



FILM: **THE SOUVENIR part2**

FDG RATING: 3.0 ☹️ 😐 😊 ○ ○

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

Joanna Hogg: *director/writer*  
Honore Swinton: *actress, Julie*  
Tilda Swinton: *actress, Julie's mother*

DATE: May 22, 2022

DISCUSSION SUMMARY: **THE SOUVENIR part2**

The Souvenir part 2 continues Joanna Hogg's semi-autobiographical story about her relationship with an older, manipulative man when she was a student at film school in 1980s London. Anthony dies from a heroin overdose so in part 2, Julie, (Honore Swinton, Tilda Swinton's daughter) dramatizes the story of their tragic relationship in her graduation film.

What we liked about the film was insight into the process of movie making in film school with Julie's class mates each collaborating in their area of study such as costume, cinematography, editing, etc. She also shows the petty rivalry and squabbles as they support each other in the project but complain about Julie's haphazard approach which is exactly what we experienced watching the film. There is no sense of continuity. The fragmented staged scenes are artistic but no one knows what to expect next, contrary to the normal process of film making which follows at least an outlined structure. Evidently Hogg does not write dialog and ab libs everything. Usually around the 4<sup>th</sup> take, something sticks. She wants spontaneity. In the film, we see her professors honestly tell her that her films make no sense.

One discussion participant said it was like watching the existential fragmentation of being 30. Another commented that it was an observation of someone processing grief. And another was completely bored, unable to become emotionally involved with the main character.

It probably helps to see The Souvenir part 1 first, but since part 2 dramatizes their relationship, viewers get the gist of the story. (As summarized by one published film reviewer: A shy but ambitious film student begins to find her voice as an artist while navigating a turbulent courtship with a charismatic but untrustworthy older man She defies her protective mother and concerned friends as she slips deeper and deeper into an intense, emotionally fraught relationship that comes dangerously close to destroying her dreams.)

It's interesting that Julie uses her own furniture and clothing to dress up her film blending reality with staged dramatization and theatrical fantasy.

The acting was good and a treat to see Tilda Swinton as Julie's mother.

We gain insight into Julie's very unconventional approach to film making, and although some discussion participants enjoyed the inventive realness, others felt detached and a bit confused by the mixing of present with staging the past which merges into the present.

A single enthusiastic high score of 5 was whittled away by a bottom score of 1 with other mediocre ratings leaving a not very memorable 3.0 on our scale of 1 to 5. (5 is the best.)



See you at the movies!

Adriane Dedic, [adedic@pacbell.net](mailto:adedic@pacbell.net)  
[www.filmdiscussiongroup.com](http://www.filmdiscussiongroup.com)