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Baz Poonpiriyaâ??s â??One For the Roadâ?• Will Leave You Wanting More

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

When I viewed *One For the Road,* recipient of the 2021 Sundance Film Festival ***World Cinema Dramatic Special Jury Award: Creative Vision,*** and directed by Baz Poonpiriya (the first Thai director to feature in Sundanceâ??s World Cinema Dramatic Competition), my mind wandered as I became aware of a thought, â??This film reminds me of Wong Kar Waiâ??s work, *In the Mood for Love.â?•* The film had a wonderful soundtrack with some Cat Stevens music along with several mainstream hits, a strong production design, and a lovely mise-en-scene with exquisite cinematography and a touch of colorization. *One For the Road* follows a young Thai man, who is dying from cancer and has decided to make his final amends by delivering a parting gift to those closest to him on the earthly plane. The narrative structure is non-linear as the director uses flashbacks to inform the viewer and add depth of meaning to the present.

Unfortunately for the filmâ??s lead character, Aood, portrayed by Ice Natara, the only Thai runway model in South Korea, he doesnâ??t drive and doesnâ??t own a car. So, he calls on his best friend, Boss, portrayed by actor/singer/model Tor Thanapob, to drive him across Thailand beginning in the north and traversing the length of the country down to the south in order to bring closure with the people from Aoodâ??s past. Only, Boss owns a bar in New York where he seems to be living the dream with an endless lineup of beautiful women that he entertains after hours.

Boss and his family had supported Aood over the years and the two were as close as two blood brothers until a falling out left them estranged. But when Aood tells Boss he is sick and needs Bossâ??s help to complete a final â??to doâ?• list, Boss comes to help. As the two rekindle their friendship, Boss puts up with Aoodâ??s idiosyncrasies and his overt intrusions into peopleâ??s lives with his parting gifts. Yet, when Aood tries to give Boss a gift, truths are revealed threatening their friendship while simultaneously offering an opportune moment for redemption.

One for the Road is full of nostalgia as multiple genres come together including romance, buddy film, as well as sex-positive melodrama. Itâ??s very visual, very visceral, and one I was sad to see it end after 136 minutes. But end it did and as the credits began to roll, there it was â?? a title revealing

â??Produced by Wong Kar Waiâ?• â?? â??â?¦ a filmmaker who specializes in making the evanescent tangible, in capturing fleeting emotions in a style that is always poetic, often ravishing and, despite his filmsâ?? surface-level dreaminess, unerringly precise.â?• (https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/26/movies/Wong-Kar-wai-romance-films.html) Iâ??m a huge fan of Mr. Wongâ??s work so all I could do in that moment was sit and smile. What a wonderful gift. (Wong and Baz worked together on *One For The Road* for three years.)

Director Baz Poonpiriya, a strong storyteller who has come into his own, had previously helmed *Bad Genius* the 2017 Thai box-office smashing and the record-breaking winner of twelve categories at the 27th Suphannahong National Film Awards (the Thai Oscars), before embarking on *One For The Road* with Wong. If youâ??re a fan of Wong, this is a film you donâ??t want to miss. And, if youâ??re a fan of Thai film (Apichatpong Weerasethakulâ??s 2010 *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives* if you simply enjoy exquisitely told films, I highly *e Road!*





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