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MODERN TIMES



TIFF13 Review: Giraffada (2013)

Posted by Brandy Dean September 8, 2013 0 Comment 2767 views

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Giraffada, from filmmaker Rani Massalha, is both an entertaining adventure story about young boys and giraffes and a nuanced meditation on the absurdities of life behind the Separation Wall in the West Bank. Plus, it has giraffes.

When a giraffe in a West Bank zoo is killed in an air strike, his pregnant mate becomes so despondent she refuses to eat. Local veterinarian Yacine (Saleh Bakri) promises his 10-year-old, giraffe obsessed son Ziad (Ahmad Bayatra) a miracle – to wit, stealing a giraffe from an Israeli zoo. And a miracle it will have to be, as we watch Yacine’s daily struggle to provide the zoo animals with even basic care and nutrition in the face of local corruption, poverty, and, of course, violence.

What better animal than a giraffe – majestic and absurd all at once – corresponds to the absurdities of daily life in the West Bank, where a veterinarian may have his forceps confiscated and a young boy may be confronted by a knot of machine gun wielding soldiers at any moment? And what better place than a zoo where the beasts mill about waiting for the arrival of the carrot truck could better illustrate the frustrated existence of the Palestinians behind the separation wall? No matter your personal politics, Massalha’s beautiful *Giraffada* cuts to the heart of the existential dilemma of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the human costs involved in a geo-political tug-of-war, reminding us that it’s 10-year-old boys and giraffes that suffer the most.

I saw *Giraffada* because if a movie has giraffes, then it’s for me. For the very first time, I’ve encountered a filmmaker who recognizes the fundamental absurdity of a giraffe and wields that insight to create a subtle examination of a fundamental political absurdity – and for that, I tip my ossicones.

Giraffada is exactly the kind of film you should see at TIFF13. It’s surprising, moving, powerful, and unlikely to play at the Cineplex Odeon next week.

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Screening Times for Giraffada

Sunday September 8 TIFF Bell Lightbox 1 4:15 PM

Tuesday September 10 TIFF Bell Lightbox 3 9:15 AM

Sunday September 15 Scotiabank 4 3:45 PM

A Gallery of Images from Giraffada



FESTIVAL COVERAGE RANI MASSALHA TIFF13

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About Brandy Dean



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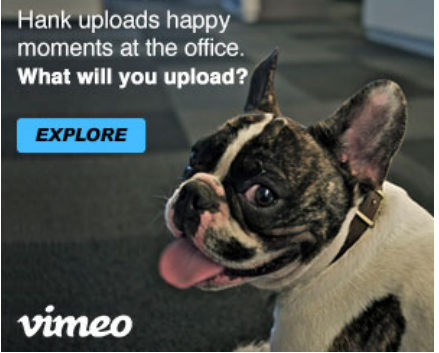


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