DIFF REVIEW: ‘Vaho (Becloud)’

11 Apr, 2010 Angela Jones DIFF, Reviews
Alejandro Gerber Bicecci’s “Vaho (Becloud)” tells the story of three childhood friends, Andres, Felipe, and Jose, and their lives in a dusty, run down corner of Mexico City. The boys were inseparable until they witnessed a tragedy that haunts them to the present day. The tragedy shaped each boy differently, and had a profound effect on their lives.

What’s unique about this tale is it’s not told sequentially. We’re introduced to Efren as he drives down a dusty road with a truck full of water. He has the company of a lady, and when they stop, she goes to explore a dried up lake and finds a baby with his dead mother. She adopts the child as her own and names him after Efren, but Efren wants nothing to do with the child. Fast-forward to the present day where we follow 18-year-olds Andres, Felipe and Jose. The story jumps randomly from one boy to another as we catch glimpses of each trying to find happiness, love, steady job, or acceptance in their lives. This part of the movie works in a lot of character and exposition, and I wasn’t sure where it was going or why certain things were happening.

Then, act two begins, and we’re taken back eight years earlier when the boys were in school. We see their tight bond to one another, and as boys do, they fight over who can marry the elusive Abigail at the school carnival. The boys put on a mock sword fight to see who the victor will be. This stage of their lives is when the boys witness something they’ll never forget.

This is where Bicecci displays a true gift as a master storyteller. All of the questions the audience had about the characters and their motives were addressed. I understood why they acted the way they did, why they drifted apart over the years, and why none of them could find happiness in their lives. “Vaho” translates as the mist that you see when you breathe out in a cold night. Bicecci meant this title to be an allegory for the lives of the boys. The mist clouds your vision, and you can’t see what’s ahead of you, and you begin to question the meaning of your life because nothing is clear.

Bicecci has a bright future ahead of him as a film maker and storyteller. This movie reminded me of “City of God” where the pieces are mixed up, but once you figure out where they go, the end result is highly captivating.
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