

## **Diana – review**

A pedigree cast fails to ignite a mediocre and ultimately pointless rehash of Diana's life

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Neither as good as its pedigree suggests (director and star both have weighty credentials) nor quite as terrible as its detractors insist, this stodgy middle-of-the-road stiff is boringly ordinary and depressingly well behaved. Shying away from the laugh-out-loud bollocks of the altogether more enjoyable TV movie *William & Kate*, this addresses the most inaccessible part of Princess Diana's over-exposed life – her relationship with heart surgeon Hasnat Khan – to oddly pointless, speculative effect. Only when it intersects tangentially with *The Queen* do we get an inkling of what may have attracted Hirschbiegel (director of *Downfall*) and Watts to such an ill-conceived project in the first place – the prospect of making a movie that might function as an awards-courting companion piece/prequel to Stephen Frears's Oscar-winning hit.

Yet screenwriter Stephen Jeffreys is no Peter Morgan, and despite citing a personal five-minute encounter with Diana as "my lodestar", he still manages to make her every utterance sound as though it has been culled directly from the pages of *Hello!* magazine. Watts employs a number of iconic head tilts, hairdos and stick-on noses, but fights a losing battle against a film which has neither backbone nor teeth, swerving drearily between hagiography ("I just want to help people!") and hapless cod romance, interspersed with hokey landmine photo-ops and scenic cultural detours through Lahore.