



TIFF 2014 review of Iraqi Odyssey

6 September 2014 review of *Iraqi Odyssey*



TIFF 2014 review of Iraqi Odyssey

6 September 2014 review of *Iraqi Odyssey*

What I know about the film before seeing it

Director Samir traces the emigration of his large family over several decades. As an expat Iraqi himself, this filmmaker interviews members of his extended family for a documentary to capture how they survived and/or escaped dictatorship, war, and foreign occupation.

What I thought after seeing it

I am the kind of person who looks forward to binge watching multiple episode documentaries like Ken Burns' *Jazz*. The art of narration is increasingly lost in the new normal of 140 character word bites and the visual overload of death by CGI. Samir and his remarkable family members are all natural storytellers full of wit and a willingness to share their experiences. The pace is deliberate, with Samir's careful voiceover providing a lullaby tone to the background guidance that navigates through decades of family history that also captures the political, social and cultural evolution leading to the country of Iraq as we see it now. There are subtle details and dimensions giving depth and breadth to their fortunes, joys, humour, sorrows and difficult, sometimes desparate, decisions made by relatives from several generations now living in all corners of the globe. They freely shared regrets, triumphs, fears, stories of love and loss while Samir enhanced the journey we were on with an impressive display of home videos, photos and historical references.

The only criticism I have is the use of 3D. It does not add to the movie, in fact I think it's distracting. Samir's relatives and their riveting stories are entertaining enough without hovering images and floating sanscrit.

During the Q&A it was obvious that Samir is just as willing to elaborate in person, answering each question carefully and completely. After the Q&A I approached him with my wish that this work be expanded to a multi-episode series with additional footage. The stories are too important to be limited to less.



Director, producers and contributors to the documentary

<http://particularpelicula.wordpress.com/2014/09/08/tiff-2014-review-of-iraqi-odyssey/>

https://particularpelicula.files.wordpress.com/2014/09/wp-id-img_20140907_021559.jpg