



HELENA BONHAM CARTER LINUS ROACHE ALISON ELLIOTT  
THE WINGS OF THE DOVE

USA/UK 1997 Certificate 15 102 minutes

Credits:

Director: Iain Softley  
Producers: Steven Evans, David Parfitt  
Screenplay: Hossein Amini (from the novel by Henry James)  
Music: Ed Shearmur  
Cinematography: Eduardo Serra  
Editor: Tariq Anwar

Cast:

Kate Helena Bonham Carter  
Merton Linus Roache  
Millie Alison Elliott  
Aunt Maude Charlotte Rampling  
Kate's father Michael Gambon  
Lord Mark Alex Jennings  
Elizabeth Suzie McGovern

**"Superbly played by Bonham Carter.....superb set scenes amongst the masked balls of the Venice carnival.....beautifully designed.... handsomely mounted and suffused with a rare and languid eroticism. This is more than just a heritage movie." - Evening Standard.**

Henry James' multifaceted novel of tragic love is magnificently translated into a gorgeously realised, richly textured movie. Kate (Helena Bonham Carter) is a spirited but poor middle class girl who is subordinate to her wealthy Aunt Maude (Charlotte Rampling). Her aunt blocks her from marrying Merton (Linus Roache), her charismatic but equally penniless journalist boyfriend. Then into their lives comes Millie (Alison Elliott), a young, fabulously wealthy but lonely American heiress, who, harbouring a sad secret, is befriended by them. The scene is then set for an intensely moving drama that plays out its themes of love, loyalty, deceit and regret against the splendour and emptiness of high society. Set partially in London and partially in Venice, the film's style, composed through beautifully photographed set and costume design, is that of Pre-Raphaelite painting rendered into ravishing cinema images.

"NOT ONLY GORGEOUS TO LOOK AT,  
BUT ALSO SEXY, INTELLIGENT  
AND UTTERLY ABSORBING."

MARIE CLAIRE



"MAGNIFICENT... SPELLBINDING...  
BRILLIANTLY REINVENTS HENRY JAMES FOR THE NINETIES."

MARK KERMODE RADIO 1

As Kate Croy, Bonham Carter dominates the film, moving between watchfulness and abandon with a skill that commands our sympathy, even against the grain of her actions. Although it would hardly have been possible without the work of director, Iain Softley (*Backbeat*) and his screen writer, Hossein Amini (*Jude*), her performance depends for its power on her own intellectual grasp of moral ambiguity, and an ability to translate it into something that the camera can see. She has lost that gawky immaturity which made some of her earlier performances hit-and-miss, and has blossomed into a far more controlled actress, capable of replacing a page of dialogue with a single glance. Able - like only the very best - to communicate two or three things at once, none of them necessarily the same as the words she is saying.

Amini and Softley take many liberties with James' story. The decision to move its period from 1902 to 1910 allows the film to be more contemporary through the use of less constricting women's clothes, hinting at more modern thought and behaviour. It also allows Kate to take the Underground where the now closed station, Dover Street on the present Piccadilly line, is featured.



"Iain Softley's direction is  
FLAWLESS, THE PHOTOGRAPHY AND  
COSTUMES RAVISH THE EYE."

TIME OUT



Kate, as a young Victorian woman has an entrée into the upper classes through her aunt but still has her roots in the working class through her dissolute, opium smoking father (Sir Michael Gambon). Merton, Kate's impoverished boyfriend, is a morally floundering journalist of shallow ideals and an even shallower fortune. Aunt Maude's hauteur is at maximum wattage as she places a necklace at her niece's throat: "Try to look as if you've worn it all your life".

The beautiful heiress, Millie Theale (Alison Elliott - *The Spitfire Grill*) is an American innocent (one of James' favourite themes) all ready for corruption by decadent Europe and Europeans. And as Susie Stringham, the heiress's companion, Elizabeth reminds us that she would once have made an equally distinguished Millie.

Bonham Carter, who, at the age of 17, shot to fame in Merchant-Ivory's EM Forster adaptation of *Room with a View*, passed another milestone in *The Wings of the Dove* by acting in her very first nude scene.

"I had never done nudity before - it was definitely very strange, absurd even. Linus and I had worked it out minute by minute, we choreographed the whole thing. It was very spontaneous. I just hope I hadn't done it for nothing. The rest of the film had to come off, or it could have been seen as a gimmick."

Thankfully it worked - the film was critically acclaimed and received four Oscar nominations, including a best actress nomination for Bonham Carter.

The director creates a real sense of concern for all the characters, none of whom are simply black and white, each has their own good reasons for acting as they do, none more so than Kate. For where else is there for a young woman without means to go in the world of the early 1900s? Bonham Carter makes us see the complexity of her character and we have considerable sympathy for the way she behaves. The film has a tender feel to even its harshest emotional scenes and the atmospheric settings serve to soften yet deepen at the same time.

Brian Cartwright



Editor's Note:  
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# English ROSE

From the moment she bypassed going to Cambridge to star in *A Room With a View* at 17, Helena Bonham Carter became the personification of a look and a mood.

The enormous success of *Howards End* compounded the image of the strong-willed young woman caught in the emotional restraints of a more repressed time which she plays so well. Even Yardley, that very English brand of cosmetics, saw her appeal as the proverbial upper class English rose early on, and signed her up to promote their products.

This look has led Bonham Carter to become a favourite for period dramas – those films that the British do well, and often feel apologetic about.

"I tend to represent a kind of drama that we Brits are not really proud of," she says. Over the years she has made various attempts to diversify her career as an actor, but the appeal of the period drama remains strong.

