Michael Pfaff-Shalmiyev

Prof. Elisabeth Miossec- Backer

WR323

12 March 2014

Film Review: *Red Without Blue* (2007), Acting vs. Living

Growing up as twins must be an intensifier to already emotional times. Piecing together ones identity whilst so tied to another poses challenges and benefits hard for the non-twin to comprehend. Mark and Alex in *Red Without Blue* are so adoring of each other at a young age. Their love for each other really comes through in the family’s home movies. Unencumbered by societies norms as we all are to some degree as very little ones they were truly alive. Living each day with no expectations, only their zest for life (sorry) and admiration for their family. Mark and Alex’s parent Jenny and Scott provided a seemingly healthy wholesome environment for them to enjoy childhood.

At some point growing up we come to a place where we have to reconcile our burgeoning self with the rest of the world. For some this point comes earlier than others. May of us have to start learning to act if who we are doesn’t mesh with our surroundings. But brave souls or those living in a safer place may not take this route. Mark and Alex may have found strength in each other for they seem to stay true to their discoveries. But living is sometimes the hard way. Adolesence for the twins proved the biggest hurdle of their lives. With one parent checked out and one at odds with their identities as gay and transgendered, Mark and Alex found themselves searching for solace in all the wrong places. In the meantime, they turned away from each other. Their lives look dangerous turns.

Jenny and Scott, by default, had to become the actors. Or was it that *they* were the actors all along. Jenny, lost in her religious beliefs, Scott pretending to hold down a job, they both acted the perfect family, whilst abandoning their beloved to find themselves in the wilderness. They divorce.

I took Oliver and Clair, formerly Mark and Alex, to show their parents what unconditional love looks like. In the film, Scott comes around more easily, doing whatever soul searching he needed off camera. We see a burgeoning father daughter relationship with Clair that finally melts the stoic Scott. Jenny on the other hand is still coming around on camera. Now living with a woman partner, Jenny has not yet come to terms with who she and her children are, but at some point at least, acknowledges they are her children, and begins to heal.

Clair and (now) Mark may not have taken the smoothest roads to get to where they are now but taking the paths they were given, having lived through what they did rather than act, they bless all of us with a more honest and beautiful world.