



FILM: **THE SECOND MOTHER**

FDG RATING: 4.5 ☺☺☺☺☺  
Film Discussion Group (FDG) Scale is 1-5 (5 is best)

*Director, Writer:* Anna Muylaert  
*Actress:* Regina Case (Val)

DATE: OCTOBER 18, 2015

DISCUSSION SUMMARY: **THE SECOND MOTHER (Que Horas Ela Volta)**

The Second Mother 4.5

Only 3 of our film discussion participants saw this outstanding Brazilian film that left our small art house theater too quickly. The Second Mother stars Regina Cale as Val, a middle aged housekeeper for a wealthy Sao Paulo family (Barbara and Carlos) that enforces strict class distinctions in their relationship with her although Val, for all practical purposes, has raised their son, Fabinho, now a teenager preparing to take college entrance exams. The care that Val takes in maintaining her role as servant is thrown off kilter when her teenage daughter Jessica arrives to take her college entrance exams. For a decade, Jessica has had a distant estranged relationship with her mother, living with relatives ever since Val, a single mother, left to pursue employment to support her child. Jessica is independent, free spirited, and refuses to adhere to the class barriers, eats Fabinho's favorite ice cream, takes a dip in the family pool, and admonishes her mother for her willingness to be humiliated by her employers. Cale is a veteran actress who performs her role as Val with the perfect balance of warm comic interactions. Themes of outdated class prejudice and the many aspects of motherly love weave throughout the film. The end is especially endearing. It's interesting that Val is a second mother to Fabinho so the English title fits perfectly. But the Portuguese title is Que Horas Ela Volta? which more directly refers to the relationship of Jessica to her mother, asking the question "When will she return?" both physically and emotionally.

This is a small gem of a film that leaves a large impression. Each of us applauded the film with a score of 4.5 on a scale of 1 to 5. (5 is the best)



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See you at the movies!  
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