

<p>Volume 26 Number 9  SEPT 2023</p>		<p>Website <a href="https://www.williamstown-film-society.org">https://www.williamstown-film-society.org</a> Email michaeljslee58@gmail.com Phone 0478 624 528</p>
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Council Chamber of the Town Hall, 104 Ferguson St, Williamstown, 7.30pm, Wednesday 27th September, 2023.

## Golden Voices

Light and breezy on the surface, co-writer/director Evgeny Ruman's immigration comedic drama *Golden Voices* actually happens to deal with weighty themes. It does so modestly, without fanfare, confidently guiding the viewer through its witty and touching story, allowing the motifs to unravel naturally. Bolstered by two formidable leads, the film is bound to resonate with anyone who has tried to make a fresh start, rediscover themselves, but also maintain a grasp on the past that keeps slipping away.

Set in 1990, right after the fall of the Iron Curtain, the plot follows married couple Raya (Mariya Belkina) and Victor (Vladimir Friedman), as they arrive in Israel after years of dubbing western films for Soviet audiences. However, there doesn't seem to be a need for their particular profession in the Sacred Land. While Victor gets a lousy job distributing flyers, Raya uses her vocal talents to become a phone sex operator. She proves to be a natural at it but lies to her husband, telling him it's a telemarketing position.

As Raya comes to certain realizations regarding her marriage – and perhaps even falls for one of her stuttering "clients" – Victor struggles to utilize his skills, voicing a country-wide civil defense warning pro bono, auditioning at the local theater, and finally securing them both a position at a shady video rental store. Screenwriters Ziv Berkovich and Ruman manage to gracefully and somewhat tragically bring everything to the only logical conclusion.

Individual sequences of *Golden Voices* shine, such as Victor being unable to act unless he does an impression of a Western performer or Raya's encounter at the beach. The scene where the couple spots Dustin Hoffman on the screen and recognize the dubbed voice or record films illegally in a movie theater are all equally memorable. The couple escapes one oppressive regime into another, where the threat of Saddam Hussein's wrath looms large, and complimentary gas masks are handed out in case of a sudden chemical attack. The world may open up to the duo – be it in the form of sexual liberation or the ability to showcase Fellini's films – but it's not as glamorous as they once thought.

Charming and witty, low-key but evocative, *Golden Voices* touches upon the love of cinema, a constant variable in the engaging characters' tumultuous lives. But it's Raya and Victor's love for one another that ultimately keeps them going. Don't let its seemingly niche appeal fool you – seek it out as soon as possible. 8/10

**Review by Alex Saveliev, November 3rd, 2021 on the Film Threat website**

## Starbox Results

	5	4	3	2	1	Average
The Girl Can't Help It	11	22	8	5	0	3.8

To watch a trailer (& read more) head to the 2023 program on our website

[https://: www.williamstown-film-society.org](https://www.williamstown-film-society.org)