

The Main Feature



Season 33 - Issue 4 (screening 25.10.12)



One World Week is a Development Education Charity. Each year, "The Week" is an opportunity for people from diverse backgrounds to come together to learn about global justice, to spread that learning and to use it to take action for justice locally and globally.

The 2012 theme asks how can we shape our lives to contribute to an equitable future for all?

WNCC's marks One World Week by screening:



India

UK release 24 September 2010

107 minutes

cert 15

Co-Directors: Anusha Rizvi and Mahmood Farooqui

Writer: Anusha Rizvi

Cinematography: Shanker Raman

Editing: Hemanti Sarkar

Cast includes:

Omkar Das Manikpuri as Natha

Malaika Shenoy as Nandita Malik

Shalini Vatsa as Dhaniya

Vishal O. Sharma as Kumar Deepak

Sitaram Panchal as Bhai Thakur

Anoop Trevedi as Thanedar Jugan

Raghubir Yadav as Budhia

Nawazuddin Siddiqui as Rakesh

Farookh Zafar as Amma

Naseeruddin Shah as Saleem Kidwai, the Minister

Aamir Bashir as Vivek



Writer-director Anusha Rizvi's debut feature, a disarmingly simple but remarkably powerful film, is a major triumph. She taps into the power of the medium to narrate a story rooted firmly in the depressing realities of rural India, but without ever going into paroxysms of self-righteous indignation.

In an interview the producer Aamir Khan explained the meaning of the movie title: "When we were looking for the right title before we began the publicity and promotions of the film, we came up with Peepli Live."

Peepli is the village that film is set in, the "live" part is meant to indicate: here is a story that is happening in Peepli that the filmmaker is bringing to you live. That's why it's Peepli Live."

The subject of the movie is simple yet thought provoking. As India moves to an industrialized economy, farmers are committing suicide. Self-serving politicians at all government levels have been unwilling or unable to do anything about this. While the movie might appear as a spoof on the farmer suicides but it ends up conveying much more and presents some shocking facts.

Farmers in India became the centre of considerable concern in the 1990s when the journalist P Sainath highlighted the large number of suicides among them. Official reports initially denied the farmer suicides but as more and more information came to light the government began to accept that farmers in India were under considerable stress. On figures there was much debate since the issue was so emotive. More than 17,500 farmers a year killed themselves between 2002 and 2006, according to experts who have analyzed government statistics



VJAS (Vidarbha Janandolan Samiti), the Nagpur-based farmer's advocacy group, asked the Maharashtra government to ban the film due to its depiction of farmer

suicides. Kishor Tiwari, the president of VJAS, stated: "TV serial 'Bairi Piya' has shown that debt-trapped Vidarbha farmers are selling daughters to clear their debt, while 'Peepli Live' is far from reality and an insult to poor farmers of Vidarbha who have been victims of globalization and wrong policies of the state."

Rizvi handles her subject like a veteran director. Her tight, witty script spreads the drama around an ensemble cast and comes to life in wise earthy dialogue among the most disadvantaged characters. There's plenty of broad comedy as each character bares his or her self-interest.

Clearly her film is of some significance as she recalled that she had sat beside Prime Minister Manmohan Singh as he watched a special screening of her film, cringing in her seat each time an abuse was let out on screen.

"I couldn't laugh, I couldn't breathe, I was just thinking 'Oh god! let this moment pass'," she says, now laughing, but still feeling squeamish about it. "From what I gathered he got all the layers, the sarcasm, everything. At the end of it, he gave a small speech saying that clearly there were two Indias and we need to bridge them."

"It could be anywhere in India. We had to shoot it somewhere and wherever we would have shot it, it would have looked like that. But if you see the film, it says it is Mukhya Pradesh. That means it's a completely fictitious state and Peepli is a fictitious village in it. Even for the police uniform, we have not used it from any state of India," said Anusha



Peepli Live focuses on the poorest of the poor in India and it not only highlights the plight of a farmer in a tiny corner of a giant country, but also throws light on the varied people who exploit the situation to their advantage, right from the politicians to the bureaucrats to the television reporters to the local people. In fact, *Peepli Live* makes a scathing attack on the functioning of media in India and how media persons, depicted as vultures, generally stoop to the lowest levels to increase the ratings of their television channel/show.

