



FILM: **THE RIDER**

FDG RATING: 4.0

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

Chloé Zhao: *director*

Brady Jandreau: actor, Brady Blackburn

Tim Jandreau: actor, Wayne Blackburn

Lilly Jandreau: actress, Lilly Blackburn

DATE: June 10, 2018

DISCUSSION SUMMARY: **THE RIDER**

Based on the true story of a rising star rodeo rider, Brady Jandreau, the film provides an honest, emotional look at how he faces life's challenges after suffering brain damage from an accident at a bronc riding competition, hindering motor functions in his right hand and leaving him prone to seizures. Doctors told him he can no longer ride, or else his seizures will get worse. Brady lives in financial poverty with his father Tim, who wastes their money away on drinking and gambling, and his younger sister Lilly, who has autism. What makes the film especially honest is that Brady, his dad Tim, and sister Lily, play their own characters even though they have no acting experience.

We see the tender side of this rugged rodeo star in his relationship with his sister and as he regularly visits his friend, Lane, who lives in a care facility after suffering severe brain damage from a similar bull-riding accident. And again, as he uses gentle guidance to break horses, an exceptional skill that allows him to make a small living.

The film is filled with sadness. One participant reviewer, felt sorry for everyone and every animal in the film noting that everyone was struggling and had a sad life. For this reviewer, the story was not interesting. Others disagreed, appreciating the way Brady stood up for his sister. And Lilly's endearing personality was a bright star in the film.

Powerful emotional themes rooted the film: Accepting what you are and the hand you are dealt, the culture of macho-ism, and the ability to find another purpose in life. Almost all resident reviewers gave the film consistently high marks on our scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the best.) The Rider raced ahead of our other 3 discussion films for June with a solid 4.0



See you at the movies!

Adriane Dedic, adedic@pacbell.net

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