

Life in 2016 is Famous in ‘Presenting Princess Shaw’

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Rating: **4.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – Had you told a person 50 years ago that someday we would be able to personally record television and broadcast it to the whole world, they might have laughed and said maybe on the futuristic cartoon “The Jetsons.” But the future is now, and it lives in “Presenting Princess Shaw.”

The documentary chronicles the miracle of the modern age, with a working class woman from New Orleans publishing her “a capella” songs on YouTube, and a musician/artist in Israel finding those songs, and giving them full orchestration – by soliciting other musicians on the world wide web. The film is basically about the miracle of this, and how it affects everyone who is involved in the process. But it is especially about Princess Shaw – the stage name of Samantha Montgomery – who sits in a threadbare apartment with a talent and a dream, and then having that dream fulfilled. It is much about the life and philosophy of this remarkable woman that shines through, as much as the show business phenomenon.

Samantha Montgomery (stage name, Princess Shaw) works as a care-giver in a New Orleans facility. Like many people in the age of connectivity, she spends her down time putting up original songs on YouTube, sung soulfully without accompaniment. There are very few “hits” on her page, save for one very important one. In Israel, there is a musician/artist named Kutiman (Ophir Kutiel), and he is interested in presenting Princess Shaw.



Samantha Montgomery in 'Presenting Princess Shaw'

Photo credit: Magnolia Pictures

Kutiman specializes in recruiting musicians from all over the world, through the internet, to participate in giving full orchestration to Samantha's songs, and prepares them while Samantha is being profiled by director Ido Haar. Princess Shaw is unaware that her world is about to break open, with her fully produced music about to infiltrate the atmosphere, a gift from a far-away land.

Isn't that description the very definition of miracles and magic? This invention – this internet – can make the impossible possible, with just the right click at the right time. "Presenting Princess Shaw" is more than a Cinderella story, it is a multi-layered and multi-faceted modern fable, that is only possible in the now of the now. While most of us are using the information age in a passive way, there are artists everyday who are making their mark from, for example, a lonely apartment in New Orleans.

Also, the story of the film wouldn't have as much depth if it wasn't for the fascinating main subject. Princess Samantha proves that everybody has a interesting life, if the depths of it are plumbed enough. It is a credit to Ido Haar that he kept his cameras on, even during the most difficult moments. There is remarkable scene in which the Princess discusses a family secret with a sympathetic cousin, and the purging of this secret is revealed in the faces of all in the room.

Meanwhile in Israel, Kutiman is a true artist. As a musician and producer, he has codified and manipulated a rich source of new sounds and song thoughts, and have brought them to the world in the hope it will move or heal us. The work of the Princess is very much in the vein of Amy Winehouse, that deep down soul of the artist – with life baggage – that shines through in every phrase and note. Kutiman was able to find it and sweeten it, thus contributing back to the culture that invented it.



Montgomery and Her Collaborator Kutiman in ‘Presenting Princess Shaw’
Photo credit: Magnolia Pictures

The audience, although in on what Kutiman is doing, gets to be surprised along with Samantha Montgomery once the result of what the Israeli musician has produced is released. We are moved to tears along with her, and we share her happiness. The rest of the journey after that is the cherry on the cake, where the scared little girl scraping by in Louisiana becomes an international traveler and performer. It is true joy, and it is a true story.

“Presenting Princess Shaw” is available for digital download, and a profile of Samantha Montgomery, by HollywoodChicago.com, is available by [clicking here](#). [21] In the age of technological miracles, the best ones happen to the most unlikely people.

“Presenting Princess Shaw” continued its limited release in Chicago on June 10th, and is available via digital download. Check local listings for show times and theaters, plus online digital providers for availability. Featuring Samantha Montgomery and Ophir Kuti (Kutiman). Directed by Ido Haar. Not Rated. For an example of Kutiman’s handiwork with Samantha Montgomery, [click here](#). [22]



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