

Movie Review: GREETINGS FROM THE SHORE

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By Harvey Karten

Forget about the sexual revolution. Things haven't changed at all since the publication of Maureen Daly's middle-school classic of 1942, "Seventeenth Summer," about a gal named Angie who locked eyes with the handsomest guy she'd ever seen, and while sailing on her first date with him heard, "You look nice with the wind blowing in your hair." As the late Ms. Daly reports, "She felt tingles, prickles, warmth: the tell-tale signs of romance." Or as one reviewer notes, "It's the beginning of an unforgettable summer for Angie, full of wonder, warmth, tears, challenge, and love."

OK maybe not all sixteen-year-olds these days are virginal—just ask one newly-celebrated young woman in Juneau. But make sure you turn off the CNN so that One Jenny Chambers (Kim Shaw) can remain as pure as Alaska's driven snow. In "Greetings From the Shore," we witness possibly her first pangs of wonder, warmth, tears, challenge and love. All that was needed was for her to lock eyes with a fellow, Benicio Aceveda (David Fumero), a man surprisingly sensitive for one who spends most of his time at sea with a group of rough-looking characters who smoke like fiends, withdrawing their cigarettes from well-molded biceps.

"Greetings," which was filmed by Mike Mickens on the Barnegat Island on the Jersey shore and dubbed by the name Lavallette, which given the foul-looking ocean water, a beach that looks like the one at Coney Island in December, makes me happy I was able to spend a summer on Mykonos instead. But who cares about topography when love is in the air? With a story that could find a place quite comfortably on cable, first time feature film director Greg Chwerchak lucks out by casting a radiant beauty in the role of the aforementioned seventeen-year-old.

Still grieving the recent death of her father—who (are you ready for this?) had to quit his studies at Columbia with just three credits to go because he had to support his family—Jenny is way short of money to enter that same Ivy-league institution. Her summer's job teaching English to mostly Russian bus-men at the

island's yacht club and waiting tables will hardly give her the balance of \$30,000 that she needs to make up for her first year's stingy financial aid. As the dog days recede, we fervently hope that writers Gabrielle Berberich and Greg Chwerchak will not leave her in the lurch attending (ugh) a public college in her own state like Rutgers. But how will they manage this? She doesn't look as though she'd sell her bod, hungry for funds though she may be. Watch the picture and find out, a film that featured Jay O. Sanders as the leading villain, club owner Commodore Callaghan, a high-rolling gambler not averse to throwing major insults to Catch Turner (Paul Sorvino), who is both divorced and estranged from his son. "Stick to losing your wife," advises the commodore when Catch is eager to join a high-rolling poker table. And that's when Callaghan is nice.

The story, however familiar and predictable, does not wear out its welcome during its 116 minutes thanks in large part to Kim Shaw, who in her lead role is bound to make many a fogey watching her in action wish that he were tall, dark and handsome—and a few decades younger. As for the "R" rating that the MPAA in its wisdom gave despite the almost complete absence of violence, chalk that up to a single word used several times, one which nobody below the age of seventeen has ever heard or should be encouraged to pick up.

Kim Shaw has done a few TV episodes, had a small role in the film version of "Sex and the City," and won "Best Actress" for "Greetings" at the Wild Rose Independent Film Festival.

Newstyle Releasing/ Hudson Mermaid Productions

Grade: B

Directed by: Greg Chwerchak

Written By: Gabrielle Berberich, Greg Chwerchak

Cast: Kim Shaw, Paul Sorvino, David Fumero, Jay O. Sanders, Andrew Shaifer, Lars Arentz-Hansen

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