Allan E. Goldstein's
The Outside Chance Of
Maximilian Glick

B
uy, just what the world needed: another Canadian-ethnic family
drama. It'll make you laugh. It'll make you cry.

Just when you thought it was safe
to return to the movie theatre, along comes Allan
Goldstein's film adaptation of Morley Torgov's
novel, The Outside Chance Of Maximilian Glick.
This is not to suggest that Glick is a dreadful film;
indeed, it's downright competent. So competent
is this effort, that it almost drowns in its own
cadence, conventional framework.

Glick is sort of what you'd get if the Waltons
were Jewish and moved to Beausejour.

Canadian-ethnic

Family

Drama.

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Robin Spry's

**Obsessed**

hit-and-run driver kills a 12-year-old boy. The guilt here is so obvious that the one responsible will certainly be brought to trial and justice done – right!

Hold it. Nothing is quite so simple in real life or in Robin Spry’s latest psychological thriller, Obsessed. Here, complex issues intersect with equally complex human emotions. Lines of right and wrong waver beneath our feet, and simple resolutions are simply not to be found.

Obsessed is not a formula thriller: there is no gratuitous gore to titillate or nauseate, no psycho-killer to fear and hate. Instead we have a very realistic (shockingly so) portrayal of a fatal accident that kills a child, and the equally realistic emotional wrangler that results for the people involved. In addition, it is a story that manages to introduce a level of suspense and tragedy as an element of entertainment, and at the same time remains a kind of morality play of the modern world.

Director Spry shows his love of the socially relevant once again, using it as a base to build his levels of meaning while maintaining an uncanniness of tension. He tug at the audience’s emotions without ever jangling them into submission, for he keeps the focus on the people involved rather than on the issues.

Keirra Keane plays Dinah Middleton, an ‘everyday mother’ who becomes obsessed (hence the title) with finding and punishing the hit-and-run driver of her only son, Alex. She tracks him to his home across the U.S. border, where he remains safe behind a technicality of law: hit-and-run offences are non-extraditable. She tries to turn him in, but he has really done finally penetrates all his cool defences: that a boy’s life snuffed out is more than just an arm’s-length abstraction. Then, alone before the truth of his guilt, he is utterly and totally shattered.

What is especially chilling about Rubinek’s character is that he has really done finally penetrates all his cool defences: that a boy’s life snuffed out is more than just an arm’s-length abstraction. Then, alone before the truth of his guilt, he is utterly and totally shattered.

Both Keanie and Dillon deliver fine performances, despite the fact that the writing for their characters is at times weak. But the one actor whose performance most affects this film is Saul Rubinek as Dinah’s husband Max, played by Daniel Pilon. His performance as a basically weak man, so that by the end of the film, the audience is left with a very strong sense of sympathy for him, even though he is clearly guilty. The film is definitely a crowd-pleaser, and at the very least, it should have no problems in this area. At a budget of $5-20 million, the film is extremely well-produced. Technical credits are all (yet unappreciated) and the use of locations is extremely imaginative. In fact, the whole affair appears as if it might be more comfortable on television, rather than up on the big screen.

All of this is not to suggest that The Outside Chance Of Maximillian Glick will not appeal to a wide audience: Lord knows, many Canadian films have (such as Manilal and Porky’s). The film is definitely a crowd-pleaser, and at the very least, it should have no problems in this area. At a budget of $5-20 million, the film is extremely well-produced. Technical credits are all (yet unappreciated) and the use of locations is extremely imaginative. In fact, the whole affair appears as if it might be more comfortable on television, rather than up on the big screen.

What it all boils down to is that The Outside Chance Of Maximillian Glick is safe, sound, regional filmmaking; it resembles an American film, crafted as competently as any other American film and at half the American budget. It just seems too bad that this is the sort of stuff being championed as the ultimate goal in regional filmmaking. There are so many stories from the regions that have yet to be told; this one has been told much too often.

GREG KLYMIK •