

Four Daughters – Members and Guest Feedback

The most powerfully felt film I have ever seen. The confusion of the women's position in society came across so well. The format was perfect for the story - I hope and assume there was psychological support for all players behind the scenes.

A very moving and powerful film which really opened up how young women and men become radicalised. The actors often seemed to be counselling the daughters and mother but also opened up the discussion on how radicalisation happens. Class and education are clearly factors as the daughters were poorly educated until they were taken away for their safety. It really was thought provoking and very sensitively filmed with excellent acting and direction.

One of the most important, moving, informative films I have ever seen. Many thanks to whoever chose it.

An excellent film using such a creative form to explore family dynamics and lasting anguish.

Another look at the travails of the Third (or is it Second) World as the director and her actresses/actress-protagonists work out the traumas of living in a repressive society as well as trying to co-exist with the pitfalls of jihadism. Too long and quite frankly, I was not engaged with the characters' problems. Once again, I wonder if anyone in Tunisia actually watched this or was this made for an audience in France or middle-class liberals in Europe? The use of the two youngest daughters to act themselves and the mother to partially act herself was original, and it gave me food for thought in the following week, hence a very generous 3. Let us watch and draw the obvious conclusions.

The subject matter of the film was of great interest but I did not feel that it offered much insight into the defection of the two elder daughters. The progression of women's position in society - from freedom of dress to hijab depending on the regime was interesting background. Whilst the mother's violence may have come from her own experience of abuse it was never clear and surely alienated all the daughters. The implication was that the women were all vulnerable to abuse. I found the semi documentary format muddled and it was hard to empathise with any of the characters. Overall, slightly enlightening but an uneasy watch.

A moving and engaging film, exploring the cycles of trauma and violence which can lead young women down such dark paths. Funny and beautiful when it shouldn't be. Amazing use of colour and of its mixed cast.

This was a very tough watch. The "film within a film" idea was very effective and immersed you in a completely different way of life being experienced by these women and girls in another part of the world. The portrait of the struggles and difficulties they had was made very clear. It made me count my blessings to say the least.

This was a thought-provoking and harrowing tale. It was an interesting idea to use actors to play the missing daughters and Olfa, when she found it too painful to continue to tell her story. She was a strong character who did not have much time for the men in her life!

I never read anything about the films beforehand, so the subject or treatment will come as a surprise. I enjoyed the treatment of the film as a semi-documentary. Life is so tough for all girls in these patriarchal societies and yet they had an indomitable spirit. It's a pity that the mother

didn't teach her daughters the boxing skills that she had, it might have saved them from the boyfriend. She couldn't stop the headstrong girls becoming radicalised and so it goes on.

It was harrowing and claustrophobic and I felt exhausted by the end. Excellent acting and a fascinating story told convincingly.

A brave and remarkably ambitious project which needed a few days of cogitation to achieve its full realisation for me. The tragic story of generations passing on their prejudices was strongly told, if occasionally confusingly. What sort of life will the little girl have growing up in prison in Libya?

This was a hard slog to get through and at times I found myself thinking that a "short film" had never been so long, yet (especially after thinking about it afterwards) I was very moved by this tragic story of two daughters in a close knit family being lost to Islamic State and their continuing imprisonment in Libya, including hearing about the lost grand-child. It was impressive that the two younger daughters played themselves which added to the emotional impact. Perhaps inevitably I found myself also thinking about Shamima Begum and the two other girls from Bethnal Green who travelled to Syria in 2015 and wondered about how their families in the UK had coped with a similar loss.

The most telling moment in this film was the two young girls thanking social services for intervening and saving them from going the same way as their elder sisters. The combination of religious and social ritual, overseen by a domineering mother, leading to the two elder sisters seeing that their freedom lay with ISIS was very sad to watch and difficult to comprehend. Once I again thanked my lucky stars I was born in Britain in the late 20th century.

Engaging, thought provoking, upsetting and clever use of documentary style to tell the story.

Right up there with Anatomy of a Fall and Holdovers for us. This film was so riveting. Not only was the concept truly original with the idea of using some actors and some original people but they blended seamlessly together as a group so that often I felt that the actors WERE also the original sisters and that replacement Olfa, was her alter-ego. And the scripted lines for the actors and their non-scripted interventions felt absolutely real - as real as the interactions of the real people. So much so that I almost cannot see how the real sisters could have outplayed the actors playing them! I loved how this film was shot, that it cannot be categorised neatly, the tightness of the editing, what the film maker chose to leave in and take out, and above all, the charisma, character and joy that just oozed from Olfa, Eya and Tayssir - even whilst describing or acting out scenes of violence. How can these two young girls be so confident, articulate and just downright wonderful after going through what they have been through? How can they and their mother still find things to laugh about together? Despite the tragic circumstances of the two older siblings, these young sisters are full of hope and life. Miracles (and therapy!!) do happen.

The idea of having a mixture of actors and the "real" mother and sisters telling the story was good and I thought it worked well. I found the film quite depressing. What a waste of women's and girls' lives and how violent the family environment was. The final shot of the little girl in prison with her mother was so sad.

