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Madonna on the Red Carpet: Are the Golden Globes Folks Watching?

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TORONTO—Only Madonna.

“The story of ‘The King’s Speech’ in a way was a great set-up for my film,” she said at a screening on Monday night, adopting that slightly elevated – dare we say, Wallis Simpsonian? — tone she has taken in her public discussions of her film, “W. E.,” about the love affair between Ms. Simpson and the Prince of Wales.

You and I might think of “The King’s Speech,” directed by Tom Hooper, as last year’s Oscar-winning best picture. Madonna describes it, almost, as a warm-up act for her movie about the royals.

You’ve got to hand it to her. Undaunted by a critical drubbing at the film festival in Venice, Madonna showed up at the Toronto International Film Festival for a reboot, clearly determined to get her film into the seasonal mix. At an afternoon press conference, she said in regard to Oscar hopes that she had fingers and legs crossed.

She is nothing if not brave. On the red carpet before a Monday-night gala screening of the movie here, the 53-year-old pop star stood side by side with the much younger stars of her film, Abbie Cornish and Andrea Riseborough, looking, frankly, like their mother. But she didn't give an inch — and neither did the fans.

The movie started almost 30 minutes late, possibly because an inflamed mob of admirers wouldn't let the singer-turned-director stop handing out autographs and sound bites. It was if she were running her own Golden Globes ceremony, complete with a giant security contingent, right there on the red carpet.

Which suggests a challenge: Is anybody willing to bet "W.E." won't get a Golden Globe nomination, for something, no matter what the critics in Venice might have thought? As long as she makes it clear that she'll show up for the ceremony — what a ratings boost — Madonna is a shoo-in.

The Oscars are much trickier. But you never know, given the willingness of film mavens to accommodate celebrity. On Monday night, Cameron Bailey, the co-director of the Toronto festival, managed to say: "You get drunk on this movie."

Whether Mr. Bailey is correct is best left to the critics. But nobody can question Madonna's determination to fight for a movie she directed and co-wrote, and on which she has currently staked a huge part of her professional identity.