

Blanchett challenges Streep as mistress of foreign tongues

by bendweekly

Many qualities make up a great actor or actress, not the least of which is the ability to immerse oneself in a character, to become that character.

When it comes to total immersion, right down to the requisite manner of speech and the dead-on accent, Meryl Streep is the queen - whether she's portraying a Danish baroness in "Out of Africa," a Polish survivor of a Nazi concentration camp in "Sophie's Choice" or an Irish schoolteacher in "Dancing at Lughnasa."

QUEEN OF ACCENTS - Cate Blanchett, who reprised her role as Queen Elizabeth I in 'Elizabeth: The Golden Age,' has not only played House of Tudor, but also Irish in 'Veronica Guerin,' German in 'The Good German' and Kate Hepburn New England in 'The Aviator.' CNS Photo But the queen has competition.

Cate Blanchett, who recently reprised her role as Queen Elizabeth I in "Elizabeth: The Golden Age," has not only played House of Tudor, but also Irish in "Veronica Guerin," German in "The Good German" and Kate Hepburn New England in "The Aviator."

Is Blanchett the new Streep?

Let the accent wars begin!

MERYL STREEP

Born: June 22, 1949, in Summit, N.J.

Oscars won: two, in 1980 ("Kramer vs. Kramer") and 1982 ("Sophie's Choice")

Nominations: 14

ACCENTS BY STREEP

New York literati: "The Devil Wears Prada" (2006), "Adaptation" (2002)

Queenly ant: "The Ant Bully" (2006)

Irish: "Dancing at Lughnasa" (1998)

Italian-accented American: "The Bridges of Madison County" (1995)

New Zealand/Australian mix: "A Cry in the Dark" (1988)

Danish: "Out of Africa" (1985)

Texan: "Silkwood" (1983)

Polish: "Sophie's Choice" (1982)

Victorian-era English: "The French Lieutenant's Woman" (1981)

CATE BLANCHETT

Born: May 14, 1969, in Melbourne, Australia

Oscars won: one, in 2004 ("The Aviator")

Nominations: three

ACCENTS BY BLANCHETT

Queenly English: "Elizabeth: The Golden Age" (2007), "Elizabeth" (1998)

Hibbing, Minn. (as Bob Dylan): "I'm Not There" (2007)

Modern-day English: "Notes on a Scandal" (2006)

German: "The Good German" (2006)

American: "Babel" (2006), "The Missing" (2003)

New England (as Katharine Hepburn): "The Aviator" (2004)

Irish: "Veronica Guerin" (2003)

Long Island: "Pushing Tin" (1999)

Middle Earth: "The Lord of the Rings" series (2001-03)

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