I movies...

'The Ninth Circle' at Fine Arts Is Set In Nazi Occupation

By Gilberto Perez - Gallinano

"The Ninth Circle," one of the five foreign film nominations for an Academy Award this year, (A pastag that has ignored masterpieces like "La Avventura," "La Notte" and "L'Amore Dorme" in America) among many others, can obviously be no claim to classic achievement. It is a Yugoslav film, set during the Nazi occupation of that country. In order to protect a Jewish girl, a Yugoslav family decides to rescue her to their own. As would be expected, the formal relationship develops into love. Eventually, she is captured by the Nazis and taken to a concentration camp. Despite the heavy loss of the story.

"The Ninth Circle" shares with other recent films from Communist countries a black-and-white view of human values, a repertory of camera tricks with a strong Welles influence and a series of war film cliches. With significant exceptions like Wajda's "ashes and Diamonds" and Karel Zeman's "The Fabulous World of Jules Verne, each masterpiece."

The film achieves its best moments in simple scenes: the Jewish girl out is broad daylight after a long reunion, playing gaily in the park. In one scene; a close-up of the girl with the man at a police car in the background, she is seen running away from her fate.

However, tatter points do not come across as well: all too often verbal explanations of the actions have to be inserted, reminicing on an unsatisfactory, dramatically inadequate dialogue. The story, which was too much closed in the first place, becomes even less believable by the director's failure to convey to people enough complicated aspects. People are either "good" or "bad," nothing in between; the husband and wife, who at first appear sheltered, the girl and her later decide to preserve her son, future rather than her safety, are "good" at the beginning, "bad" at the end, with no transition and no character growth.

Camera tricks are present, but none of them are original or lend any dramatic value. (How many times have I seen that shot of people running down stairs?) With the exception of the final scene, which is indeed touching and clearly deeply moving. the scenes in the concentration camp fail to be moving. A quick remembrance of Rossmann's "The Open City" made the failure even more dramatic. However, especially through Dusica Zegarac's sensitive portrayal of the Jewish girl, the film achieves instant human interest and dramatic value. It is unfortunate to see them in a film that is light in the backbone. However, however much extended, the film continues to be pleasant, with many laughs.

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