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'Ayla, The Daughter of War,' a touching film from Turkey

By Sophie Braccini



Photo provided

damages of war is heightened as they empathize with the small victim. The scenario would seem too sentimental if it was not based on a true story.

In an interview published in the Turkish media Anadolu Agency, director Can Ulkay explained how shocked he has always been by the fact that children are the first victims of wars. This film, even if it tells a story that happened 60 years ago, was made to draw attention to the suffering of the young victims. Ulkay added that these atrocities continue today and his film is representative of present day struggles. Today in the world there are 25 million child victims of war who are injured, orphaned, displaced.

The movie also depicts how human beings can commit the worst inhuman acts and can also be transcended by totally unselfish love. This grace can touch two people of different ages, religions, ethnicity; it does not require being of the same blood to cherish and want to save a child.

There are some very interesting historic aspects to the film as well. Not many may remember the important Turkish engagement alongside the Americans during the Korean War. The depiction of certain characters may appear somewhat simplified and overly positive at times, or somewhat naive, but the movie reaches its target and it is unlikely that spectators will leave the theater without having shed tears at some point in the movie. The interpretation of the child actress Kim Seol is extremely convincing and touching.

"Ayla" received many international awards and was the 2017 Turkish selection to the Oscar. It is brought to the Orinda Theatre by the International Film Showcase and will be shown for at least one full week starting Nov. 8. For more information, visit orindamovies.com

Based on a true story, "Ayla, The Daughter of War" presents the surprising relationship forged between a Turkish soldier and a small Korean orphan during the Korean War in 1950. As the story develops, the relationship between the two heroes deepens to become a real father-daughter bond. But the war and the many difficulties Sargeant Saleyman is confronted with force him to leave Ayla behind when he has to return to Turkey. Will they ever find each other again?

"Ayla" is first and foremost a movie about love, telling the story about a father and daughter. In the middle of an atrocious war (Are there wars that are not so?) the miracle of love can still happen. A soldier is touched by the absolute distress of a child and decides to give her his heart. The movie shows with simplicity and authenticity how an entire group of soldiers mobilizes to save and raise a child with whom they share neither language nor culture. Their consciousness of the

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