

MOVIE REVIEW

Greetings From the Shore (2006)



Freestyle Releasing

Kim Shaw, right and David Fumero in "Greetings from the Shore."

Waves of Emotion

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The problem with having a big-name actor in your small film is that he tends to underscore the inexperience of some of your other stars.

That's the effect Paul Sorvino has in "Greetings From the Shore," a watchable-enough summer-at-the-beach tale billed as Gabrielle Berberich's first feature as writer and producer. (Parts of the story are drawn from her own summers in Lavallette, a New Jersey shore town.)

It stars Kim Shaw as a teenager spending her first solo summer in the New Jersey beach town where her family had gone for years. She lands a job teaching English to a group of mysterious foreigners who are employed by the local yacht club and falls for a particularly good-looking one (David Fumero).

Ms. Shaw is, at least at this point, the type of actress you find on the Disney Channel: genetically unable, even when crying, to project anything other than "cute" and never quite able to shake the "Hey, I'm on camera!" look.

That's harmless enough in this type of warm-weather reminiscence, until Mr. Sorvino, a real actor and a good one, shows up. He plays a down-on-his-luck fisherman who takes the girl under his wing, and he makes Ms. Shaw and some of the other cast members look like amateurs. The director, Greg Chwerchak (who also gets a writing credit), doesn't help; he allows several secondary characters to become thudding clichés, trampling the delicate story.

"Greetings From the Shore" is rated R (Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian), supposedly for language, though there is nothing here that would scandalize younger teenagers, the audience who would most enjoy this film.

GREETINGS FROM THE SHORE

Opens on Friday in New York, New Jersey and Philadelphia.

Directed by Greg Chwerchak; written by Gabrielle Berberich and Mr. Chwerchak; director of photography, Mike Mickens; edited by Kimberly Generous White; music by Jim Latham; production designer, Chia-Yi Renee Chao; produced by Ms. Berberich; released by Newstyle Releasing and Hudson Mermaid Productions. At the Village VII, 66 Third Avenue, at 13th Street, East Village. Running time: 1 hour 56 minutes.

WITH: Kim Shaw (Jenny Chambers), Paul Sorvino (Catch Turner), David Fumero (Benicio Aceveda), Jay O. Sanders (Commodore Callaghan), Andrew Shaifer (Flip Dooley) and Lars Arentz-Hansen (Lars Ramkildestrom).