

Film Review: '45 Years' is Emotional Art From a Long Relationship

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on January 22, 2016 - 10:06am

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CHICAGO – There is something incredibly special when two old pros – in this case actors Charlotte Rampling and Tom Courtenay – interpret an amazing exploration of a long relationship with a preciseness that creates life affirmation, despite the sorrows. There is truth in this film.



Rating: **5.0/5.0**

This one sneaks up on us, providing an almost innocuous secret as a plot engine, and then revving that engine to the breaking point – yet in a quiet and desperate way that most people live. A long marriage is ripe for land mines of raw feelings and repressed anger, and “45 Years” confronts it all, with two performers as the husband Geoff and wife Kate that absolutely understand what the story is projecting. Rampling and Courtenay take the smallest gestures, or turn of character, and make the most of those collection of moments. By the end of this film, we know Geoff and Kate, because who they are insiders to how all of us are. That type of exposure is rare in a piece of art, and the technique combines the intimacy of stage acting with the wide angle of film presentation.

Geoff (Courtenay) and Kate (Rampling) are planning a black tie celebration for their 45th wedding anniversary. A wrench is thrown in during the planning that involves an incident and secret from Geoff’s past. The details begin to unfold as the secret is revealed, and Geoff begins to act strangely. Kate, in the meantime, is feeling a sense of betrayal.

The couple continue to keep their appointments and plan their event, while the past keeps bubbling up with new revelations. Geoff becomes distant, and may be suffering from melancholy having to do with the secret. Kate occupies herself with a bit of detective work regarding the incident, and it all becomes too clear for the tenuous marriage, but the band plays on at the 45 year celebration.

“45 Years” continues its limited release in Chicago on January 22nd. See local listings for theaters and showtimes. Featuring Charlotte Rampling, Tom Courtenay, Geraldine James, David Sibley and Dolly Wells. Screenplay adapted and directed by Andrew Haigh. Rated “R”



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Geoff (Tom Courtenay) and Kate (Charlotte Rampling) in '45 Years'

Photo credit: Sundance Selects



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