

Jim reviews "THE GREAT BUCK HOWARD" -- A MENTALIST-ICALLY STIMULATING COMEDY =

Submitted by jimchudnow@sbcg... [1] on March 19, 2009 - 1:04am

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"THE GREAT BUCK HOWARD" – A MENTALIST-ICALLY STIMULATING COMEDY =
Rating: 4 of 5 stars.

(Based on an advance preview:) JOHN MALKOVICH stars as an over-the-hill entertainer, a thought-reader "mentalist" based on the life of The Amazing Kreskin. In this film, his character is quite accurately described as "CHEESY but charming". He needs a new personal assistant, and the job is given to a student named Troy (played by COLIN HANKS) who's fed up with the idea of being a lawyer, to the dismay of his father (played by his real-life father TOM HANKS). People (even Colin) wonder if the mentalist is for "REAL". Malkovich has an unforgettable "greeting" when he meets people, & he exudes a "barely-tolerant" outgoing smarminess when he wants to impress his audience. He can be unkind to associates, or put on an enchanting appeal when he feels it'll help him. Malkovich is a real PLEASURE to watch in this role, as is Colin with his relaxed naturalness (abetted by his girlfriend played by EMILY BLUNT). It's a gentle comedy, enjoyed more for its situational actions rather than any wild or especially witty dialogue; in other words, it "WORKS" successfully.

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