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Silver Award - 1986
 Special Commendation - 1987
 Film Society of the Year - 1988
 Best Programme Notes - 1990
 Special Commendation - 1992

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"Witty, intelligent, sumptuous... ORLANDO bursts onto the screen in a blaze of glory."

screen international

"Tilda Swinton is perfection... Potter's is a magical achievement"

GQ

ADVENTURE PICTURES PRESENTS A FILM BY SALLY POTTER BASED ON THE BOOK BY VIRGINIA WOOLF

ORLANDO

PG

TILDA SWINTON BILLY ZANE LOTHAIRE BLUTEAU JOHN WOOD CHARLOTTE VALANDREY HEATHCOTE WILLIAMS WITH QUENTIN CRISP AS ELIZABETH I

SOUNDTRACK OUT NOW ON VARESE SARABANDE CD: VSD5413 MC: VSC5413 DISTRIBUTION SUPPORTED BY EFDO - A PROJECT OF THE MEDIA PROGRAMME OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

Virginia Woolf wrote 'Orlando' as a diversion during the Autumn and Winter of 1927, when she was struggling to get to grips with a more serious work - 'The Waves', finally published in 1931. It is a thinly disguised love poem to Vita Sackville-West, who was herself in the position of being unable to inherit her family home because she was a woman.

Despite its origins, the film contains transsexualism and transvestism but not lesbianism, although the sight of a gay old man (Quentin Crisp) portraying an old woman who flirts with a woman playing a youth is somewhat confusing, to say the least !

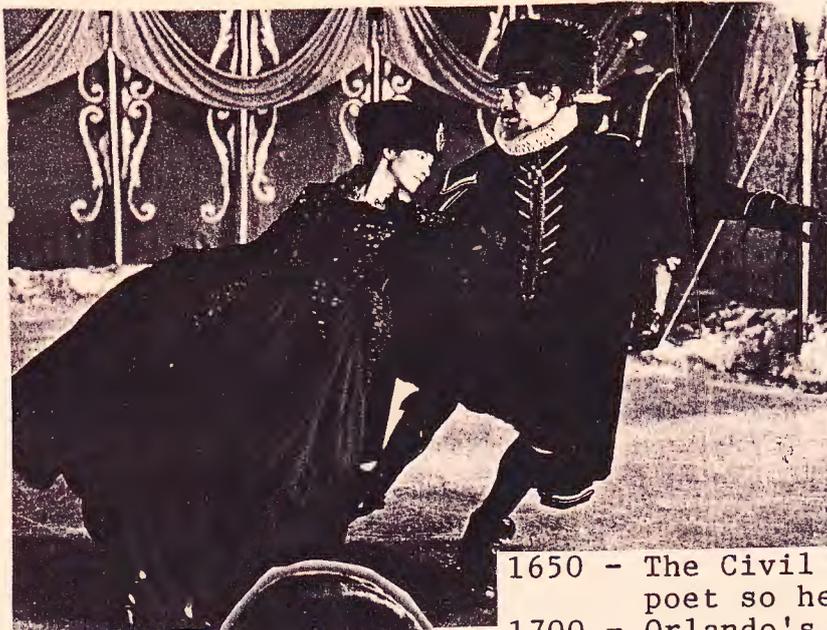


The Main Players:

- Tilda Swinton.....Orlando
- Billy Zane.....Shelmerdine
- John Wood.....Archduke Harry
- Lothaire Bluteau.....The Khan
- Charlotte Valandrey.....Sasha
- Heathcote Williams.....Nick Greene
- Quentin Crisp.....Queen Elizabeth I
- Ned Sherrin.....Mr Addison

Chronology:

- 1600 - A banquet in honour of Queen Elizabeth I at the ancestral home of Orlando's family.
1610 - A winter celebration on the frozen River Thames organised by King James I. Orlando deserts his fiancée for a Russian princess.



- 1650 - The Civil War; Orlando decides to become a poet so he seeks the help of Nick Greene.
1700 - Orlando's ambitions turn to politics: he is sent to central Asia as British Ambassador.
1710 - War disrupts a consulate reception for Archduke Harry. Fearing the battle to come, Orlando falls into a deep sleep and emerges as a woman.



