

by Kimberly_Gadette

Movie Review of "BORAT"

Those who have seen previews of "Borat" are calling this film a new kind of guerilla comedy. But honestly, it's just one more Jewish comedian from England (Sacha Baron Cohen) playing an anti-Semitic, Gypsy-loathing reporter from Kazakhstan who's determined to drive across the U.S. in an ice cream truck in order to meet and marry the perfect virgin, namely one Pamela Anderson. You know, the usual.

A mix of road comedy meets fish-out-of-water meets Candid Camera, this may well be the first mockumentary/mainstream release that combines all three of these genres in one brilliant satire. Directed by Larry Charles (one of the creative forces behind "Curb Your Enthusiasm," "Entourage," "Seinfeld" and "Mad About You"), it's stunning how the movie gets away with the concept of fooling all the unsuspecting interviewees all the time. Even during a rodeo scene in Salem, Virginia, a surprised horse falls down – whether the animal hits the ground from shock or laughter, one can't tell. (Hopefully Baron Cohen as Borat will be able to snag the horse for a follow-up interview in the sequel?)

Given that "Curb Your Enthusiasm" broke new boundaries in extemporaneous scenes, using veteran comedians to adlib the actual dialogue, it makes sense that Larry Charles is now at the helm of a similar freeflowing form as translated to a feature. The difference here is that aside from skinny Sacha Cohen in an ill-fitting, gray suit and his hefty producer/sidekick Azamat (Ken Davitian), no one is acting.

And no one is safe from the film's examination of American hypocrisy, ultra-nationalism, racism and anti-Semitism, all painted in broad strokes of slapstick. For example, upon Borat's visit to a dinner party at a Southern mansion located on Secession Drive, the genteel hostess maintains her composure even after Borat presents his bowel movement to her. It's one thing to be surprised by a memento from the mensroom – but when the hostess is then surprised by Borat's black hooker at the door, it's too much. He and his friend are immediately thrown out.

The four screenwriters had to constantly revise their loose outline after the outrageous contributions from the real interviewees. Beer-gulping frat boys, a car salesman, a dialogue and humor coach, a mortgage brokers' convention, New York subway riders during rush hour -â€“ from his Kazakhstan to our America, the world is Borat's oyster.

Sacha Cohen ("Talladega Nights") has received much attention and many nominations and awards from his starring role, actually roles, in the 2003 HBO series, "Da Ali G Show," portraying black rapper Ali G, Borat and Bruno, a gay Austrian fashion designer. Though Borat's Kazakhstan is halfway around the globe, in this performance of a naïve, loveable, Chaplin-esque clown, Sacha Cohen has emphatically stamped his Borat on the map.

And now, an invitation from Borat himself: â€œI hope you Americans see my movie, but please be warn that since it contain foul cursings, needless violence and a close-up of a manâ€™s bishkek, it have been given most strict certificate in Kazakhstan, meaning no one under age of 3 will be able to see it."

Lowbrow comedy has just reached new heights.

Grading this movie on the curve of the Deschutes River: B-plus

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Production Credits: "Borat" aka "Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan" Directed by Larry Charles Screenplay by Sacha Baron Cohen & Anthony Hines & Peter Baynham & Dan Mazer Story by Sacha Baron Cohen & Peter Baynham & Anthony Hines & Todd Phillips Cast: Sacha Baron Cohen, Pamela Anderson, Ken Davitian Rated: R Running Time: 84 minutes Grade: B-plus

The Screen Savor: â€“Kazakhstan'd Up, Fall Down Komedyaâ€™ by Kimberly_Gadette