

'Halftime' sincerely captures Jennifer Lopez's highs and lows



CHENNAI: Lauded at the ongoing Tribeca Film Festival, director Amanda Micheli's taut new documentary on pop superstar Jennifer Lopez is enthralling and reflective.



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Now streaming on Netflix, the smartly edited documentary offers a balanced view of the 52-year-old queen of the stage and is a study of her life and career, with a strong focus on her iconic 2020 Super Bowl Halftime show. And what a career it has been, with an amazing arc stretching from being a dancer, to an actress, singer and global icon. As a Latina, whose parents came from Puerto Rico to live the American dream in the Bronx, New York, Lopez had to struggle to be heard and to be seen.

As a woman of color, she faced discrimination and humiliation, and was once asked if this bothered her — she quipped that it was expected. However, this documentary takes us behind the graceful one liners and showcases a star who says that at times she wanted to quit. The 95-minute documentary is marked by such sincere moments, but manages not to get bogged down by theatrical emotions. It steers away from the morose with uplifting scenes of Lopez doing what she does best — performing and preparing for one of the biggest shows in her career with a dedication and single-mindedness that will remind viewers why she is considered one of the best performers of this generation.

Comparable to Beyonce's "Homecoming" and Janet Jackson's "Lifetime" documentaries, "Halftime" is a breezy tribute to Lopez and a fantastic gift for her millions of fans. The movie mostly documents her life in 2019, including her preparations for the Super Bowl show as well as her work on the film "Hustlers," for which she gained a Golden Globes nomination. The film also touches on her life as a Latina under the Trump administration, with its notorious immigration policies, taking the work from a sugary pop documentary to something altogether more hard-hitting.

"Halftime" is disarmingly honest and shot through with passion — a word that may as well be Jennifer Lopez's middle name.