The best part is that at no point does the film get preachy or starts offering solutions to the grave issue. It's a mere tool that the makers have used to discuss bureaucracy, the rural and urban divide and lack of concern of the administration.

Iain McGlashan

The printing of the notes for each film is undertaken by Repropoint free of charge

Repropoint

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sponsors photocopying of *the main feature*

Reactions to **A Separation**

11 October 2012

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Score | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Votes | 1 | ~ | 1 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 7 | ~ |

Total received – 33

Average Score – 6.97

Your Comments

An interesting film

Wanted film to end, then did not like the ending

What a mess!

And we think we have problems – excellent film

Dilemmas unlimited – absolutely absorbing

A good thought provoking choice

Powerful and moving – great ending!

An excellent film but troubling story

A thought provoking frustrating film

Incomprehensible Kafkaesque tosh

An excellent piece of film making if a bit long

A very good film but families and relationships the same the world over

Not clear why wife wanted a divorce in first place

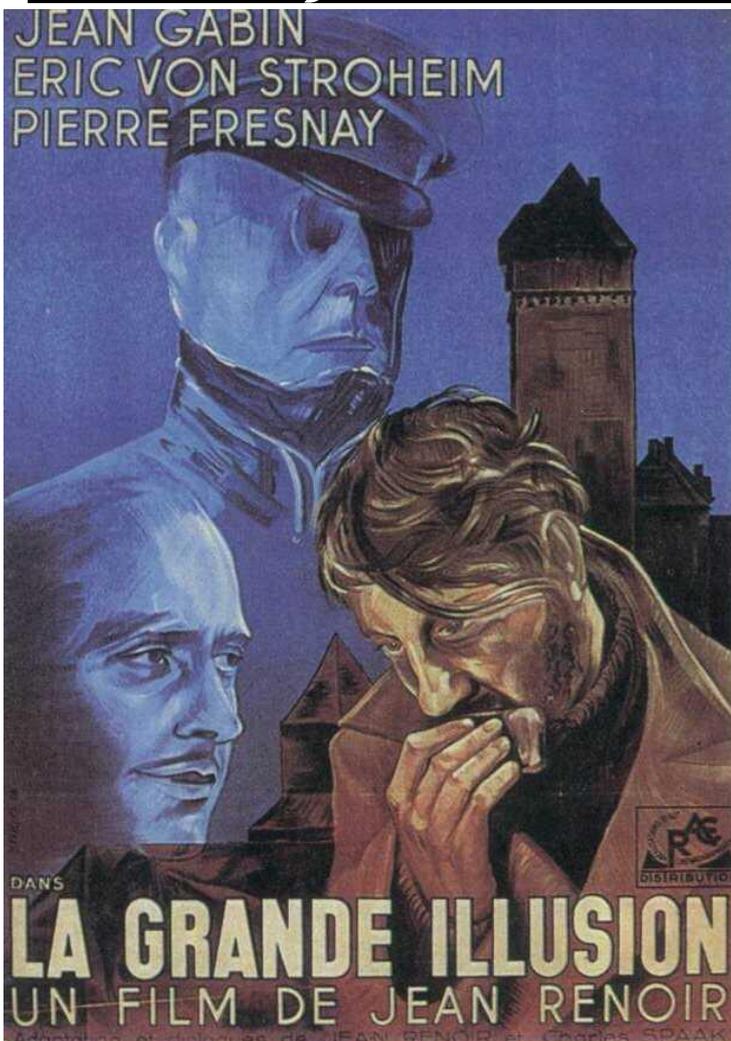
A very good film - families and relationships are the same the world over

A powerful film – universally relevant but played out against a religious background

At the end, you find film and fiction merge – terrific performances from the two females

| Position | Film | Average Score |
|-----------------|----------------------|---------------|
| 1 st | The Artist | 8.28 |
| 2 nd | My Week With Marilyn | 7.56 |
| 3 rd | A Separation | 6.97 |

Our next film will mark Remembrance Week



**8pm on
Thursday
8 November
2012**

Highly intelligent anti-war film which points up the futility of nationalism and argues for men of peace to unite against warmongers.

Arguably Jean Renoir's most notable film, *La Grande Illusion* is a tale of determination and spirit that is as relevant today as when first released 70 years ago. It was the first foreign-language movie ever to be Oscar-nominated for Best Picture.