



FILM: **SIGHT**

FDG RATING: 3.3 😊😊😊○○

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

Andrew: *director, co-writer*  
Terry Chen: *actor, Dr. Ming Wang*  
Greg Kinnear: *actor, D. Misha Bartnovsky*  
Mia SwamNathan: *actress, Kajal*

DATE: October 20, 2024

## DISCUSSION SUMMARY: **SIGHT**

Sight is a 2023 American biographical drama about Ming Wang, a Chinese immigrant who overcame huge challenges to be able to study medicine in the United States and then become a ground breaking, renowned eye surgeon. It is based on his 2016 autobiography From Darkness to Sight.

It's an extremely emotional, poignant film that plays out in two timelines. One is the present as Wang attempts to restore vision to a young orphan girl from India, named Kajal, who the nuns have brought to him hoping he can restore some of her vision. Her eyes had been burned with acid when she was a child because, as beggars, her mom knew they would get more when they begged if her child was blind. We see the emotional pain Wang experiences when, against all odds, he attempts to restore her vision but he fails because they are so completely damaged.

The other timeline is the past as we watch Wang as a child. His parents were physicians in China, and we saw how dedicated they were to ensure Wang received a good education and would be able to pursue his goal to study medicine, although they faced horrible adversity during the uprisings of the Cultural Revolution launched by Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong during his last decade in power (1966–1976). It was heartbreaking to see Wang's childhood love, Lili, who is grabbed from his side and taken away while the revolutionaries are beating him. We never know what happens to her but can only imagine the worst. Wang, who had promised to always protect her, never gets over the loss of his first love.

We agreed the acting was excellent including the young actress who plays Kajal. We also liked Greg Kineer's performance as Wang's close friend and lab partner, Dr. Misha Bartnovsky. And it was uplifting to see a Chinese immigrant who overcame so many challenges to become a brilliant eye surgeon and contribute enormously to medical research. The Cultural Revolution closed schools, limiting and disrupting his education so Wang's parents pressured him to leave China. He applied himself to his studies, earning top spots in universities like MIT and Harvard before creating his own practice treating eye ailments in Nashville, Tennessee. After his unsuccessful surgery on Kajal, he was obsessed with researching how to restore sight to severely damaged eyes and realized that amniotic fluid can prevent tissue from scarring. This led to his joint discovery with Bartnovsky, eventually creating a contact lens to minimize eye tissue from scarring so that it was possible to perform successful eye surgeries that were previously considered impossible.

Kajal was endearing. Even though she remained blind, other children with disabilities would gather around her and she would make them feel good about themselves and give them hope.

One discussion participant noted that the film had the potential to be a dry documentary but was quite the opposite. A nice touch was seeing the real patients at the end of the film.

Inspiring, enlightening, uplifting, but not cinematically dazzling, Sight saw a heartwarming score of 3.3 on our scale of 1 to 5. (5 is the best.)



See you at the movies!  
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