

Film Review: Elle Fanning Delivers Her Best Performance in ‘Ginger and Rosa’

Submitted by [mattmovieman](#) [1] on March 22, 2013 - 9:38am

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CHICAGO – There are plenty of good reasons to see Sally Potter’s beguiling, tenderly bittersweet coming-of-age drama, “Ginger & Rosa,” but one reason trumps them all. Her name is Elle Fanning. The enormous potential she exuded in everything from art house gems (“Somewhere”) to mainstream blockbusters (“Super 8”) pays off in this sterling showcase, solidifying her status—at age 14—as one of the top talents in modern film acting.



Rating: **4.5/5.0**

Whereas many young actors force out emotion with conspicuous effort or dial it back so far that it eventually evaporates, Fanning never misses beat. Every auburn blush and cool teardrop that caresses her face is utterly authentic. She holds the audience within her character’s moment-to-moment pain and euphoria while maintaining such an effortless command of each increasingly complex nuance that she could leave Meryl Streep shaking in her Oscar-winning boots. If any actor in America currently seems poised for a Streepian career, it is indeed Ms. Fanning.



[Read Matt Fagerholm’s full review of “Ginger and Rosa” in our reviews section.](#) [12]

In Potter’s London-set period drama, the actress delivers the sort of performance that becomes more awe-inspiring the more one reflects on it. Only afterward do we realize the flawlessness of her British accent or how the vast majority of the film’s scenes are anchored by close-ups of her marvelously expressive face. Yet while the film is playing, we’re never distracted by the fact that we’re watching a great performance.

We are simply engrossed in the world of Fanning’s heroine, Ginger, a headstrong teen so frightened by the threat of a potential nuclear holocaust that it has brought her an avid interest in activism. Since the entire story is clearly experienced from Ginger’s perspective, Potter’s decision to name the film “Ginger & Rosa” is initially perplexing. Yet whereas Ginger represents the Cold War-era youth grappling with the fragility of their mortality, her best friend, Rosa (well-played by Alice Englert, daughter of Jane Campion, in her film debut shot prior to “Beautiful Creatures”) embodies the sexual revolution. With the Cuban missile crisis mere months away, Ginger’s inner world crumbles at the precise moment that mankind itself appears doomed to collapse. Since Ginger’s tight-knit bond with Rosa resembles that of a first crush, her friend’s lustful dalliances are all the more difficult to bear. The ever-growing distance between these two women is beautifully portrayed in an unforgettable shot, as Ginger huddles in the corner of a bus stop while the blurred silhouette of Rosa makes out with a boy behind a glass wall.

‘Ginger and Rosa’ stars Elle Fanning, Alice Englert, Alessandro Nivola, Christina Hendricks, Timothy Spall, Oliver Platt and Annette Bening.

It was written and directed by Sally Potter. It opened at Landmark Century Centre Cinema on March 22nd, 2013. It is rated PG-13.



[Continue reading for Matt Fagerholm’s full “Ginger and Rosa” review.](#) [12]



Elle Fanning stars in Sally Potter's Ginger and Rosa.

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