



FILM: **MIRACLE**

FDG RATING: 3.0 😐 😐 😊 🕐 🕐

Film Discussion Group (FDG) Scale is 1-5 (5 is best)

Bogdan George Apetri: *director/writer*
Ioana Bugari: actress *Cristina Tofan*
Emanuel Pârvu: actor, *Marius Preda*

DATE: October 23, 2022

DISCUSSION SUMMARY: **MIRACLE**

The 2021 Romanian film, *Miracle*, tells its story in two parts. Part one focuses on Cristina, a young woman, who we see in the dark, very early morning haze, hastily leaving the convent where she lives, wearing the attire of a novice rather than a nun, getting in a taxi, and directing the driver to take her to the hospital for an appointment. She asks the driver to stop along the way so she can change into civilian clothes which causes us to dread what might happen to her as the male taxi driver watches from a distance. She returns to the taxi and the drive continues. She meets with an OBGYN doctor but does not keep the follow up meeting which we assume would be for an abortion. Several hours later she climbs in a taxi to return to the convent, and asks the driver to stop along the way so she can change out of her civilian clothes. This driver sexually assaults her violently, which caused several of our discussion participants to stop watching the film.

Part two focuses on Marius, the officer investigating the assault. Cristina lies comatose in a hospital bed. The investigation centers on the crime but the film-maker simultaneously investigates religious hypocrisy and post Communist Romanian society/nostalgia for the Communist era, as revealed through the dialog of various characters. Faith certainly didn't save Christina,

Religious references crowd the film: Christina died like a sacrificial lamb, her name an obvious reference to Christ, the agnostic side is seen as the inspector dismisses his assistant's faith driven statements, the fervently religious nuns lied to protect the girl, or to protect the reputation of their convent.

Marius is married but appears to be the father of Cristina's unborn child. He is obsessed with proving the taxi driver's guilt and plants evidence to implicate him. The film splits into two alternative actions on the part of Marius. In one he violently kills the taxi driver. But then he sees a vision of Cristina, reflected in the water, which compels him to take the driver into custody rather than act out his violent impulse, a sharp contrast to the taxi driver's impulsive behavior.

One mysterious scene is in the hospital when Cristina weakly whispers something in Marius' ear. Possibly she expressed her love to Marius and said he was the father of her baby, or she blamed him for deceiving her and his wife, or she says she forgives him, or she says she forgives the taxi driver.

We also questioned the title. What was the "miracle"? In the final scene a tear rolls down her cheek which again has religious reference.

The film was murky and disturbing. One person called it a horror movie. On the positive side, it was provocative resulting in one of our most interesting discussions. Those of us who braved the violence and watched the entire film are still trying to make sense of it.

It seems that Romanian films tend to depict a country where corruption and unhappiness are the norm. Our appreciation of *Miracle* was also questionable resulting in an ambivalent 3 for its score on our scale of 1 to 5. (5 is the best.)



See you at the movies!

Adriane Dedic, adedic@pacbell.net
www.filmdiscussiongroup.com