Both the adaptation of George Orwell's *Keep the Aspidochelone Flying* and the more recent *The Wings of the Dove*, based on the classic Henry James novel, saw Bonham Carter displaying a lot of her emotionally corseted Merchant Ivory persona.

"I couldn't resist *The Wings of the Dove*. I haven't done enough of a

mixture really, but it was such a good part," she explains. "All of the characters I've played have been fairly modern women out of their time. I saw beyond the setting of *The Wings of the Dove* to see this was a very different kind of character and energy to the other dramas I've done."

## career milestone

*The Wings of the Dove* marked a milestone in Bonham Carter's career for a very different reason – it contained her first ever nude scene, on this occasion with British actor Linus Roache.

"I had never done nudity before – it was definitely very strange, absurd even. Linus and I worked it out minute by minute, we choreographed the whole thing. It was very spontaneous," she jokes. "I just hoped I hadn't done it for nothing. The rest of the film had to come off, or it could have been seen as a gimmick."

Thankfully it worked – the film was critically acclaimed and received four Oscar nominations, including a best actress nomination for Bonham Carter.

Her next role, as a woman suffering from motor neurone disease in the drama *The Theory of Flight*, represents a shift away from her typecast cocoon. Her personal experience with a disabled father left her convinced

about the realism of the film's depiction of disability.

After her father fell ill when she was a teenager Bonham Carter had to be like a parent to him. "I was 13 so there has always been this role reversal of me taking care of him. I grew up quickly as a result," she explains.

She talks about her parents as being her best friends. "I think it's my biggest privilege to have grown up with two parents who were a real advertisement for marriage."

## in the spotlight

While she's trying very hard to be taken more seriously as an actress, Bonham Carter's private life has really intruded for the first time. Her relationship with Kenneth Branagh thrust her into the tabloid celebrity spotlight. Branagh and Bonham Carter made *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* together and their relationship continued offscreen.

"I think I was treated quite well by the British media until about a year ago," she admits. "It's true that your freedom gets restricted as you become more successful. I wouldn't be human if I said I didn't mind what's said about me, because I do."

Now 31, one thing Bonham Carter says she's learned with age is to be kinder to herself. "I know a lot of actors go into agony about what they've done, but I've always felt that there's no point beating yourself up afterwards. It's a sadistic side of actors. You must have seen photos of yourself and been horrified. The truth is, I think we all have a different perception of ourselves in our heads to what others see." ●

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There's never been a year when I haven't got a real kick out of Claremont. I prefer to come on the Wednesday or Thursday, when you can afford to bring the whole family - it's always more fun to come in a group and all get into a few. Cross Move over Indiana Jones..."

From: The National Trust Magazine

(apologies for the quality - the original is overprinted on a photograph - Ed.)

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From Bogart to Bond & Branagh to Brando... Who knows who you'll meet at Claremont '99, where the stars come out at night (see Box Office Choice).

## 'Full Monty' star hurt

The youngest star of the hit film *The Full Monty* was reported to be doing 'very well' in Sheffield's Children Hospital yesterday, after being run down near his home.

William Snape, 13, is recovering from a second operation on a broken leg. He played Robert Carlyle's son, Nathan, in the comedy about a group of unemployed steelworkers who become strippers.

From 'The Observer' [31.01.99]

Any contributions to the notes, -such as the press articles reproduced above -are always welcome - Ed.

The Boston Strangler (11/2/99)

37 reactions, average score 7.24

Comments

The ending was excellent – very sad.

Enjoyed the film despite the quality.

Gallant work by the projectionist!

A thriller without thrills - almost a fly on the wall documentary.

Deeply disturbing.

Very interesting piece of history.

Tony Curtis excellent.

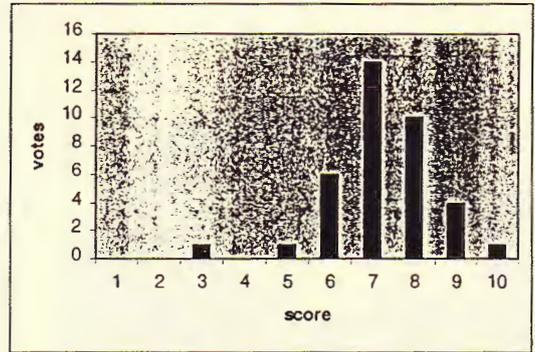
It was horribly RED!

Didn't mind the pink tinge – would have enjoyed the split screen technique more if had been clearer.

One session with Eileen Drewery would have sorted him out – Albert would make a good midfield playmaker!

*Helen Sayers*

Title (No of Reactions)	Score
Road To Morocco (33)	7.52
Mrs Brown (45)	7.93
Twelve Monkeys (23)	6.00
Letter From My Village(20)	6.50
Grosse Pointe Blank (38)	7.58
Ridicule (46)	7.78
It's A Wonderful Life (27)	8.41
Shooting Stars (27)	7.52
The African Queen (32)	8.06
The Boston Strangler (37)	7.24



**11<sup>th</sup> March** - See the sensual performance that brought Marlene Dietrich to Hollywood's attention:  
**THE BLUE ANGEL [A]**, Germany, 1930. Directed by Josef von Sternberg.  
*Dietrich is Lola, a sexy singer in a sleazy German cafe, whose white thighs, encased in black stockings and suspenders, provoke infatuation in a middle-aged professor, particularly when she gives her memorable throaty rendition of "Falling in Love Again". Still a powerfully erotic film after almost 70 years.*



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