

FILMS *in Review*

GREETINGS FROM THE SHORE

By Roy Frumkes

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Part memoir, part fairytale, *GREETINGS FROM THE SHORE* is a sweetly poignant coming of age story about a young girl who spends one last summer at the Jersey Shore before heading off to college. Based on the true-life experiences of writer/producer Gabrielle Berberich (who also produced the recent Film Fest notable - *HOUNDDOG*), Jenny Chambers (played by Kim Shaw), not yet recovered from the death of her father, secures a job at a seaside resort where she stumbles into a surprising world of Russian Sailors (whom she is hired to tutor in English, unsuccessfully...), illegal high-stakes gambling (lorded over by the father of a former playmate from her youth), and an incurable dose of unexpected love.

Intended as an homage to films like *DIRTY DANCING*, and *MYSTIC PIZZA*, *GREETINGS FROM THE SHORE* reminds this reviewer more of *THE FLAMINGO KID* with its retro salty atmosphere of, beach-clubbiness, adolescent angst, and post-pubescent adventure. An ensemble cast starring Paul Sorvino as a long-suffering and conflicted surrogate father figure, David Fumero, and Jay O. Sanders brings these vivid small-town characters to life. Jay O. Sanders as the archly bombastic and intimidating Commodore Callaghan and Andrew Shaifer as the hilariously sniffy club manager Flip Dooley give scene-stealing minor performances. The most grounded, at-first-scary-then-warmly-accessible performance, is essayed by Norwegian actor Lars Arentz-Hansen, who has done quite a bit of film work around the world, including *THE QUARRY*, a previous film by Producer/Director team Chwerchak and Berberich, but still needs to stumble across that break-out role. I'll be watching for him.

GREETINGS FROM THE SHORE does succeed modestly and gently, in the writer's words, "as a love letter in the sand, a tribute to the Jersey Shore, and a postcard from summers past."