

Film Review – Silver Surfers Curry Favour

✘ The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel, 2011 (12A)

Director John Madden

Screenplay Ol Parker (based on the novel by Deborah Moggach)

Comedy/Drama

124 mins

A senior ensemble cast lends some dignity, if not excessive credibility, to this predictable feel-good comedy/romance SAGA saga Rogan tosh, set in the crumbling ex-Raj splendour of the not quite Exotic Marigold Hotel, under the dreamingly aspirational, but hopeless management of Sonny (Dev Patel, Slumdog Millionaire). His ex-pat disparate retiree guests are obliged to stretch their meagre grey pounds and pence to their last Rupee's worth. The narrative conceit is driven by Evelyn's (Judi Dench) Blog that she writes for her son back in Blighty and provides us with her voice-over musings as the various sub-plots are woven against the vibrant chaos of the megalopolis of modern day Jaipur. Thomas Newman's luscious Indian fusion, saffron-drenched, music score providing more exoticism than the crumbling hotel ever manages.

The characters are formulaic, and the plot laden with wish-fulfilment sentimentality. Taken as a Third Age journey of self-discovery and unrequited love's resolution, it's all very charming and wittily presented with stock-character performances from a tried and trusted cast that includes a hen-pecked Bill Nighy (Douglas), a randy Ronald Pickup (Norman) and a somewhat clichéd, crotchety Muriel (Maggie Smith) whose racist heart is redeemed by her 'Untouchable' chamber-maid. Tom Wilkinson (Graham) brings a degree of

redemptive pathos to his role as a closet gay ex-Judge seeking the whereabouts of a past lover, whose life was destroyed on the discovery of their relationship.

To broaden the audience demographic, love's young interest focuses on Sonny and Sunaina, the millpond wide-eyed Bollywood beauty, Tena Desae, both of whom have to triumph over family opposition. At just over two hours, like a tiresome Balti House customer who can't take a hint, it almost outstays its welcome but there's enough to amuse and charm those willing enough to disengage their humbug mode and enjoy 'These Foolish Things', the source novel's title.

[Dominion Cinema](#)

18 Newbattle Terrace

□15:00□ □17:35□ □20:20□

[Cineworld](#)

Fountain Park, 130/3 Dundee Street

□11:00□ □14:00□ □17:00□ □20:00□ □23:00□

[ODEON Edinburgh Wester Hailes](#)

Westside Plaza, 120 Wester Hailes Road

□14:20□ □17:10□ □20:00□