

MOSTLY MATINEE TIME 2010/11

By Dorothy Kurtz

Welcome to my last Mostly Matinee Time column. Starting in 2012, I'll be publishing a twice-a-year column called DOTTY'S DIMENSIONS: THE COLUMN. The odd-numbered columns will cover what I did from March through August, and the even-numbered columns will cover my activities from September through February. These activities will include special events, sightseeing attractions, science fiction conventions, and so forth. In the meantime, for more information about events and shows in New York City, I recommend the "Cue" section of *New York* magazine. Anyway, here's what I saw at a Philadelphia theater and three NYC City cinemas:

Saturday, November 13, 2010: I've seen the film *White Christmas* several times. It was part of my childhood. On the Saturday night before Christmas, *NBC Saturday Night at the Movies* would telecast it for several years in the 1960s. I am also very familiar with the Walnut Street Theater, 825 Walnut St., Philadelphia (215-574-3550). Dating back to 1808, the Walnut Street Theater has been the oldest theater in constant use in the English-speaking world. I've seen several shows here in the past and enjoyed them all; I have the same opinion for the latest show that I saw recently. Although the basic plot, some of the songs, and the main characters stayed the same as the 1954 film, the live show, *White Christmas*, also offered more

and different songs as well as much more dancing. (Because it is 2010, some of the comedy could also be more frank, but nothing was obscene; it was still a family show.) Between the music, dancing, and light comedy as well as the costumes, scenery, and holiday decorations, this show provided a treat for the ears and eyes. I'm sure Irving Berlin would have approved, especially because this show added more of his songs.

Saturday, December 4: Since Autumn 2009, I've had a Facebook page. Because of it, I have been back in touch with old friends from childhood, friends from high school, relatives I haven't heard from in a long time, and other people from my past. Therefore, when I heard about the film, *The Social Network*, I had to see it. Thus, on the above date, I arrived at the AMC Loews Kips Bay 15 theater, 570 2nd Ave. between E. 31st and E. 32nd Sts., NYC (212-447-0638). From the outside, this glass-and-chrome cinema looked quite modern; inside, I noticed a bit of Art-Deco touches in the lighting fixtures and the snack bar. Once inside the screening room, I watched *The Social Network* and learned about the rise of both Facebook and one of its founders, Mark Zuckerberg, and about the enemies he made, including the cofounder. The story and acting moved very fast as the scenes went from legal hearings against Zuckerberg to flashbacks on what led to the hearings. Those scenes included the founding of Facebook, the rise of Zuckerberg, and the

lawsuits against him by his former friend and Facebook cofounder, Eduardo Saverin, and other people. These other people were the Winklevoss brothers/twins and their business partner, Divya Narendra, who had asked Zuckerberg to help them program their web site: Harvard Connection. Later, the Winklevoss twins and Narendra accused Zuckerberg of stealing their ideas. Along the way, Zuckerberg and Saverin met up with Napster cofounder Sean Parker. Parker impressed Zuckerberg, but Saverin became skeptical, and this created another twist in the plot. Overall, I found it interesting how Facebook came about and about the people behind the scenes in its early years--for better or worse.

Sunday, January 2, 2011: Heading Downtown in Manhattan, NY, on the above date, my destination became the Regal Union Square 14 cinema, 850 Broadway at E. 13th St. (1-800-326-3264 or 212-253-6266). This cinema first opened for business in 1998. From the outside, the LED-display marquee listed the films currently showing for that day, including the film I planned to see, *The King's Speech*. The inside looked just as modern as I walked past the lobby and snack bar to the screening room. As to the film, *The King's Speech*, I truly enjoyed it. Back in the 1920s and '30s, Prince Albert (Bertie), Duke of York, suffered from a speech impediment all of his life. Part of the reason for his speech problem resulted from his childhood; he was born left

handed, and those who raised him forced him to use his right hand. The situation became worse when his father, King George V, died, and later, his brother, King Edward VIII, abdicated. This made Prince Albert become King George VI. Before he became king, however, his wife, the future Queen Elizabeth, set up an appointment for him to see an unconventional speech therapist: Lionel Logue. After a not-too-promising start, Albert and Logue developed a lasting friendship, and the British people received inspiring broadcasts from King George VI during World War II. I found the acting good; the scenes moved smoothly, and Helen Bonham Carter looked very similar to the way the real Queen Elizabeth (the future Queen Mother) looked at that time. On the other hand, although Timothy Spall played Winston Churchill well, when it came to the actor's looks, I found him scary looking compared to the real Churchill--who had a more pleasant-looking face. Nevertheless, overall, I highly recommend seeing this film.

Friday, February 4: I'm no stranger to the Uptown Manhattan, NY, AMC Loews Lincoln Square 13 cinema, 1998 Broadway at W. 68th St. (212-336-5020). First opened in 1994, this multiplex was one of the first cinemas to include an IMAX screen that also presented some of its films in 3D as well. The mainly modern-looking exterior contrasted with the interior. Once inside, I noticed Art-Deco designs at the box office and

escalators as well as pictures of scenes from classic films. Instead of numbers, the designers of this cinema named the screening rooms after past movie palaces: Capital, Paradise, Jersey, and so forth. Meanwhile, the screening-room portals displayed styles that the designers copied from those former cinemas: Roman, Egyptian, Chinese, Aztec, Thai, Indian, Art Deco, etc. In my opinion, the AMC Loews Lincoln Square 13 was one of the fanciest cinema interiors in Manhattan. In the past, I have seen two 3D-IMAX films here as well as two first-run films. On the date above, I saw another first-run film: *No Strings Attached*. In this romantic comedy, two friends, Emma and Adam, "consummated" their relationship to another level. Nevertheless, they both agreed on "no strings attached"--but could they have kept it that way? I found this film funny, light, and amusing. *No Strings Attached* is R rated.