

A Separation

Cert PG Iran 2011 122 mins

Crew

Director/writer Asghar Farhadi
 Cinematography Mahmood Kalari
 Film Editor Hayedeh Safiyri
 Art Director Keyvan Moghaddam
 Music Sattar Oraki

Cast

Leila Hatami Simin
 Peyman Moadi Nader
 Shabab Hosseini Hodjat
 Sareh Bayat Razieh
 Sarin Farhadi Termeh
 Babak Karimi Judge

Synopsis

Iran, the present. As the film opens, a middle-class couple, Simin and Nader are arguing in front of an unseen judge while filing for a divorce that neither of them really wants.

The issue is that Simin wants to leave the country and take their 11-year-old daughter Termeh with her, while Nader refuses to leave his senile father behind.

The judge grants their divorce, and Simin goes to live with her parents while she prepares to leave. Nader hires working class woman, Razieh, to look after his father while he goes to work.

But Nader doesn't know that his new maid is not only pregnant, but also working without her volatile husband's permission. Soon, Nader finds himself entangled in a web of lies and confrontations.....



Film website:

www.artificial-eye.com/film.php?cinema=aseparation



Reviews

A Separation, Asghar Farhadi's fifth film as director, won the Golden Bear at Berlin this year - the first time for an Iranian film - and was also awarded Silver Bears for best actor and actress. Any suspicion that this might have been a proxy sympathy vote for Farhadi's absent colleague, the imprisoned filmmaker Jafar Panahi, invited as a member of the jury, is dispelled by the film itself.

Fiercely intelligent, morally and emotionally complex, *A Separation* invites us into an intricate web of social, ethical and religious dilemmas, exploring intelinked questions of pride, class, honesty, guilt, family, justice, loyalty and honour, and never settles for easy answers - or indeed any answers at all. It's a film that pays us the compliment of letting us make up our own minds....

Philip Kemp, Sight and Sound, July 2011

.....the 'separation' of the title isn't just between husband and wife. It's also between classes, as represented by the well-educated, near-secular Nader on the one hand, and the unemployed, unskilled, god-fearing Hodjat on the other. These are also the lives they bequeath their children: one nurtured and with a future full of options; the other neglected and bound for the same drudgery as her parents. This division becomes apparent when Razieh has a miscarriage and Nader, held responsible and accused of murder, finds himself facing a possible prison sentence.

The consequent claims and counterclaims see both families sucked into a frightening Kafkaesque bureaucracy. As the story unfolds, religion, honour and justice are all put under the spotlight. *A Separation* is a gripping experience, far from hopeless or depressing thanks to the precision of Asghar Farhadi's writing, the spryness of his direction and the generosity of his outlook, which can even spare a moment of sympathy for the police interrogator burdened with the case. The cast is uniformly excellent, adding to the appeal of this shrewd and subtle film.

Julian White, Little White Lies, June 2011