

SIFF reviews: Falling, 2 Days in Paris, Hula Girls

 devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20070613-01

June 13, 2007



Raymond Chen

Another week, another batch of SIFF movie reviews. *Falling*: High school friends reunite at a teacher's funeral. And then go on a road trip, except they give up on their destination and start wandering around. A bunch of stuff happens, none of which seems to make much sense. Like the twelve-year-old Daphne in the film, I felt dragged along on a boring trip against my will. I give it a 0 out of 5. This movie failed even on the linguistic front, since the characters speak Viennese-accented German, which is different enough from Standard German that my ability to follow along was severely impeded. *2 Days in Paris*: Marion takes her American boyfriend Jack to Paris. He meets her parents (who don't speak English) and her ex-boyfriends (of which there appears to be an endless stream) and brings a decidedly American attitude to the whole affair. The insane family conversations that pass for normalcy are captured perfectly, and watching Jack constantly being shut out of conversations due his inability to speak French only serves to reinforce my phobia of traveling to a country without speaking the language. Hilarious, awkward, touching, it fires on all cylinders. I give it a 4½ out of 5. *Hula Girls*: The heartwarming story of a dying coal mining town which reinvents itself as a Hawaiian spa resort. The townsfolk are hostile to the idea, and the Tokyo dancer recruited to train the hula girls thinks the plan is hopeless. The story, based on the real Joban Hawaiian Center (now known as Spa Resort Hawaiians), is predictable and emotionally manipulative, but the ride is enjoyable nonetheless. I was particularly impressed by the dance instructor. Her sense of style always screams "big city", but she overcomes her "I can't believe I'm stuck in this podunk town" and begins to really care for her charges. I give it a 4 out of 5.

Legend:

- ⌘ Would pay money to see again by myself.

- ⌘ Would see again if it were free or if seeing it with others.

- ⌘ Would recommend to others.

- ⌘ Okay, but wouldn't recommend to someone not already interested.

4 Would advise against.

5 Waste of my time.

Note: The rating scheme has been revised since this article was originally posted.



Raymond Chen

Follow