

Program notes for ***Pinewood Dialogue with John Waters*** and screening of ***Hairspray***

October 24, 1998

Series: *John Waters*

HAIRSPRAY

New Line, 1988, 93 mins, 35mm print courtesy of Fine Line Features.

Written and directed by John Waters. Produced by Waters, Rachel Talalay, and Stanley F. Buchthal. Photographed by David Insley. Edited by Janice Hampton.

Original score by Kenny Vance. Production design by Vincent Peranio.

With Ricki Lake (as Tracy Turnblad), Divine (Edna Turnblad/Arvin Hodgepile), Jerry Stiller (Wilbur Turnblad), Shawn Thompson (Corny Collins), Sonny Bono (Franklin Von Tussle), Colleen Fitzpatrick (Amber Von Tussle), Deborah Harry (Velma Von Tussle), Ruth Brown (Motormouth Maybell), Michael St. Gerard (Link Larkin), Leslie Ann Powers (Penny Pingleton), Mink Stole (Tammy), Ric Ocasek (Beatnik Cat), and Pia Zadora (Beatnik Chick).

From a review by Jonathan Rosenbaum, Chicago Reader:

John Waters' 1988 musical comedy set in 1962 Baltimore represented a good many firsts for the celebrated underground "bad taste" writer-director-producer: his biggest budget, his first period foray, his first PG-rated movie, and his first real brush with politics—the issue of integrating a local TV dance show in Baltimore during the height of the civil rights movement. The cast includes Debbie Harry, Sonny Bono, Divine (in a dual role), Jerry Stiller, Ricki Lake, Ruth Brown, and cameo appearances by Ric Ocasek and Pia Zadora as beatniks. Not only Waters' best movie, but a crossover gesture that expands his appeal without compromising his vision one iota; Ricki Lake as a hefty young heroine is especially delightful. With many arcane dance steps and hit singles from the period.

The Pinewood Dialogues, an ongoing series of screenings and discussions with significant creative figures in film, television, and digital media, as supported with a generous grant from The Pinewood Foundation.

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