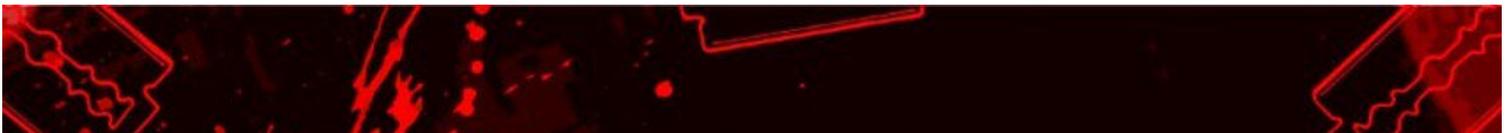


Film Review: 'Midnight Delhi' is a bewildering tale of violence



SINGAPORE: With his 2006 film “Babel,” Mexican director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu kickstarted a trend of depicting multiple storylines that are finally tied together at the end of the film. Since then, many directors have attempted this fascinating model of storytelling, and the latest to jump into the fray is India’s Rakesh Rawat. His “Midnight Delhi,” which premiered at the Singapore South Asian International Film Festival last week, zooms in on a dark, mysterious day in India’s capital city, which has in recent years grabbed global attention for its crime rate.

Rawat’s debut fiction feature begins its narrative on a foggy night with a burglar (played by Anshuman Jha, whose screen name is not revealed until halfway through the 115-minute movie), who uses a blade to slit the jugular vein of his victim, jumping into an autorickshaw (driven by Mukesh Bhatt, earlier seen in works such as “Jab We Met” and “M.S. Dhoni”). The burglar engages in light banter with the driver, gaining his confidence until he attempts to commit the crime.





COMING
SOON

MidNight **Délhi**

a film by Rakesh Rawat

Anshuman Jha | Mukesh Bhatt | Trimala Adhikari

a thoughtful clown films production

Later, in a series of seemingly unrelated events involving a jilted woman and a husband who returns home to find his wife with her lover, Rawat weaves a narrative that is extremely violent, sometimes unnecessarily so, and also confusing at times. Packed into three acts, though, the drama has interesting characters, each with their own tragic tale.

In a style reminiscent of American auteur Quentin Tarantino (whose canvas is invariably a bloody mess), “Midnight Delhi” throws together puzzling situations that do not quite add up. While Inarritu ably tied up the different stories in “Babel” to present a coherent picture in the climax, Rawat does not quite get to that, and some of his characters appear overly dramatic, sometimes even caricaturist, leaving us with a sense of dissatisfaction.
