

Bridge of Spies – Review

Directed by Steven Spielberg, starring Tom Hanks and featuring a script written by Matt Charman and **polished** by the Coen Brothers, *Bridge of Spies* is a fantastic Cold War drama that **dares** to tackle big, difficult **themes**: namely the **inner** workings of the justice system, the law and civil rights, in countries where suspicion and intolerance were **rife**.

Inspired by real events, the film opens with the capture of a Russian agent working in the United States. Mark Rylance plays Rudolf Abel in a **revelatory, soulful** performance, and his relationship to Tom Hanks' James B. Donovan is beautifully judged; the **bedrock** on which the drama **unfolds**. Donovan, an insurance lawyer, is tasked with defending Abel in court in an effort to show that the United States are willing to extend their notions of justice to even a Soviet spy. Of course, things aren't quite as simple as that, and the agendas of numerous military, CIA and governmental figures combine to make Donovan's **duty** an exceptionally difficult one.



Donovan is portrayed - in a slight **departure** from fact - as an **everyman**, who soon finds himself in **deeper** waters than he could have anticipated, but Hanks' take on the role is thoroughly believable. His **unwavering** dedication to the cause, and a talent for negotiation skilfully portrayed in his very first scene, sees him **eventually** become a major player in tense negotiations that take place far from American soil, leading to a scene near the end of the film in which its title is breathtakingly realised.

Buoyed by an **exemplary** cast from Amy Ryan to Alan Alda, to reveal too much of *Bridge of Spies*' story would **spoil** the surprise - it is something of a spy thriller, after all - but needless to say, this **handsome, memorable** film is not to be missed.