

LOG IN | SIGN UP

Google Custom Search SEARCH

THE HUFFINGTON POST

JUNE 23, 2009

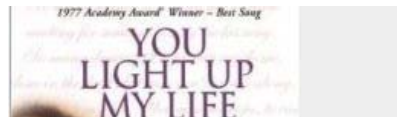
- HOME
- POLITICS
- MEDIA
- BUSINESS
- ENTERTAINMENT
- LIVING
- STYLE
- GREEN
- WORLD
- COMEDY 23/6
- NEW YORK
- CHICAGO
- VIDEO
- BLOGGER INDEX
- ARCHIVE
- Get Email Alerts
- Make HuffPost Your HomePage



TLC HALTS 'Jon & Kate' Till August, Jon Talks Split Logistics



More in Entertainment: Jon & Kate Bombshelle... Miley's Photo Scandal... Spector's Sensitive Needs...



Oscar Winner Accused Of Multiple Rapes



Michael Giltz

Freelance writer and raconteur
Posted: May 20, 2009 09:49 PM

- BIO
- Get Email Alerts
- Become a Fan
- Bloggers' Index

Cannes 2009 Day Eight: Jews Fighting Back, Jews In Love, Singing Nuns and Dour Germans

Read More: Cannes Film Festival, Cannes-France, Michael Haneke, Quentin Tarantino, Entertainment News



Google Custom Search

Buzz up! Be the First to Submit This Story to Digg

Get Breaking News Alerts

never spam

Share Print Comments

If it wasn't taking so long to upload my video clips, you could already be watching my interview with documentary filmmaker Anne Aghion about the gachacha trials in Rwanda. Look for it Thursday (I hope). Right now, here are the reviews of today's films.

INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS *** 1/2 (OUT OF FOUR) -- At this stage of the festival, a movie has to be really good just to keep you awake. Well, Quentin Tarantino kept me awake from 8:30 in the morning till 11:00 (about two and a half

hours) with his WW II B movie *Inglourious Basterds*. It begins with two gripping introductions: one is a terrific set piece in a French country home where a farmer and his three beautiful daughters are sheltering Jews who hide under the floorboards when the Nazis show up for another inspection. The other introduction is of the Nazi leading that inspection and it's journeyman actor Christoph Waltz who is absolutely sensational as Col. Hans Landa, one of the wittiest, smartest and most compelling villains ever. Waltz absolutely steals a film peopled with strong actors like rising British star Michael Fassbender, Daniel Bruhl, Maggie Cheung, and Til Schweiger. Waltz can make offering a glass of milk seem dripping with menace and when he shouts with glee, "I have a Bingo!" it's funny enough to become a catch phrase.

Divided into chapters, the movie is a revenge fantasy where a band of Jews head into occupied France and kick some ass in the most violent, frightening way possible. Fun set pieces abound: that scene in the country farm house, an extended showdown in a German bar, the amusingly cruel torture of Nazi prisoners by the Basterds, and a finale in a movie house. In fact, movie jokes are a running gag in the film, with one character a former movie critic and a constant emphasis on how movies can change the world. It's definitely Tarantino, including elaborate and spot-on dialogue

Bettye LaVette

CHANGE IS GONNA COME
Sessions

People.com

Sarah Jessica Parker and Matthew Broderick Reveal Twins' Names
[READ MORE](#)

Gosselins Go Their Separate Ways
[READ MORE](#)

Ellen DeGeneres & Portia De Rossi 'Happily Married Without Children'
[READ MORE](#)

More Celebrity News at People.com

Don't Miss HuffPost Bloggers

Gavin Newsom
The Nation's Most Ambitious Recycling Law

T. Boone Pickens
Propane and the Pickens Plan

Popular Stories on HuffPost

Johnny Depp As Mad Hatter, Helena Bonham Carter's Red

that goes on and on and circles back to the heart of things just when you think he's lost his way and a Mexican stand-off or two. But to my taste, the period setting has kept Tarantino in check a bit; it's his most disciplined film in a while and the combination of a great score, and resolutely low-key action pay offs keeps the B movie flavor consistent throughout. So a great new actor (I'm telling you, Waltz is amazing), loads of fun -- I expected very strong applause and thought, "Gee, *Une Prophete* is gonna have a run for its money at least from critics." And then the applause was mild, polite and quickly over. Throughout the rest of the day, it became clear I was in a distinct minority on this one.

EYES WIDE OPEN *** -- This Israeli film is about an Orthodox Jew living in Jerusalem, a butcher who has just reopened the meat store after his father's death. He's got a dutiful wife, a couple of kids and the deep respect of his community. Until, that is, he takes in a young Orthodox Jew who seems lost and adrift. The younger man quickly proves useful in the store but word filters back from other communities that he is bad news, a sinner. And what is his sin? One man intriguingly describes the man as having performed too many mitzvahs (good deeds). The simple truth is that the man is gay and was in love with another man who has rejected him and yearns to follow a respectable path. You can see where this is headed, I assume. It's delivered with restraint and respect and perhaps a little fear for the tightly knit, stifling world of the Orthodox Jews. There is safety in such uniformity, such closeness but you pay a very heavy price. Their burgeoning love is contrasted with the scandalous neighbor who continues to court a young woman who loves him even though she's been promised by her father to another. The community is relentless, even violent in destroying this love. And we realize by implication how utterly beyond the pale the love of these two men would be if it were known. A solid, well-told tale. Just don't expect a happy ending.

