

The Past Le Passé

France/Italy/Iran 2013

Directed by
Asghar Farhadi

Writing credits
Asghar Farhadi

Cinematography
Mahmoud Kalari

Music
Eugueni Galperine
Youli Galperine

130 mins

Cast
Bérénice Bejo
Marie Brisson

Ali Mosaffa
Ahmad

Tahar Rahim
Samir

Pauline Burlet
Lucie

Confirms Farhadi's artistic preeminence in making films that are simultaneously intimate psychological portraits of interpersonal conflict and detailed, nerve-wracking mysteries.

James Kendrick, Q Network Film Desk

Asghar Farhadi's follow up to the international hit *A Separation* is another dramatically rich, layered and engrossing film about the ties that bind. It is about a kind of love that is less often shown in the movies. The long-established kind, when it isn't passion and desire holding people together but entangled histories and circumstances. Its French setting means that there isn't the extra layer of complication that Iranian social mores provided in *A Separation*, but it is complicated enough. With its sympathies forever shifting among its characters, the film asks whether the truth is ever even objectively knowable, let alone whether honesty is always the best policy. And the drama plays out against a detailed and textured backdrop of domestic family life: the school run; a father cutting his son's fingernails in the bath. The intensity of Farhadi's focus means that *The Past* would seem to be about minutiae. But it is crucially important minutiae, to the point where the dramatic climax hinges on the most fractional twitch of a muscle.

Laurence Phelan, The Independent

Farhadi reveals himself (once again) as both a great humanist and a dab hand at building characters whose complex psychological motivations are always bracingly, harrowingly credible. This follow-up to awards darling, *A Separation*, again mines the dramatic moments between moments, the sticky emotional sinews that simply won't tear when two people have apparently parted ways. He comprehends and pre-empt the disparity between what people say and what they really mean, how the act of conversing with a loved one (or an ex-loved one) can become a minefield of semantic second-guessing, and how human relations are composed of perhaps little more than people relaying banal information between one another. Technically, it's very straight and tight, with only a handful of stylistic flourishes including an extremely moving long final shot. *The Past* is more muted and Bergmanesque than *A Separation* and less playfully academic than his 2009 film, *About Elly*. The deep browns and beiges of the colour scheme perfectly convey the muddiness of the situation, while the pacing gets more frantic as matters accordion out in all directions. The title offers a (thuddingly?) blunt encapsulation of the film's basic theme: that however hard you try to expunge it, the past will remain with you always and forever.

David Jenkins, Little White Lies

Our next screening...

A Touch of Sin

Tue 17 Mar 2015 8:00pm

Dir: Zhang-Ke Jia

Four independent stories about corruption & despair. A scathing reflection on modern China.



Voting for *Wake in Fright*: A-19 B-21 C-14 D-2 E-3 Attendance: 67 Rating: 71.6%