naomi

a film by Eitan Zur

July August Productions & EZ Films present
VENICE FILM FESTIVAL 2010 - CRITICS’ WEEK

Yossi Pollak
Melanie Peres
Ilan Ben Natan, a 56-year-old Professor, is married to a young woman, Naomi. He is obsessively in love with her. Ilan discovers that his deepest fears have come true. Naomi has a lover. He seeks the advice of his elderly German-born mother, who suggests he leave the matter alone. But Ilan is unable to control himself. He follows his wife and is tortured by what he sees. Ilan confronts the lover and commits a horrible act, the consequences of which will weigh heavily on his conscience.

Ilan Ben Natan, un professore di 58 anni, è sposato con la giovane Naomi che ama di un amore ossessivo. Ilan scopre che la sua più grande paura si è avverata: Naomi ha un amante. Chiede consiglio a sua madre, di origine tedesca, che gli suggerisce di far finta di nulla. Ma Ilan non riesce a controllarsi. Segue sua moglie ed è straziato da quello che vede. Ilan decide di avere un confronto con l’amante e commette un atto terribile, che peserà per sempre sulla sua coscienza.

It wasn’t a simple decision for me to choose a psychological suspense tale, in essence a universal theme, as the basis for my first feature film. To make a film these days in Israel that is inspired by a cinematic and literary tradition, unrelated to the embroiled and complex reality around, is perceived, also in my eyes, as a luxury of sorts.

Nevertheless, when I came upon the screenplay for “An X-Ray Burst” (By Edna Mazya and based on her book), I was immediately captured by the emotional intensity of the story on the one hand, and the sarcasm entwined throughout it on the other, as well as by the secondary characters, and most of all by the description of Ilan’s journey, the hero of the tale, the “normative” person who is propelled into an extreme situation, and the way in which it rocks his peaceful organized life.

I chose a cast and cinematic style that would make it possible for me to focus on the characters. The main location for me was the actors’ faces, especially in those instances when they don’t talk. During the work on the film I found myself giving up most of the few camera movements I had planned on, and the music that had already been written for some of the scenes. I tried to make a film that would be characterized by silence and restraint above the surface, in the hope that no viewer would miss the earthquake taking place underneath.

Sin dall’inizio, ho capito che la principale sfida nella realizzazione del film sarebbe stata la direzione degli attori. I dialoghi della coppia sono futili, quasi insignificanti, sono gli elementi di una relazione che, nonostante l’amore, è basata sulla mancanza di comunicazione, segreti, sospetti, e silenzi. La maggior parte del tempo, la forza delle emozioni è nascosta sotto la superficie.

Ma, quando ho avuto fra le mani la sceneggiatura di “Esplosione cosmica” (scritta da Edna Mazya e tratta dal suo libro), ho subito catturato dall’intensità emotiva della storia, dall’ironia che la pervade, oltre che dai personaggi secondari, e soprattutto dalla descrizione del viaggio di Ilan, l’eroe del racconto, la persona “normale” che si trova in una situazione estrema, e il modo in cui questo sconvolge la sua pacifica e ordinata esistenza.

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Cast
Ilan Ben-Natan: Yossi Pollak
Naomi Ben-Natan: Melanie Peres
Kathy Ben-Natan: Orna Porat
Anton Karam: Suheil Haddad
Oded Safra: Rami Heuberger

Crew:
Director: Eitan Zur
Screenplay by: Edna Mazya
Based on her novel «X-Ray Burst»
Director of Photography: Shai Goldman
Editor: Boaz Lion
Production Design: Eitan Levy
Costume Design: Yael Shenberger
Sound Recording: Sam Cohen
Sound Design: Gil Toren
Original Music: Adrien Blaise
Producers: Eilon Ratzkovsky, Elie Meirovitz, Yossi Uzrad, Guy Jacoel, Yochanan Kredo
Production Companies: July August Productions, EZ Films

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