

Article Details

MOVIE REVIEW: ROAD, MOVIE

by Preeti Thandi

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ROAD, MOVIE ON THE PATH TO SUCCESS



Humorous, beautifully shot and meaningfully executed, Dev Benegal's *Road, Movie* is the kind of film that will be talked about for quite some time. There's something fascinating about road journeys and Benegal proves it cinematically. Vishnu (Abhay Deol), a disenchanting young man hits the road in Rajasthan with an archaic truck. He is obviously taking the escapist route unwilling to be part of his father's dated hair oil business. Little does Vishnu know that his impromptu journey will actually acquaint him fully with harsh realities of life. *Road, Movie* had a world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival 2009.

The intelligently woven script has three other characters who have a specific purpose in Vishnu's journey. The first person he encounters is a young boy played to perfection by Mohammed Faizal. The next person they come across is Om, (Satish Kaushik) who is the problem -solver and fixer of all things. Then, in the peak of the desert heat they chance upon, an enchanting woman, Tannishtha Chatterjee who completes the circle.

The antique truck that Vishnu is transporting to a museum happens to be a travelling cinema. Interestingly, cinema becomes a separate entity within the film which adds to the lure of escape and also brings people together. There's something magical and dream like about the whole journey which is magnified by the breathtaking montage of Rajasthan's landscape.

At its' core *Road, Movie* is a fun film about a trip but that said it also makes sharp personal, social, cultural and economic statements. Water scarcity and exploitation is cleverly juxtaposed with corporate commercialization of basic necessities of life. The musical score by Michael Brook is notable and so is the choice of a timeless classic Indian song. In the middle of nowhere on a dark desert night, Chatterjee breaks into a song she sung herself. The scene is both haunting and melodious.

Every sight on the road has a specific reason in the film. *Road, Movie* speaks more eloquently with visuals and performances rather than words. Benegal draws outstanding performances from Deol and Chatterjee who share a tender on screen chemistry and add to the mix, the brilliance of Kaushik's acting. It makes for a stupendous medley!

