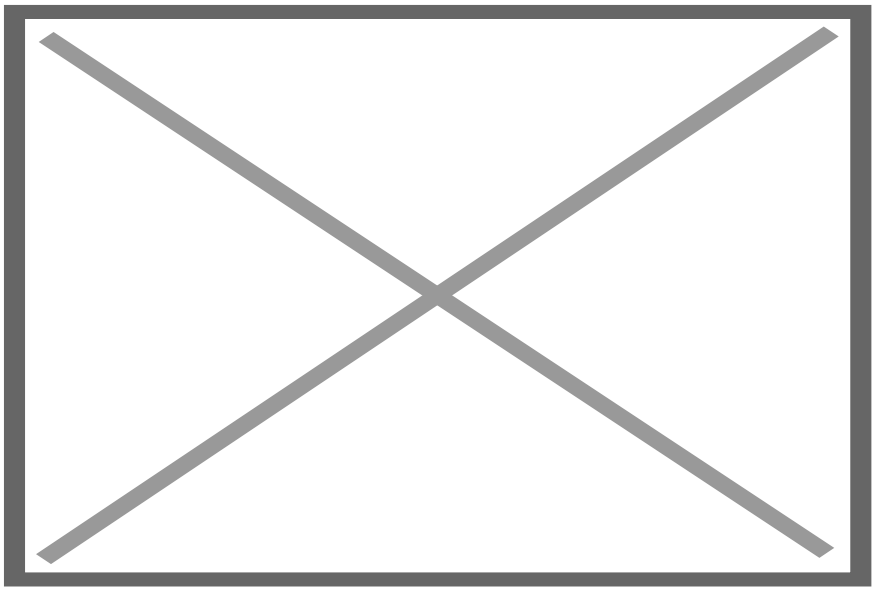
HOLLYWOODGLEE, LLC
1226 N Salsipuedes Unit C 1(805)704-5994 |https://hollywoodglee.com Larry@HollywoodGlee.com

Dheepan

Description

Reviewed by Larry Gleeson. Viewed during 2015 AFI FEST.



â??Dheepan,â?• is the latest work by director Jacques Audiard. Audiard has to his credits the critically acclaimed and well nominated films â??Rust and Boneâ?•(2012), and â??A Prophetâ?•(2009). â??Dheepan,â?• is written by Audiard, Thomas Bidegain and Noe Debreâ??, and tells the story of a Sri Lankan Tamil Tiger, called Dheepan. Dheepan is played by Indian actor, Antonythasan Jesuthasan.

Winner of the coveted Palm dâ??Or at the Cannes Film Festival, â??Deephan,â?• is a visual feast beginning in the jungles of Sri Lanka and the ensuing shots depicting Dheepanâ??s cultural transformation in the night streets of Paris. Epinine Momenceau provides the cinematography in a compelling manner along with a nicely done soundtrack by Nicolas Jarr.

As the film opens we see Dheepan and fellow Tamil warriors placing dry palm branches over a funeral pyre. Dheepan place his military fatigues on top and lights the fire. Sri Lanka is mired in a bloody civil war. Dheepan along with an unknown woman called Yalini, played by Kalieaswari Srinivasan, and a young orphan girl, Illayaal, played by Claudine Vinasithamby, decide to flee the strife together and set out for a new life in the suburbs of Paris posing as a displaced refugee family. With the inventiveness of a well versed interpreter, Dheepan and Yalini pass their social services interview and find employment as caretakers of a not so well-to-do housing project and one of itâ??s incoherent inhabitants.To complicate matters, Illayaal is having difficulties at school, Dheepan is contacted by a Tamil warrior who insists Dheepan continue the fight for freedom, and Yalini is becoming attracted to the gang leader nephew of her incoherent charge. This is all on top of the deeper humanistic component of three strangers living together as a family in a small apartment in an entirely foreign culture.

Soon, however, Dheepan and his refugee family begin to pull together as they experience renewed forms of violence. Their challenging suburban life becomes increasingly dangerous due to drug activity and an ensuing turf war that hits too close to home. Dheepan, working primarily as an janitor, takes a stand and declares a no-fire zone between his apartment building and the adjacent housing project much to the disbelief and chagrin of the well-armed gang members. As the turf war breaks out and spills over into the â??safe zone,â?• Dheepan shifts gears and his switch is flipped. He becomes an uber-soldier defending and protecting what has become his. This is an extraordinary transformation as he resorts to survival skills presumably developed as a Tamil freedom fighter. The action sequences heightens the drama in its fragmented and rather hazy segments as Dheepanâ??s deep and powerful emotional chords propel him through the violence and chaos until victory is his.

All in all, I found â??Dheepan,â?• to be a very moving film with its riveting action sequences contrasting with its earlier tender, more human sequences. Audiard takes a very timely topic, the displaced refugee, and embodies him and her, with very human characteristics. Highly Recommended.

Category

1. Uncategorized

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