

Gran Premio Festival de Cine de Montreal
Mejor Director y Mejor Guión Festival de Cine de Gijón

BARAN – A movie review

By Chandni Kishen Saigal & Mahita Valluri (BAGA 2018)

“The movie depicts West Asian culture passively through the events in the film. The societal divide between men and women, the way refugees are received, and how people still manage to find happiness in a crushed, colourless environment, are all a part of the story ‘Baran’ manages to tell to those who wonder. “

What kind of images come to your mind when you think of countries like Afghanistan or Iran? Is it immense poverty, or the Taliban’s authoritative regime? Do you ever wonder about the civilians and their everyday life? Or how these countries turned into their existing state?

If you ever ponder about these, like I do, then a movie like ‘Baran’ would be a great learning tool. ‘Baran’ provides faces and emotions to the strangers we hear/think about. It's a story about the afghan refugees through the eyes of an Iranian boy.

Baran is a highly acclaimed Iranian film that was released in 2001, directed by Majid Majidi. Based on an original script, the film revolves around an unconventional teenage romance where selflessness and unrequited love steal the spotlight under the veil of geo-political tensions of Iran and Afghanistan, along with the presence of millions of Afghan refugees that have migrated to Iran. With the cinematography of the film, the audience is made to feel like they are watching something that is naturally flowing, something less dramatic. True human nature is prevalent throughout the narrative of the film.

Lateef, the protagonist is an immature, lazy and naïve seventeen-year-old who works in a manual construction site. Due to the construction site’s proximity to the Afghanistan borders, there is a populous group of Afghan workers. Lateef serves tea to the workers and isn’t required to do any of the heavy lifting due to the presence of the hard-working Afghans.

Una película de
MAJID MAJIDI

civite



MIRAMAX

SINSA

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In the beginning of the film, the situation of Afghanistan after the Soviet Invasion is mentioned. Millions of them live in Iran to avoid the Taliban terror, to earn wages and support their families. These Afghans are paid lesser, but do most of the manual work.

Lateef's life takes a turn away from the ordinary when Najaf, an Afghan worker, is forced to send in his young son, Rehmat to work in his place due to an injury. Memar, the kind boss, looks at Rehmat's inability to lift heavy weights and swaps his duty with Lateef's.

Lateef resents the younger boy, as he is now forced to work harder and as revenge, tries to make Rehmat's life harder. Lateef soon discovers that Rehmat is a girl in disguise. It startles him, and begins to change the way he behaves. This is when the storyline focuses deeply on the lives of the refugees. It explains their struggles, and how hard it is to maintain a job because of the Iranian government's laws about Afghan workers.

Lateef believes that he's falling in love with Rehmat, whose actual name is Baran, and he starts to observe her closely. He feels grim after he watches her struggle to help her father and her many siblings. Lateef does everything he can to help her, anonymously.

The ending is sorrowful, but it carries a deep meaning which can be perceived in various ways. This movie is a portrayal of people who have dreams and never see them to fruition, of betrayal and the will do to anything for someone you love. Director Majid Majidi works his magic by turning even the most monotonous settings lively, and touching a sensitive topic with a stellar screenplay.

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BARAN (LLUVIA)

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