

***Behind the Name Shakespeare: Power, Lust, Scorn & Scandal* – documentary by Robin Phillips**

Film review by Yvonne Cheal

Don't be fooled by the seeming irreverence of this film: the presentation style masks a powerful commentary on who really was behind the works of 'Shakespeare' – and provides ample well-researched evidence that it was not 'the guy from Stratford' but *was* Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford.



DVS member Robin Phillips is the auteur writer, producer, director and artistic creator of this multi-award-winning documentary, presented in an experimental style that succeeds in getting a great amount of detail, based on solid research, across to all audience levels. She is also the elegant presenter 'Christina di Marlo' (whose opulent costumes would not have escaped 16th-century sumptuary laws) who provides tongue-in-cheek guidance through the sequential unfolding of events in Edward de Vere's life. With 86 film festival awards gained so far, the word is getting out.

All the main points of Oxfordian theory are covered and explained with clear graphics and sumptuous illustrations that make the information accessible to all levels of prior knowledge. The research is impressive, convincing, substantiated, and with little or no conjecture. Content moves between 16th-century history, literature and art but the facts, visuals and music make the proposition very easy to follow; accessible but not dumbed-down. Those with a long-standing knowledge of de Vere's life will find the poignancy and penetration of the points made deeply affecting – such as the injustice of the Dérogeance Laws for someone of Oxford's position in the nobility.

The film has already had a huge impact on film festival audiences worldwide, successfully highlighting the subject with its multi-layered approach. Oxford's story is illustrated in every sense, with seemingly unconnected facts settled into context through pictures, music and words. The theory and evidence make an impact on an emotional and sensory level with the world's oldest film festival – fittingly – stating the film 'teaches and entertains ... remaining faithful

to the primary purpose of Elizabethan theater' (*Venice Film Awards Review*, 11.11.2020). This Robin is no upstart, and has plenty to crow about. The film is one to watch, in all senses. Trailers available at: <https://groundbreakerfilms.com/>



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