

Arranged marriage meets its match in Algerian comedy 'Masquerades'

By Julie Washington, The Plain Dealer

March 21, 2010, 3:00AM

In the genial film "Masquerades," Mounir is a hardworking man who just wants a little respect.

Mounir decides to marry off his sister Rym, unaware that Rym is secretly in love with Mounir's best friend. Mounir's family convinces their Algerian town that Rym has been promised to a mysterious and rich foreigner. Mounir enjoys playing the big shot too much to call off the fake wedding, and things quickly spin out of control.

Appealing characters and gentle humor help make the point that tradition must give way to modern thinking -- such as women choosing their own fates -- in the most unlikely of places. The film also immerses viewers in daily life in modern Algeria.

"Masquerades" starts slowly but rewards the patient viewer with a strong ending.

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REVIEW

Masquerades

What: True love shakes up traditions in an Algerian town. (2010/USA) 83 minutes. In Arabic with English subtitles.

When: 7 p.m. today and 4:40 p.m. Monday.

Grade: B

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