Track Me That You Love Me

Tzipi Trope's

Marriage, observed Blaise Pascal, the first existential philosopher, is the lowest condition in Christendom. In modern parlance, one could say that married life is the bottom line of ordinary human social existence, thus perhaps this explains the necromancy of marriage and its universal fascination.

As one of the fundamental vistas onto both the high hopes and the daily wretchedness of the human condition, the portrayal of marriages poses a considerable challenge to the artist. It takes the consummate mastery of a Bergman 'Scenes From A Marriage' to capture the void of marriage.

For her first feature film, Israeli director Tzipi Trope took on a topic that might have scared off many a less gutsy filmmaker. Yet in an essentially courageous kind of way, she did it right.

Tell Me That You Love Me is that rare and astonishing thing: a film that's honest with itself. And this is all the more surprising given the number of reasons that might have caused Tell Me That You Love Me to fail.

For one it is a Canada-Israel co-production, an approach to filmmaking that has only been used twice before and in both cases with lamentable results.

For another, the use of Canadian actors to articulate a story set in Israel might have seemed inappropriate. But it works, in part because Israel is more or less a Western country, and because the marital woes of the middle-classes are universal throughout that Western world.

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Thirdly, the Israel of Tell Me That You Love Me has neither the realism of conventional documentary, nor the newsmedia imagery of the troubles of a local imperialism. Instead this is an Israel whose internal topography consists of the good middle-class existence. She has a job as a senior writer for a woman's magazine; a good, hard-working lawyer of a husband. Dan (Nick Mancuso) is a good kid; and a good kid, her colleague and Leonora (Belinda Montgomery) who is single and less happy.

Miri is working on a major expose on battered wives in the course of which she meets Naomi (Andree Pelletier) who refuses to leave her unemployed husband David (Kenneth Welsh) who beats her.

Tell Me That You Love Me, then, works within this triple play on relational possibilities. Miri, fascinated by her polar opposite, Naomi, does the upright, possibilities . Miri, fascinated by her polar opposite, Naomi, does the upright, possibilities . Miri, fascinated by her polar opposite, Naomi, does the upright, possibilities . Miri, fascinated by her polar opposite, Naomi, does the upright, possibilities . Miri, fascinated by her polar opposite, Naomi, does the upright, possibilities . Miri, fascinated by her polar opposite, Naomi, does the upright, possibilities . Miri, fascinated by her polar opposite, Naomi, does the upright, possibilities . Miri, fascinated by her polar opposite, Naomi, does the upright, possibilities . Miri, fascinated by her polar opposite, Naomi, does the upright, possibilities . Miri, fascinated by her polar opposite, Naomi, does the upright, possibilities .