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FESTIVAL DE CANNES 2002

Marin Karmitz AND Abbas Kiarostami
PRESENT



(T E N)

Abbas Kiarostami

ABBAS KIAROSTAMI • MANIA AKBARI • ROYA ARABSHAHI • KATAYOUN TALEIDZADEH
MANDANA SHARBAF • AMENE MORADI • AMIN MAHER • KAMRAN ADL
MORTEZA TABATABAI • BAHMAN KIAROSTAMI • MASTANEH MOHAJER
MAZDAK SEPANLU • REZA YADZDANI • VAHID GHAZI



TEN,
ten sequences
in the emotional lives
of six women
and the challenges
that they face at one particular moment
in those lives,
that could just as easily be
ten sequences
in the emotional life
of the one same woman...



FESTIVAL DE CANNES 2002

Marin Karmitz AND Abbas Kiarostami
PRESENT

TEN

Abbas Kiarostami

FRANCE/IRAN • 2002 • DVCAM / 35 MM • 1:66 • DTS • RUNNING TIME: 94 MINUTES

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TEN by Abbas Kiarostami

Sometimes, I tell myself that TEN is a film that I could never make again. You cannot decide to make such a film... It's a little like CLOSE-UP. It's possible to continue along the same path but it requires a great deal of patience.

Indeed, this is not something that can be repeated easily. It must occur of its own accord, like an incident or a happening... At the same time, it requires a great deal of preparation. Originally, this was the story of a psychoanalyst, her patients and her car, but that was two years ago...

I was invited to Beirut in Lebanon last week, for a film workshop with students. One of them told me, «You're the only one who can make such a film because of your reputation. If one of us had made it, no one would have accepted it.» I replied that, as his teacher, I owed him the truth: making something simple requires a great deal of experience. And, first of all, you need to understand that simplicity isn't the same as facility.

Kundera tells a fascinating story that genuinely impressed me: he relates how his father's lexical range diminished with age and, at the end of his life, was reduced to two words: «It's strange! It's strange!» Of course, he hadn't reached that point because he had nothing much to say anymore but because those two words effectively summed up his life's experience. They were the very essence of it. Perhaps that's the story behind minimalism too...

The disappearance of direction. That's what is at stake: the rejection of all elements vital to ordinary cinema. I state, with a great deal of caution, that direction, in the usual sense of the word, can vanish in this kind of process. In this form of cinema, the director is more like a football coach. He has to do most of his work before the take starts. Indeed, for me, the film always starts well before the initial preparation and is almost never over. It's a never-ending game. Each time I show it, I await the audience's reactions. The discussions following the screening take on a new turn each time... For me, the beauty of art resides in the reactions that it causes.

This film was created without being made as such. Even so, it isn't a documentary. Neither a documentary nor a purely fabricated film. Mid-way between the two perhaps... A scene occurs and I decide that it suits me. Later, I realize that one particular element was vital for the integration of the whole.

In TEN, we have a shot in the car with the little boy facing the camera. The scene takes place in front of the camera. And yet there are also people who come over, lower the window and peer into the car. That's documentary. This background. They look at the camera. But what happens in front of the camera isn't documentary because it's guided and controlled in a way. The person in front of the camera manages to forget its presence, it vanishes for him. Emotion is created in this way, the result of a certain quantity of energy and information that we give and then recover later. It circulates... Resulting in the complexity of the situation. This flow must be controlled in order to be released at the right moment.

You cannot promise yourself that you'll make another film like this. It's like wavering in your staunchest convictions and ideas. Sometimes it's easier to protect yourself with good old direction, the scenery, the set...

If anyone were to ask me what I did as a director on this film, I'd say, «Nothing and yet if I didn't exist, this film wouldn't have existed.»

In all my films, there are shots where the emotional impact goes beyond direction, triumphing over it, and the emotion becomes more powerful than cinema itself. There's the shot in TASTE OF CHERRY where Mr Badii, while talking about himself, refuses to let out his emotion. And the corners of his mouth start trembling as he begins to sob. These are shots that I do not claim to have created. They deserve better than that. I was able to provoke them and seize them at the right moment. That's all.

This film is my own «two words». It resumes almost everything. I say «almost» because I'm already thinking about my next film. A one-word film perhaps...



The film's crew

Abbas KIAROSTAMI

Mania AKBARI

Roya ARABSHAHI

Katayoun TALEIDZADEH

Mandana SHARBAF

Amene MORADI

Amin MAHER

Kamran ADL

Morteza TABATABAI

Bahman KIAROSTAMI

Mastaneh MOHAJER

Mazdak SEPANLU

Reza YADZDANI

Vahid GHAZI

"Walking in the air"

Howard Blake

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Abbas Kiarostami's filmography

short and medium-length films

- 1970 THE BREAD AND ALLEY (Nan va koutcheh)
- 1972 THE BREAKTIME (Zang e tafrih)
- 1973 THE EXPERIENCE (Tadjrobeh)
- 1975 TWO SOLUTIONS FOR ONE PROBLEM
(Dow rahe hal baraye yek massaleh)
- 1975 SO CAN I (Man ham mitonam)
- 1976 A WEDDING SUIT (Lebassi baraye arossi)
- 1976 THE COLOURS (Rang ha)
- 1978 SOLUTION N° 1 (Rah hal yek)
- 1979 FIRST CASE, SECOND CASE
(Ghazieh shekle aval, Ghazieh shekle douwom)
- 1980 DENTAL HYGIENE (Behdasht Dandan)
- 1981 ORDERLY OR UNORDERLY (Betartib va bedone tartib)
- 1982 THE CHORUS (Hamsarayan)
- 1983 FELLOW CITIZEN (Hamshahri)

feature films

- 1974 THE TRAVELLER (Mossafer)
- 1977 THE REPORT (Guozarech)
- 1984 FIRST GRADERS (Avali ha)
- 1987 WHERE IS MY FRIEND'S HOME?
(Kaneh-ye doust kojast ?)
- 1990 HOMEWORK (Mashgh e shab)
- 1990 CLOSE-UP (Nema-ye Nazdik)
- 1992 AND LIFE GOES ON (Zendegi edamé dêrad)
- 1994 THROUGH THE OLIVE TREES
(Zir e Darakhtan e zeyton)
- 1996 TASTE OF CHERRY (Tam'e Guilass)
GOLDEN PALM, CANNES 1997
- 1999 THE WIND WILL CARRY US (Bad mara khahad bord)
SPECIAL JURY GRAND PRIZE, VENICE 1999
- 2001 ABC AFRICA

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