

PARASITE – David Stratton’s Introduction

PARASITE, S Korea, 2019, 132 min, Drama/thriller, MA for strong violence (Rights held by Madman). Dir: Joon-ho Bong. IMDb vote 8.6

Welcome to a screening of the latest film from Korea’s most celebrated director Bong Joon-ho, PARASITE, which won the Palm d’Or in Cannes in 2019 and also the lucrative Sydney Film Prize.

Bong’s CV is an impressive one which includes the crime thriller MEMORIES OF MURDER in 2003, the terrifying monster movie THE HOST in 2006 and the wonderfully weird SNOWPIERCER in 2013.

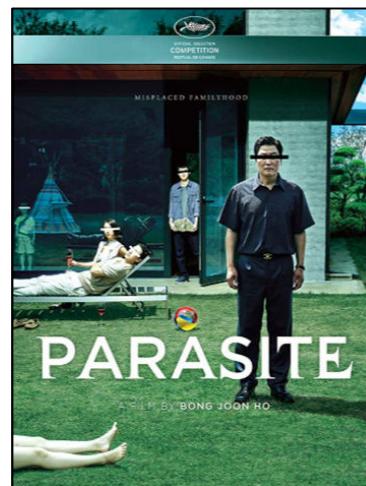
PARASITE sounds like a horror movie, but it isn’t – at least not in the usual sense of the word. Instead it is wily and a frequently bitter examination of class warfare, with a bit of bloodshed thrown in. The Song family – parents and two adult children, live in a shabby basement in the city. They are all unemployed, but as we are about to see they are extremely resourceful.

We also meet the Park family but in contrast, they are very wealthy and live in a grand mansion. When the two families connect there are plenty of surprises in store.

There is a lot going on in this very smart black comedy as Bong takes hilarious aim at, among other things, North Korea’s earnestly conformist TV newsreaders. He avoids the trap of making the wealthy and basically snobbish Parks too obnoxious, but he clearly sides with the Songs.

PARASITE combines humour, suspense and a bit of mayhem, and it is a subversive delight that despite its hefty 2 ¼ hour running time is never dull because Bong keeps shifting the goalposts so that just as you think you know where the film is heading, he changes tack and pulls another joker from the pack.

I hope you enjoy the work of this consummate artist. Here is PARASITE.



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