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Reviews

Critic's Choice



Guest Critic: Chris Evans

Chris Evans has been a film journalist, editor and reviewer for ten years, writing for numerous titles, including The Independent newspaper and Screen International. His film preference is for smaller indie and arthouse fare, rather than Hollywood blockbusters, with the occasional exception of films such as Michael Mann's 'Heat'. He is half-way through writing his first script, but progress on this has been slow since becoming a father.

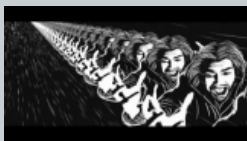


My Favorite Hitler Youth

'You could never have resisted becoming a member of the Hitler Youth without some dire consequences,' says the elderly Fred Curtis rather starkly, in reference to his early life in Germany as a young boy called Friedrich Karl Nischwitz. He is one of the founding fathers of the computer hard drive and talks openly about the ritual beatings he received as part of the Hitler Youth before escaping to live in the US and eventually fight against the Germans in the Second World War.

This is an amazing and troubling story, and at its most poignant when Curtis talks about the lack of love and recognition from his emotionally distant father.

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Fission

Although four years old, this multi award-winning short from Taiwanese artist Kun-I Chang still compares favourably with other modern graphic design works. Shot using real actors and images projected on to a green screen, the film conveys the life of the chief protagonist through moving graffiti on a poster in a train station. The sense of desperation to break free from the confines of his environment is conveyed through lead actor Jimil Shanmasdin's actions as he confronts the camera with expressions of anger or desperation while passing from one colourful scene to the next. A masterful and visually stunning work.

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The Ghost Of Kirkton Fell

Although simple in style and execution, this horror ghost story has a wonderful charm to it and is shot in a way that makes you feel genuinely spooked. It follows a young man who has cheated on his wife driving along country road late at night, as a young girl narrates the story of a 15th century abbot who sold his soul to the devil and was left for dead on the road by his fellow monks. What follows is a spooky encounter between the two men that will remind you of the ghost stories you used to hear as a youngster.

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Perrington Stud

An offbeat and imaginative comedy that tells a dark and sinister tale of revenge involving two infamous players of an unusual card game called Perrington Stud. Set in the 19th century using real life images of JM Barrie and William Young Darling, the story stems from one particularly gripping game between



the upstanding Battenberg kid and the sinister Drop Down Davey. The Kid loses, but believes Davy cheated, and so follows him across the globe before demanding a re-match. The clever manipulation of images, amusing dialogue and spot on narration from cockney John Benfield make this a must see.

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