

Member and Guest feedback for *Happyend*

I thought the actors were well cast and enjoyed the film more than I expected.

This warning about a dystopian Japanese future fell on deaf ears in my case. Obviously, the makers of this film were kicking against this ultra conformist society but the disaffected self-pitying and entitled youth grated and had little to redeem themselves. Way too long, it seemed to drone on without end. Apart from the long-established Korean minority, I was unaware of the number of non-Japanese (ethnically speaking) and the portable scanning machine was an interesting feature. Potentially full of authoritarian risks, I couldn't help thinking we could do with some of those right here right now.

A coming-of-age high school drama set in a not too dystopian and all too plausible future. The two best friends both knew their intense friendship was in its final stages and both battling their own problems in the backdrop of an ever divided and authoritarian society. Really enjoyed this one.

The film was like watching a reel of my high school days regarding friendships, the breaking of rules, the silly and unjust and unreasoned way schools can be dictated to run by 'educators' who care more about their ego than students. I think the script might lend itself better in book format as the watch, even with all of the many themes that came up, didn't quite work for me as I found myself simply wanting the film to end. It never quite 'ignited' but perhaps that was to mimic how most traditional schooling really doesn't ignite much story line - the same hum drum day in day out of doing what a teacher says to do and how much of a bubble we are contained within ...unless....I appreciated the parts about belonging to a society and being at the same time shunned for not being 'from that place'. It also highlighted how context can matter regarding the risks a person is willing to take on solidarity. Would we be friends with those we hung out with at school if we met them in later life? The surveillance. All these themes play out in adulthood too. In the end life continues post-graduation and perhaps as we go our separate ways and choose pathways often based on privilege and/or a perceived talent for something, we can look back and be happy for the friendships, the sparks of revolution, the humour and silliness of it all. And simply move on, having survived!

Interesting insight with dramatic urban settings. Good to see students listened to after high spirited pranks - a brighter future perhaps?

For me it lacked pace and depth. It felt a gentle coming of age film of high school rebellion and science fiction. Perfect Days is one of my all-time favourite films, so maybe it had too much to live up to in our household!

Very disappointing. Reviews were very good but their comparison with It was way off the mark.

Apart from the monolithic car 'sculpture' I found this film rather slow and predictable. Britain is having more facial recognition cameras, so are we likely to have more teenage rebellions? Interesting to see the differences and the similarities between English and Japanese cultures, architecture etc.

Another fascinating insight into Japanese culture. Most of the students conventional. Girls' skirts to their knees. Parents apologising for their children. On the one hand the school was very traditional but yet allowed the students to play their music on site. Attitudes to non-citizens interesting and the number of students who were not citizens surprised me. Softly softly

policing. The pace was slow but that has been true of all the Japanese films shown and the sociological observations kept me interested.

Loved the energy and craziness of youth meeting the world of conformity and control. Great performances from the young people and some very funny moments along the way.

Rather slow and I didn't think that there was a very clear or interesting message.

I give it an OK but maybe halfway to a Good. Lindsay Anderson's If covered this territory much better, I feel. The Japanese school wasn't anything like as brutal, authoritarian and repressive as the If school. In fact, these kids were consulted and given lots of licence to challenge the system. I got quite bored and restless with this film. No narrative tension and no real ending. The plot just petered out along with my patience. However, the racial purity theme did resonate with me. If Reform gets elected this kind of surveillance could become normative in the UK.

A quirky and highly enjoyable film even if it did drag in places, the plot stretched credulity at times and the 'social earthquake' promised at the start didn't exactly materialise. In fact, the backdrop of national political unrest seemed superficial and superfluous to an otherwise jeopardy-lite coming-of-age story. Still, I enjoyed spending time in the company of these characters. Great choice again.

I enjoyed this film and found it quite refreshingly original. It did become a little repetitive but it maintained the social comment and humour very well to the end. Loved the Principal's car!

An unusual and interesting film but I found it a bit disjointed and quite slow. The scenes about the head teacher's car were good and there were some amusing moments but it didn't quite hit the spot for me.

A bit slow and needed an edit it was far too long. Good acting and interesting topic but editing would have given it more impact.

Hard to get interested in a Japanese coming of age movie. Loved the car on end images - cool.

Intensely interesting and enjoyable despite the minimal plot.

Sadly, it did not live up to my expectation being a film I was very keen to see. Very poignant depiction of how totalitarianism can and is so close to us all. Same old story could have done with tighter editing.

Positive- fascinating to see young people in the context of an affluent hyper- regulated hierarchical culture of Japan - the way the film parodied this traditional male power dynamic - was as enjoyable as it was chilling but the incessant racial bigotry was uncomfortable and unrelenting only mitigated by the complex loyalties of the friends. I liked the music even though it's not my normal taste. Negative - overlong not really driven by a plausible story. I disengaged at one point partly due to its repetitive nature. This was an apprentice piece I feel so interesting to see a maturer output.

The cause of the disciplinary issue - car upended by weedy students- was implausible, none of the plot lines were developed and no matter what the students did they all graduated. If I hadn't been sat in the middle of a row I'd have walked out well before the end.

Unfortunately, I didn't enjoy this film.

Oh, the bittersweet last term at school. Enjoying friendships soon to finish as the classmates disappear to university, college, work or no work, or go abroad. The 'Highschoolers' think they are invincible and that they know everything in this last period before real life will intervene. A slow story where the background of adult life - earthquakes, the police, surveillance and of course racism (especially against Koreans) - keeps poking in without disrupting the Highschoolers' lives too badly. An enjoyable film if rather too long and slow.

We felt it had lots of interesting strands and enjoyed the way that serious topics were also leavened with humour.

A very well shot and well-acted film which dealt with many themes including friendship. I felt the director achieved a sharp contrast between the 'safe' (i.e. familiar) environment of the school and the world outside that these youngsters were about to be thrust into. Some very humorous moments, in particular the headmaster's expression when his beloved orange car was set on end. The tension when earthquake warnings sounded reminded us that this was set in a future Tokyo where the 'big one' (earthquake) was imminent. It also addressed racism in Japan which is very much a societal problem. I was not aware of the director using any of his father (Ryuichi Sakamoto's) music in the film which would have been a nice touch.

It is an interesting debut and it is always good to get an insight into how other societies look. However, the characterization was weak, the dystopian angle was weak and above all it was just dull.

Tedious and simplistic film.

I was a bit confused when seeing the film but afterwards I understood what it was all about. It is a brilliant piece of satire - particularly of the headmaster - and I was struck by the Japanese sense of humour in this film. I had previously thought that the Japanese sense of humour was slapstick! It was well made.