films into Russian in the old USSR, need to find new ways of earning money when they move to Israel in 1990.

Review: Richard Cotter

Nowadays, the thought of a foreign film being dubbed as opposed to hearing the original actor say their lines with the translation subtitled at the bottom of our screen seems unbelievable. But it used to be the vogue all over the world, and many vocal artists made a living from being the local voice of big-name Hollywood actors.

Victor and Raya Frenkel were the golden voices of Soviet film dubbing for decades, lending their talent to everything from Dustin Hoffman and Meryl Streep in *Kramer vs. Kramer* to helping Fellini launch in the USSR.

In 1990, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Frenkels decide to immigrate to Israel, just like hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews, and oy! What quite a culture shock for these non-ideological intellectuals and artists, hankering for Western civilisation.

In their sixties, Victor and Raya find themselves in not so salubrious surroundings and attempts to use their vocal training results in brushes with pornographers and pirates.

Victor inadvertently becomes involved in a black-market plot to duplicate videos of mainstream films which nearly lands him in prison.

Raya innocently answers an ad that delivers her to a sex hot line service, where she uses her experience in vocal nuance to present as a much younger, sexually alluring woman.

Cont.

FILMS IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS INC

10.00 am Sunday 13th March 2022

8.15 pm Tuesday 15th March 2022

Review: Cont.

It's all make believe, like the illusion of native linguistics on foreign tongue, but Victor is not enamoured of Raya's giving aural sex to strangers. It is an affront to his male pride, a kind of performance anxiety that sees them argue and part.

To add an extra and unexpected event, one of Raya's anonymous callers starts to obsess and becomes somewhat of a stalker.

In turns amusing, painful, and absurd *Golden Voices* is a beguiling little charmer, due largely to the casual perfection of the two lead actors.

Mariya Belkina as Raya and Vladimir Friedman as Victor personify their dilemma with stings and tickles that enlist the mind and the heart.

A film about the ordeals of the immigrant, about the chosen being frozen and promises broken in the promised land, *Golden Voices* is also a film born from a love of cinema, and so, is a must see for all cinema lovers.

Source: www.Sydneyartsguide.com.au ~ Richard Cotter 24/3/2021 Edited extracts ~ accessed 8/5/2021

~~

Review: Glenn Kenny

Two voice actors from Russia struggle for a fresh start.

Among other things, the late-1980s collapse of the Soviet state brought about both the privatization of Russian industry and the government's softening of laws forbidding Jews to emigrate from the land. *Golden Voices*, a winning comedy-drama directed by the Israeli filmmaker Evgeny Ruman, himself a son of immigrants from Belarus, locates its unusual narrative at the meeting point of those two post-U.S.S.R. circumstances.

Victor and Raya, played by Vladimir Friedman and Maria Belkin, were top Russian-dubbing artists in the post-Stalin "thaw." ("You turned Kirk Douglas into a great actor," an old fan enthuses to Victor about his work on "Spartacus.") Now, in 1990, the state film apparatus doesn't need them anymore, as it has ceased to exist. The couple had long wanted to settle in Israel anyway. On arrival, they quickly learn that demand for their particular talents is scarce.

These are warm, attractive, intelligent characters who believe in art, and Raya's diffidence upon landing a job at a phone-sex warehouse is understandable. But she applies her talents aptly: She can be a "22-year-old virgin" on one call and a jaded, bored housewife on the next.

Victor hooks up with some lo-fi video pirates, dubbing movies taped in theatres with a camcorder, but this messes with his sense of artistic integrity, not to mention his desire not to be arrested. Plus he's plenty anxious over Iraq's threatened missile attacks — which indeed arrive at the movie's climax. Friedman and Belkin are dead-on credible at every turn.

Job tensions hammer at the fault lines of the couple's marriage, but the movie maintains an understated tone. A pleasant sit — the kind of picture that's moving, but not *too* moving.

Source: Glenn Kenny: www.nytimes.com 7/10/2021 Edited extracts ~ accessed 16/2/22

Some Thoughts on: *The Heiresses*

The wonderful news that FISH is up and running again, surviving the ravages of Covid, was absolutely confirmed by the recent screening of this thought provoking and character driven gem from FISH first timer, Paraguay.

Despite the obvious small budget for design and production, this gentle film proved to be a very moving and, at times, quite brave cinematic outing. The portrayal of two relatively senior women in a close, long term relationship, the inclusion and recognition of self-stimulation as an important part of Chela's libido and the depiction of attraction and desire among 'the more mature' in society, was so refreshing to see presented both sensitively and naturally. (Hollywood, please take note!)

I really enjoyed the transit of the characters through the film. Chiquita facing the reality of debtor's prison with stoic acceptance as she duly finds her niche in the overcrowded 'borstal' of seedy, sweaty, noisy and aggressive inmates. She finally escapes at film's end.... as does the long-suffering Chela. Her 'sentence' had been much longer as their income, lifestyle and relationship were all waning. Her escape is so much more liberating though, as the taxi business and accompanying funds grow along with her confidence, happiness, self-esteem, purpose and potential love life.

The simple intensity and effectiveness of these two lead actors and our resulting concern for them was very much due to the fine direction of Marcelo Martinessi.

My only worry on behalf of Chela at the conclusion of the film, was when we witnessed that promising shot of the Merc's empty car space. With an engine rattle that sounded worse than a clapped out Datsun one tonner table top truck I once owned, her initial stop in her new life's journey, may very well have been at the first available mechanic's garage.

Thanks FISH, onward and upwards.

Ross Armfield.

~~

COMING UP:

April

A Lion Returns (Australia)

Sunday 3rd & Tuesday 5th

Message from the President

After two years of uncertainty it looks like we will be able to hold our monthly screenings, something which I know we have all greatly missed.

You are reminded that your current membership is valid for screenings till the end of 2022.

I would like to welcome Brian Barnaby and Sandra Jones to our committee and take this opportunity to acknowledge once again the very valuable contributions of our newly retired committee members, Caro Kennewell and Des Ryan.

We are also delighted to welcome back Ross Armfield, our long-standing resident reviewer

Sandra Gillespie



FILMS IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS INC

President: Sandra Gillespie 4868 2396 & 0424303620

Guest Enquiries: Suspended until further notice

Website: www.fish.org.au

Email: fishfilmsadmin@gmail.com

Mail: P.O. Box 1330 Bowral NSW 2576

Membership: Fishfilmsadmin@gmail.com

Membership closed

Enquiries: fishfilmsadmin@gmail.com

**We are grateful to our sponsors : EMPIRE CINEMA
ACE INTERNET SERVICES HIGHLAND CREATIVE**