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The Infiltrators take on Broward Transitional Center!

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

The Infiltrators, screening in the Next category of films presented by Adobe at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival, based on true events inside an Obama-era immigration detention system is a flaccid hybrid of scripted narrative and documentary form directed by Alex Rivera and Christina Ibarra. Rivera and Ibarra follow the plight of Claudio Rojas, a detainee arrested by ICE officials outside his Florida home. Next films are defined as â??Pure bold works distinguished by an innovative, forward-thinking approach to storytellingâ?¦.Digital technology paired with unfettered creativity promisesâ?¦a greater next wave in American cinema.

The film opens with some negative CGI imagery setting the tone of for what I anticipated would be an exposeâ??. After the introduction, *The Infiltrators* goes into unchartered territory with an overwhelming amount of re-enactments utilizing sparse amounts of traditional documentary techniques of voice-over narration, archival news footage and direct interviews.

After Rojas, played convincingly by Manuel Uriza, is transferred to the Broward Transitional Center, a detention facility used as a holding space for imminent deportations, his family contacts the National Immigrant Youth Alliance (NIYA), a group of activist Dreamers known for stopping deportations. Believing that no one is free as long as one is in detention, NIYA enlists Marco Saavedra, portrayed by Maynor Alvarado, to self-deport with the hopes of gaining access to the detention center and impeding Rojasâ??s deportation. Once inside, the character of Marco begins subverting the deportation process with one impeded deportation of Ismael, represented by actor Oscar Perez, and comes to realize this complex, for-profit institution housing hundreds of multinational immigrants, is in essence, a minimum security prison.

In what starts out as a believable situation, the film diverts into moments of questionable authenticity. A few minuscule interviews with the real characters help a little, but to put unspeaking, laughing, real-life character, Samuel Soto, in front of the camera as he is about to be deported mocks a judicial systems based in lawful codes and brings to mind colorful comedy of Hispanics taken by ICE officials from their homes while eating dinner calling back over their shoulder, â??Keep my plate warm, Iâ??ll be right

back.â?• In addition, the real subjects have such a small amount of screen time, I was left with a feeling that something was amiss. And it was never more evident than when Rojas arrived at an ICE office for his annual review after â??a year of close observation.â?•

Ibarra (in her Sundance debut) and Rivera (SLEEP DEALER, 2008 Sundance Film Festival) are husband and wife and itâ??s pretty obvious their work is a passionate affair. *The Infiltrators* has itâ??s moments with stunning drone shots of the Broward Transitional Center, in elevating the status of their Dreamer activists, and paying homage to *The Last Castle*, starring Sundance Institute Founder, Robert Redford. Yet, in the end, the plight of the undocumented goes on unfinished and *The Infiltrators* doesnâ??t delve into the millions of dollars detention facilities generate with any substance or depth. It does show power when an inspired group of like-minded individuals come together with a plan â?? not withstanding a dubious amount of â??creative non-fictionâ?• reenactment (scripted narrative). Warmly recommended.

Category

1. #Sundance
2. Sundance
3. Sundance Film Festival

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