I enjoyed this brave and powerful film. Loved the unusual style of narrating. It was thought provoking and raised many questions that are worthy of debate.

Definitely one of the best films of this season. Interesting and very effective storytelling.

A clever approach to tackle a difficult story. Raw emotion and trauma.

Really dreadful....I can't think of anything good about it...muddled, violent, neither a documentary nor a fictional piece, no insight into the lifestyle of Tunisians, unsympathetic characters. We both hated it!

A very disturbing and frightening film which left me unsettled for a long time. The format was interesting and all the characters were well acted. It seemed that although the mother tried her best in her own way, the treatment of her daughters, similar to her own upbringing, was a key factor in the lives of her daughters and their radicalisation.

This was as much about filmmaking, as it was about misogyny, religion and politics!

A film about making a film? It could not make up its mind if it was a documentary or a drama. Sorry but not to my taste. Anyway, in my opinion it was all the mother's fault!

While the actors/characters came over well and very naturally, I found it rather bewildering and was unsure what to make of it.

I wasn't sure how the unusual format would work but work it most certainly did. A thought-provoking and powerful portrayal of generational trauma and misogyny.

I don't know if the portrayal of Tunisian mores is accurate but I found it hard to accept that the women needed to choose between covering themselves in black and behaving in a flirtatious manner. Too depressing.

I had seen this film before but it is well worth the second watch. The interplay between 'real' story and the recreation of it through the actors was compelling. I came away sad for the mother (good/bad). Just doing (desperately) what she knows and yet fears for her daughters. And uplifted that the younger daughters may get a chance to break the cycle, without having to rebel how the older sisters did.

I would have given this an Excellent but it was, like all films and documentaries these days, far too long. I felt it was an indulgence by the documentary maker who seemed to fall in love with his (Ed. her) subjects and lose perspective. Other than that, I was absorbed. I loved the family and those who were acting the other roles.

I found the film fascinating and such an insight into a very different way of life. It was cleverly constructed jumping from the various characters, some actors and some the real individuals. The story revealed itself slowly but surely, leading to, for me, an unexpected denouement. The real-life younger sisters were marvellous, so strong and yet sensitive - really admirable. The real mother was a much more ambivalent individual - both deeply loving and emotional yet also quite abusive and self-centred.

It was a compelling film. Even the most domestic scenes kept one's attention. The portrayal of life when all four were together was beautifully shown but the trouble with docudramas is that one is constantly worrying as to what is true and what is fiction. But I'm glad I saw it and thank you for including it in the programme.

I thought the beginning of the film was very engaging and it was an unusual idea to include the actors in discussions with the family. However, the later part of the film seemed quite repetitive and, for me, it skipped over some crucial issues about how/why the two older sisters joined ISIS.

I didn't know of the story beforehand. I found this real-life story harrowing. Man's – and for much of this case a mother's –appalling inhumanity to their loved ones was depressing in the extreme. Yes, I could follow a line through the mother's life that led to her decisions but the pride she took in beating her daughters was stomach-churning. The men portrayed in the film were as bad or worse but we didn't see their inner workings in the same way. I thought the device of using two young actors to play the two "missing" daughters worked well, I was less convinced by the actress playing the mother. The film was interesting and revealed a world I know next to nothing about. I won't pretend that I enjoyed it though!

Difficult to watch both due to the subject matter and because it needed concentration on the subtitles with so much dialogue and so little action. At times I found it tedious but livens up when it starts to deal with the older daughters being sucked in to extreme religious fervour and ultimately Jihad. Violence and intergenerational violence prevalent throughout which makes one despair for such countries.

I enjoyed its enmeshed, complicated family dynamics. It was quite hard at times separating out the real women from the actors but I found it all culturally and personally fascinating. The women were all so strong, all in such difficult circumstances. I did wish I'd read up more on it beforehand though and had understood better how much was documentary and how much acting.

Fantastic film. Informative, unexpectedly funny in parts and challenged my preconceptions. Great choice.

A good film, very informative and apt for our times. Structure was challenging initially but in the end, I decided not to worry about what was fiction and what was real/documentary. I was shocked by the violence that the mother used despite her explicit love and devotion to her daughters. An interesting insight into an area I have no experience of.

The first 10 minutes into the film, I wasn't sure about the format as the scenes were quite confusing. However, it did work and it left me speechless and exhausted. It definitely was one of those films that had to be made.

An interesting and important topic but I don't think that the mix of documentary and film really worked, it was difficult to engage properly with the characters and the full story remained unclear.

I deliberately went into this film blind and so was not sure where it was going until the last 20 minutes or so. The actress substitutions although a bit of a gimmick worked but they appeared to me to be more than just clones but also providing therapy. One of those plenty-to-think-about films.

By its nature this was a tough watch at times but it was well done and a highly original take on a powerful subject.

A very powerful and engaging film as well as rather disturbing/shocking. Who thought that seeking freedom and power from their strict maternal upbringing would result in joining Daesh.

The filming format involving actresses playing the roles of the older sisters intensified the drama and tragedy of the story. Amazing performances. It felt like being involved in a collective therapy session. Exhausting.