

Tokyo Film Festival: Macedonian Director Milcho Manchevski's Kaymak is Hugely Disappointing

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Tokyo



Kaymak is loud, raunchy and terribly dramatic, and it is all about two Macedonian couples living in the same apartment block in the nation's capital city, Skopje.

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Macedonian director Milcho Manchevski's Kaymak was screened at the Tokyo Film Festival.

When I walked into the theatre to watch Macedonian director-screenwriter Milcho Manchevski's Competition film, Kaymak, at the ongoing Tokyo Film Festival, I was wondering whether he would excel or at least equal his 1994 feature debut, Before the Rain, a powerful work on the ethnic conflicts in his country. The movie premiered at Venice and walked away with the Golden Lion, and was also nominated for an Oscar.

But in the intervening decades, Manchevski could never reach the heights he did with Before the Rain. Kaymak is loud, raunchy and terribly dramatic, and it is all about two Macedonian couples living in the same apartment block in the nation's capital city, Skopje.

Although Kaymak underlines class differences, and tackles darker social issues — surrogate parenting, infidelity, woman's role in family and society, human trafficking, sexual freedom — the film is hardly subtle with too many provocative chapters that border on soft porn. In fact, they are vulgar.

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In a housing complex's upper floor live the rich banker Eva and her lazy husband Metodi. They are desperate for a child and failing to have one, they hire a surrogate mother. But this leads to complications in the couple's lives when she wants to have a greater say in the baby's life than what the couple would want.

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"All the short films I was doing were sort of trying to buy time and trying to learn the craft," he averred when asked about Before the Rain. "And for those of you who are students of moviemaking who want to be filmmakers, my recommendation is to shoot, shoot, shoot. Shoot more. Make movies rather than talk about them."

He said that winning the Golden Lion certainly influenced his career. Overnight, everything changed. One day, I

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"It took me a few years to realise that I cannot make the kinds of films that I wanted to make within the Hollywood studio system. It just wasn't for me. I appreciate much better the European relationship that audience has with the artist," he said.

Finally, he had a solid piece of advice for students of cinema. Spend a lot of time in casting. It helps. But obviously and unfortunately – and despite this – he does not seem to have been lucky with Kaymak. It was pretty much disappointing.

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About the Author

GAUTAMAN BHASKARAN Gautaman Bhaskaran is a movie critic, commentator and an author, who penned the first ever biography of Adoor Gopalakrishnan, and has been covering ma... [Read More](#)

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