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MODERN TIMES



TIFF13 Review: Parkland (2013)

Posted by Brandy Dean September 5, 2013 0 Comment 2115 views

It's an old question (pretty much 50 years old to be precise): Where were you when J.F.K. was shot? In his new star-studded docudrama *Parkland*, first time feature director Peter Landesman poses this question. Again. While *Parkland* is stylish and packed to the rafters with talented performers, it brings nothing new to Kennedyana.

Parkland focuses pretty tightly on the three days following Kennedy's assassination in Dallas, TX. Each new character (and there are so, so many of them) is another famous face, but instead of lending weight to the proceedings, this who's who of Hollywood starts feeling like some cinematic version of Where's Waldo? Look it's Billy Bob Thornton! Look it's Zac Efron! Look it's Paul Giamatti! Because the roles are so tiny and the characters so narrowly developed, the actors can't help but overact. Giamatti is actually quite nuanced as Zapruder, but with mere minutes of screen times it comes off as blatant scenery chewing.

I'm not a Kennedy-conspiracy theorist, but I could play one on television and here too *Parkland* has some issues. Every nanosecond of time, every action no matter how seemingly insignificant, from the first shot at the motorcade to Ruby's live execution of Oswald has been endlessly parsed. Further, we've never reached a single point of consensus about what really happened and what it really meant. But *Parkland* blithely proceeds with a string of events straight from the Warren Commission report, as if no one has ever thought differently. I'm not saying that the CIA assassinated a U.S. president, but the fact that many people would and do is an undeniable part of the story (maybe the story?). To pretend otherwise is a level of revisionist history worthy of Ken Burns.

Parkland is definitely not festival worthy. But with a cast list like this and the name of Tom Hanks gracing the producer credits, it's sure to reach a theater near you so you can see it then, if you must.

Screening Times for Parkland

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Friday September 6 Roy Thomson Hall 9:30 PM

Sunday September 8 Winter Garden Theatre 12:30 PM

A Gallery of Images from Parkland



Watch the Parkland Trailer



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About Brandy Dean



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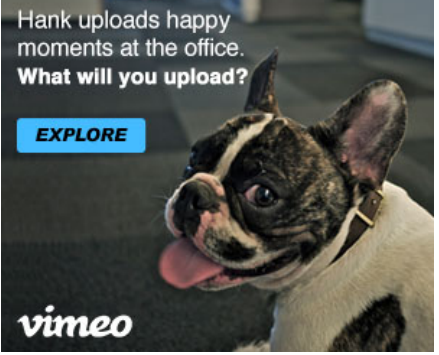
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