

CHELMSFORD FILM CLUB

An Independent film society based in Chelmsford

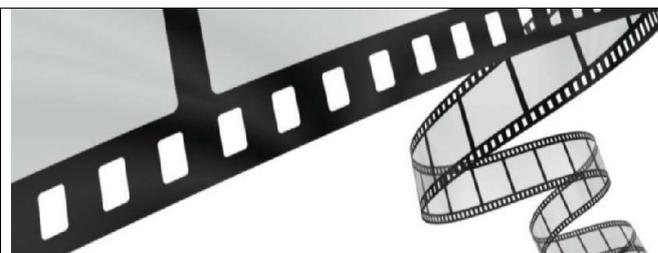
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FOXTROT (2017 - Israel/Germany/France/Switzerland 104 mins)

Tuesday 25 February 2020

Dir. Samuel Maoz

“Samuel Maoz’s alternately acclaimed and reviled Israeli drama ... is thick with grief, confusion and metaphor, the last of which extends to the title” (David Edelstein in *Vulture*).

“Brilliantly constructed with a visual audacity that serves the subject rather than the other way around, this is award-winning filmmaking on a fearless level” (Jay Weissberg in *Variety*).

“It’s a riveting portrait of a secular Job (Joe Morgenstern in *Wall Street Journal*).

“Foxtrot makes demands on audiences and then richly rewards them. It’s a riveting, deeply resonant achievement” (Peter Travers in *Rolling Stone*).

Could the conclusion of this structurally fascinating film be a bit of a let-down, as accumulations of ambiguity and mystery are jettisoned for the final reveal? It’s presented in three parts. First, we see the fraught existence of a successful middle-aged architect and his wife in Tel Aviv whose son is away doing military service. Then the fraught existence of this son’s unit, out in the middle of nowhere, guarding a border post. Then back with the architect and his family. The first and third scenes are very theatrical, like a conventional stage play, and the second - the centre-piece, perhaps - is visually weirder, at times almost hallucinatory.

Lior Ashkenazi plays Michael Feldman, well-respected architect and bearded paterfamilias: a handsome figure of a man. The difficulties in his relationship with his wife Daphna (Sarah Adler) are exposed by a traumatic official visit. Moving to a radically different scene involving the son (Yonathan Shiray is Jonathan Feldman) in the Israel Defense Force, the fate of both father and son speaks volumes about official secrecy and a tendency on the part of the authorities to cover things up, never to admit a fault.

With absurdist, cartoon-like flashes of surrealism and even a brief animated sequence at the end, this witty film, designed like a graphic novel, won the Grand jury prize at the Venice film festival in 2017.

Our next screening: *Cloe* 5 to 7 on Tuesday 31 March. Don't forget to make a selection from the 'Film Selection List' of films you would like to see in a future programme of Chelmsford Film Club (maximum 16). You can do this either online, by post or hand in by 31 March.