- 1750 - Lady Orlando returns to England and becomes a confidant of the critics Pope and Addison. She is disinherited, because she is both dead and female, ("it amounts to the same thing!").
1850 - Having rejected Archduke Harry, Orlando meets her true knight, the American Shelmerdine, who in turn rebuffs her marriage proposal in favour of the wild colonial life.



- 1920 - Orlando is now pregnant (the only way to resume her inheritance is to have a son), in war-torn England. Her epic poem is finally completed.
1930 - Orlando and her daughter join the sight-seers marvelling at her former home; she is fulfilled at last.

Sally Potter perfectly captured the fun and vibrancy of Woolf's book, but wasn't afraid of reinterpreting it for the 1990's viewer; in particular, she added a 1930's coda to neatly round off the final chapter. What has emerged from four laborious year's filming in England and Russia, (on a £2 million budget obtained from throughout Europe), is an ingenious assortment of snapshots across 400 years of social history, seen from both sexes' point of view.

"A wonderful diversion, rich in fancy,
intelligence, formal gardens, riotous wigs and Afghan hounds"

The Times

A constant stream of meals, feasts, soirees and receptions illuminate the screen in a tour-de-force of breathtaking originality, which includes many grand visual and aural pleasures, accompanied by sly jokes, thought-provoking insights and emotional truths. The sumptuous embroidered style adopted by Sally Potter has been compared to that of Peter Greenaway or the late Derek Jarman, which is not surprising as she employed the former's production designers and the latter's costume designer.

"WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF? Not Sally Potter, apparently!
AN ORIGINAL, DEEPLY ENJOYABLE FILM"

The Independent

The success of 'Orlando' depended almost entirely upon the performance of Tilda Swinton in the title role. A veteran of many of Derek Jarman's historical recreations, she is believable as both the young rake - "there can be no doubt about his sex, despite his feminine appearance that every young man of his age aspires to" - and the more worldly wise woman he eventually becomes. She delivers asides to the camera, "Alfie"-style, making pertinent comments on the State of Europe, British society, colonialism, war, death, birth, sex, poetry, politics, love and romance.

Swinton manages to convey the uncomfortableness felt by Orlando in the fashion-victim constraints of doublet and hose, frock coat and wig or crinoline, seeming much happier in sexless Eastern attire or more liberated 20th Century clothing. The remainder of an idiosyncratic international cast turn in good cameo performances with any eccentricities entirely in keeping with the spirit of the piece.

"Full of grand visual pleasures, sly jokes...and romance...IT'S WONDERFUL"

Time Out

'Orlando' is undoubtedly "arty", but nevertheless digestible, as well as being funnier and much less pretentious than either Jarman or Greenaway would have made it. Finally, a word of warning: if an ageing Queen says to you "...do not fade, do not wither, do not grow old...", be prepared for longevity !

IAN SOWERBY

An added bonus this week, in the shape of an animated short.....

WATER COLOUR

(Animation, 1991, 6 minutes, 16mm/VHS, colour)

A film by Joanna Dunn

Made with the financial assistance of Yorkshire Arts

WATER COLOUR can be seen as a journey involving flight over land and sea, taking in beaches, lakes, fields, flowers and rocks. The journey experiences the effect of weather and time: clouds, rain, wind, sun and a giant tidal wave. Beginning at daybreak and ending at sunset, WATER COLOUR looks at the patterns in nature. This is a film about horizons and the possibilities which lie beyond them, and the freedom and inspiration which comes from this.



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BÉATRICE DALLE ROBERTO BENIGNI
ARMIN MUELLER-STAHL MUSIC BY TOM WAITS

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NEW WOMAN

"ALARMINGLY ENTERTAINING" "INCREDIBLY FUNNY"

COMPANY

SKY

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it's a round trip well worth taking" ◦

A FILM BY JIM JARMUSCH

NIGHT ON EARTH

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