

Review: Award-winning Saudi film 'Rupture' an abstract painting on the big screen



JEDDAH: Director Hamzah K. Jamjoom's "Rupture," which won the top prize in the Red Sea International Film Festival's Best Saudi film category, plays out like an abstract painting. Sometimes, such art work is fascinating for its myriad colors and thought-provoking concepts. But it is often a puzzle that a viewer has to work hard to fully understand. Similarly, Jamjoom's work is a brilliant work of art that defies easy comprehension, in this reviewer's opinion. One has to follow the movie without letting one's attention waver even for a few minutes — it is, in other words, an array of moving images that convey a whole lot of hidden meanings. The result is metaphorical and magnificent.

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“Rupture,” a complicated psychological thriller, tells the story of a pregnant Saudi woman who must distinguish reality from dreams and drug-induced delusions and perceptions of death, before a killer gets to her and her family. US actor Billy Zane, Saudi actress Sumaya Rida and Saudi actor Fayez Bin Jurays star in the flick.



"Rupture," a complicated psychological thriller. (Supplied)

The Saudi director packs his work with impactful messages, including discussions of culture clashes and the thin line between individual freedom and dependency – with the protagonist's frustration at being tied down to her husband, his family and domesticity given much thought.

The plot – which unfolds in a covert manner, often through darkened frames that heighten the mysteriousness of the narrative – follows an Arab couple from different cultural backgrounds who move to London to seek medical treatment for the wife's risky pregnancy. Despite her doctor's advice and husband's consternation, wife and mother-to-be Malak is determined to go through the ordeal. But when the husband, Rakan, has to go back home on an urgent family requirement, Malak is left alone to fight her own demons, to separate fact from the figment of her imagination and to keep at bay delusional tendencies which trouble her through horrid nightmares.

Jamjoom underlines his film with an unmistakable message about women's empowerment in society.

Arguably, Rupture, though with excellent production values such as cutting edge editing and largely able performances, is not easy to understand and may not be everyone's cup of tea. as the story could have been less complicated. But the challenges overcome by the director and the cast make it a worthy watch. Zane stands out as a stern concierge out to preach his morals to the pregnant woman, played by Rida whose expressive moments of fear and panic add to the gloom and darkness of the narrative. Jurays seems to have trouble sinking into his character, failing to bring in the awful fear of possibly losing the woman he adores to the screen.
