Best of the Fest: Saskatchewan Film & Video Showcase

Best Animation and Best First Production
THE FOOLISH OGRES
Brian Duchscherer, Regina. 5 min

Duchscher spent countless not-so-innocent hours reading children's books before attempting this ambitiously self-scripted animated tale. At times it appears to parody the genre, but that is also its strength for there is appeal for both toddlers and the mature.

Utilizing foam-rubber characters, a light-hearted soundtrack and a compact, colourful set, the blend of humour, action and morality is infectious. A small boy, lost in the forest is bagged by an ogre. The ogre takes his prize home to a greedy wife waiting for a suitably domestic bliss. Their argument over who gets to eat the boy provides him with a chance to escape.

Details like the fearsome ogre's slapskitted collision with a tree, the wildly staged ballet of a greedig fight, and the wife reading an upside-down Cover Girl magazine work like fine seasoning. Duchscher's irreverent wit and convincing characterization in this first-time effort prove he's ready for more challenging projects in animation.

Bauman's fearless close-ups and nail-biting silences force the viewer to make empathetic contact with Laurie and Danny. Unfortunately, Voss's flat-voiced, expressionless portrayal doesn't return the compliment. But part of her problem could be her repetetive, monosyllabic lines. On the other hand, Danny's passage from excited complicity to bewildered doubt, fear and determination is plausible. Considering what Bauman wants us to believe. The innocence of a child trapped by a monster. But part of her problem could be her repetitive, monosyllabic lines.

If anyone ever asks you to explain in 10 minutes what you did on your summer holidays in Saskatchewan, hand them a copy of this film. It was made to be shown on the video screens above the line-ups at the Saskatchewan Pavilion at Expo 86.

Bauman has covered it all. Exhilarating dance scenes, splashes of industry and a look at the drafting and construction of Saskatchewan's infamous Expo 86 glass grain-elevator tower are mixed with sweeping horizons. Although the theme changes are abrupt, Bauman has composed Rob Bryan's score to smooth the transitions.

The wide-angled aerial vistas are captivating and more than adequately define the diversity and essence of space. But two more intimate moments and their perfectly choreographed interfaces. One captures a mouse leaping through a southern swamp - in a graceful combination of high-stepping lift and ponderous dignity. The other follows a majestic, silvery elevator being moved down a mystical winter morning highway.

A tourist-oriented film, it made me want to visit a province I've lived in all my life.

Dale Winnotto

Best Promotional Production
SASKEXPO 86 - WELCOME
l. Larry Bauman p.c. Camera West, Regina. 11:30 min

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