SISTER SMILE ** -- This French film is the latest to tackle the live of The Singing Nun, the Belgian one-hit wonder novelty act of sorts who had a massive hit single with "Dominique." Debbie Reynolds played her in a film in the Sixties, but needless to say it whitewashed the real story. The real Singing Nun was apparently a lesbian who at first struggled with her sexuality, rebelled against the Church, left her order and even the Church, and even wrote a song celebrating the Pill. That didn't go down to well at the Vatican, I imagine. A very conventional, TV movie sort of film, this movie could be shown on TV without any cuts, despite a sensationalistic story that has already been at least one other feature film, a campy Off-Broadway play and a musical. Cecelia de France is winning as Jeanine Deckers, the Singing Nun aka Sister Smile. She plays her from high school (where every girl in sight seems to have had a crush on her) to her death, which in this version is preceded by the climax of her positive personal acceptance of being gay. In a gesture typical of the film's moderate tone, we see her strip down to her bra to seduce a man (after leaving her order, mind you) but when she finds true love with a woman it's depicted only with a chaste clasping of the hands and a quick kiss on the knuckles. A bit tame, but intriguing almost despite itself. Gay audiences -- especially lesbians -- should find the story fascinating.

THE WHITE RIBBON * 1/2 -- The dour, austere Michael Haneke manages to out-bleak himself with this tale set right before the onset of WW I. In it, a small town is beset by a string of disturbing crimes, including a suicide, the torture of a mentally challenged boy and more. Gee, could it have anything to do with the local kids who travel in a pack, always appearing on the scene of misery and asking with the utmost concern if they can help? And might that have something to do with the fact that their fathers are without exception unbelievably sadistic and cruel? When they're not raping their children, they're beating them. (That's not an exaggeration.) That's the set-up, the plot and the resolution of the film which no more explains WW II (they behaved evilly and voted in Hitler because their parents were such shits?) than it explains what the heck it was trying to illuminate beyond the obvious fact that beating your kids is both wrong and perhaps damaging. People threw a fuss over the Lars Von Trier film because they found it disturbing, which is like seeing a John Waters film and complaining it was in poor taste. And Von Trier's film was a fantasy with a stylized, over-the-top tone that kept the cruelty at a theatrical, unreal level. The nastiness on display in this film, in contrast, is deadly real. Haneke doesn't need to justify his film to me but it would have been helpful if he'd justified it to its characters and given them something, anything, an insight perhaps, to hold onto when all he gives them is an open palm slapping them across the face.

Related News On Huffington Post:



Heath Ledger's Final Performance Screens At Cannes
CANNES, France — Heath Ledger's zeal roused his co-stars to up their game in his final film, and his death inspired them _ and three...

Queen And Anne Hathaway's White Queen: FIRST LOOK (PHOTOS)

The Tim Burton...

Mark Sanford: Where Is He? "Hiking"

COLUMBIA, S.C. — South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford has been hiking along the Appalachian Trail,...

Bruno In Berlin: Dons Pink Bodysuit With Nipples And A Penis (PHOTOS)

Sacha Baron Cohen's Bruno continued his ridiculous...

Bernard-Henri Lévy The Swan Song of the Islamic Republic

Whatever happens from this point on, nothing will ever be the same in...

Dr. Mark Hyman The 7 Keys to UltraWellness: Discover Why You are Sick and How You Can Heal

"I didn't know how bad I was feeling until..."

Frank Serpico NYPD in Black and White

"What did you think of the shooting in the city the other day?" my friend on the other end of the line asked....

The Sexiest PETA Ads Of All Time! You Choose The Winner! (SLIDESHOW) (POLL)

In the wake of Lydia Guevara, Che's Granddaughter,...

McCain Hits Obama On Iran Again, Joe Klein Tells Him "Be Quiet" (VIDEO)

Sen. John McCain continued to rap President Barack...

Obama Father's Day Treat: The Dairy Godmother Visited By Sasha, Malia And Obama For Treats (PHOTOS)

SCROLL DOWN FOR PHOTOS
ALEXANDRIA,

Perez Hilton Called Will.i.am A "F*gg*t" Pre-Fight

TORONTO — Police have charged the tour manager of the Black Eyed Peas with...

Unemployment: The Hardest-Hit States (CHART)

Michigan has the highest unemployment rate of any state at 14.1 percent,...



Brad And Angelina Wow Cannes At 'Inglourious Basterds' Premiere (PHOTOS)

Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie lit up the red carpet at the premiere of 'Inglourious Basterds' Wednesday night in Cannes. Earlier in the day Brad,...



Brad Pitt In Cannes For 'Inglourious Basterds' (VIDEO, PHOTOS)

Brad Pitt has finally arrived in Cannes, a week into the film festival, along with the rest of Quentin Tarantino's 'Inglourious Basterds' cast. Wednesday the...

