



FILM: **WOMAN IN GOLD**

FDG RATING: 3.3 ☺☺☺☺☺  
Film Discussion Group (FDG) Scale is 1-5 (5 is best)

Simon Curtis: *Director*  
Helen Mirren: *Actress*: Maria Altmann  
Ryan Reynolds: *Actor*: Randol Schoenberg

DATE: APRIL 19, 2015

DISCUSSION SUMMARY: **WOMAN IN GOLD**

Woman in Gold is based on a true story about Maria Altmann whose painting of her aunt by Gustav Klimt was confiscated by the Nazis in Vienna just prior to WWII. She had escaped to America and then as an elderly Jewish refugee living in LA, legally battled the Austrian government along side her young lawyer, for a decade trying to reclaim the family portrait. It's an important story and Helen Mirren's performance is strong and believable. But Ryan Reynolds, as the young Jewish lawyer, seemed miscast and his wife played by Katie Holmes was completely ineffectual. The most engaging parts of the film were the flash backs to their life in Vienna and Maria's privileged childhood and tender relationship with her aunt before the Nazi's destroyed everything and took over their home as their headquarters. Their beautiful life was savagely stolen. The flashbacks conveyed a feeling of horror without the gruesomeness of so many films about this horrific episode of history. The contemporary scenes were more contrived and although accurately captured the tedium and frustrations of dealing with overwhelming bureaucracy, they lacked the engaging film elements of the flashbacks. In the end, as one resident reviewer noted, it's all about doing the right thing. This film told an important slice of history that riveted around the power of a painting and what it represented as it changed hands, having a different, very deep meaning to the people who held it captive. An entertaining film, that could have been much more, it earned a comfortable 3.3 on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the best).



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See you at the movies!  
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