

Graves of the fireflies

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. . 24 July 2007 Graves of Fireflies The Isao Takahata's the Grave of the Fireflies, a Studio Ghibli production, is one of the greatest animated picture ever made. The Grave of the Fireflies is described to be

one of very powerful, moving, touching movie, an allegory of human failings and a quiet

but unflinching look at two children caught in the peripheral effects of a war. The movie

is considered to be the most painful and affecting movie ever likely to produce. Although

an animated, having simple actions and scenes yet full of the great beauty and innocence

that would not be possible otherwise, creating all the more contrast with the harsh and

painful realities experienced by the characters.

The story is based on a bestselling novel by Akiyuki Nosaka, a survivor of the

firebombing of Kobe in World War II. Nosaka battled starvation and lost his younger

sister to malnutrition. Haunted for years by the experience, driven by the guilt of his

sister's death, he wrote the book in hopes of silencing the ghosts surrounding him. The

story of picture revolves round a boy and his sister, named Seita and Setsuko, ages 14 and

4, orphaned when their mother is killed in the firebombing of Tokyo. Both children were

left to survive on their own in what remains of civilian life in Japan. Before American

troops begin to occupy Japan, the children flee their disheveled home and deceased

parents to make their bid for a new life. They travel to the home of a distant aunt, who

turns out to be distant in more ways than one. Increasingly frustrated, the

aunt coldly

discards the children. They took shelter in an abandoned bomb shelter in the countryside.

As the situation grows progressively worse in the war, things deteriorate proportionally

on the home front. Both children Seita and Setsuko do their best to survive in the Japanese

countryside, battling hunger, prejudice, and pride in their own personal battle. The

surrounding adults, the farmers and the doctors and the officers, are either unable or

unwilling to notice the orphaned two. The world itself seems to be collapsing around

them.

At first glance the movie could be seen as a metaphor for the entire country of

Japan during the war: fighting a losing battle, yet too stubbornly proud to admit defeat

or accept help. The movie is also in some ways uplifting in its portrayals of simple

beauty in the darkest of situations and the strength of the human spirit, but although it

never resorts to heavy-handed tragedy or melodrama, this tale of two children standing

up in the face of adversity and slowly falling victim to a host of human frailties-

suspicion, prejudice, and pride--is unsparing and deeply tragic from start to finish.

Above all, though, the enemy in this story is war--you never see a battle or an army,

but you can see the tragic effects of war on even the idyllic countryside far removed

from the front. Grave of the Fireflies puts a human face on the civilian

population of

Japan during the war--something not many movies have done, and none have done as

well. Moreover, it manages to do so in a painful and realistic, yet still understated,

manner. In fact it is almost too painful to watch, but equally difficult to take your eyes

off. All this, and it is animated--anyone who thinks animation can't tell a realistic story

with any impact has never seen this movie, and should be required to do so (Marshall,

para. 1-7).

Works Cited

Marshall, Makosuke. Grave of the Fireflies: Review. 19 August, 2003.

24 July, 2007.

<http://animeworld.com/reviews/graveofthefireflies.html>

<https://assignbuster.com/graves-of-the-fireflies-movie-review-samples/>