Related Blogs On Huffington Post:



Karin Badt: Cannes Buzz: Which Film Will Win?

All charismatic, powerful men ruthlessly destroy other people's lives as they cheer on "Vincere!"



Michael Giltz: Cannes 2009 Day Six Reviews: Football, Fascism, Death and Porn

It remains a quiet fest in the market and late at night but definitely exciting and vibrant when it comes to the new films screening in and out of Competition.



Michael Giltz: Cannes 2009 Exclusive: My Neighbor, My Killer Director Anne Aghion On Rwanda (Video)

Coming to Cannes is usually a no-brainer. But for film-maker Anne Aghion, accepting an invitation to bring her documentary My Neighbor, My Killer was a genuine risk.



Karin Badt: Cannes 2009: The Underside of the Philippines

What I want to show in my film is the abuse of power; the police are like god. They can butcher people. I don't expect people to like the film, but I want them to think about it after they go to bed.

More Blog Posts: « First Prev 1 2 3 4 5 Next Last »

More in Entertainment...

Johnny Depp As Mad Hatter, Helena Bonham...

Perez Hilton Called Will.i.am A "F*gg*t" Pre-Fight

Connor Cruise And Dad Tom Spend Fathers...

Jon & Kate Gosselin DIVORCE: Couple Confirms...



HuffPost Stories Surging Right Now

64

diggs

digg it

McCain Hits Obama On Iran Again, Joe Klein Tells Him "Be Quiet" (VIDEO)

16

diggs

digg it

Bruce Wilson: Defense Department-Certified Agency Newsletter Suggests Killing Democrats

39

diggs

digg it

World Of Warcraft FREAKOUT: Boy Films Brother Going Insane After Parents Cancel His Online Account (VIDEO)

31

diggs

digg it

Chris Weigant: Barney Frank Introduces Marijuana Legislation

Ads by Google

Last minute Film Festival

Big and small flats close to Palais Lux villas in

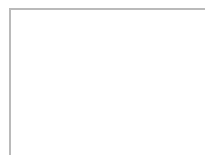
Cannes & Mougins

www.rental.qautio.com



Top Ten Things You Don't Want To Hear From Your Kids On Father's Day (VIDEO)

Letterman explained this week that Father's Day is the superbowl...



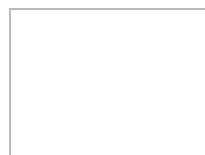
Elisabeth Hasselbeck Sued For Plagiarism Over G-Free Diet Book

BOSTON — Elisabeth Hasselbeck, a co-host of ABC's "The View," has been...



Sarkozy: Burqas Are 'Not Welcome' In France

PARIS — President Nicolas Sarkozy declared Monday that the Islamic burqa is not welcome in...



Here's To You, Dad: HuffPost Readers Share Their Father's Day Stories

On Thursday, we asked for your stories about your dads affected...

HUFFPOST'S BIG NEWS PAGES



Iran



Sports



Dick Cheney



Video



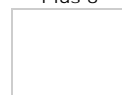
Jon & Kate Plus 8



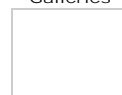
Photo Galleries



Somalia



In A Minute



WTF

[MORE BIG NEWS PAGES](#)



Tell your story to the world.
Get seen on Yahoo! News and Topix.

Sign Up Now!

Comments

1

Pending Comments

0

[FAQ: Comments & Moderation](#)

[FAQ: HuffPost Accounts](#)

Post a Comment

→  [Get the HuffPost iPhone App.](#)

Want to reply to a comment? Hint: Click "Reply" at the bottom of the comment; after being approved your comment will appear directly underneath the comment you replied to

View Comments: [Newest](#) [Expand](#)
[First](#) [All](#)

 [LMPE](#) [I'm a Fan of LMPE](#) [permalink](#)

Sounds pretty fun over there.

Someone ought to make a movie about a nun kicking ass.

[Reply](#) [Favorite](#) [Flag as abusive](#) [Posted 06:12 PM on 05/22/2009](#)

You must be [logged in](#) to reply to this comment. [Log in](#) or [Connect](#)

Ads by Google

Last minute Film Festival
Big and small flats close to Palais Lux villas in
Cannes & Mougins
www.rental.qautio.com



Tell your story to the world.
Get seen on Yahoo! News and Topix.

Sign Up Now!

[SEARCH](#)

[HOME](#) [POLITICS](#) [MEDIA](#) [BUSINESS](#) [ENTERTAINMENT](#) [LIVING](#) [GREEN](#) [STYLE](#) [WORLD](#) [CHICAGO](#) [COMEDY](#) [FUNDRACE](#)

[Advertise](#) | [Log In](#) | [Make HuffPost your Home Page](#) | [RSS](#) | [Jobs](#) | [FAQ: Comments & Moderation](#) | [FAQ: Huffpost Accounts](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Copyright © 2009 HuffingtonPost.com, Inc. | [Archive](#) | [User Agreement](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Comment Policy](#) | [About Us](#) | [Powered by Movable Type](#)