



Journal of Religion & Film

Volume 23
Issue 1 April 2019

Article 5

1-28-2019

Boni Bonita

William L. Blizek
University of Nebraska at Omaha, wblizek@unomaha.edu

Recommended Citation

Blizek, William L. (2019) "Boni Bonita," *Journal of Religion & Film*: Vol. 23 : Iss. 1 , Article 5.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/jrf/vol23/iss1/5>

This Slamdance Film Festival Review is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Religion & Film by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Omaha

Boni Bonita

Abstract

This is a film review of *Boni Bonita* (2019) directed by Daniel Barosa.

Author Notes

William Blizek is the Founding Editor of the Journal of Religion and Film, and is Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He is also the editor of the Continuum Companion to Religion and Film (2009).



Boni Bonita (2019), dir. Daniel Barosa

One of the things that religion offers us is an explanation of death; an explanation that helps us to deal with death, whether our own or that of someone we know. In this film a young girl, Beatriz, has recently lost her mother. Her immediate response to this sudden loss is to act badly, which gets her expelled from school. Given her expulsion, her father kicks her out of the house. Now she has neither her mother nor her father. But Beatriz does not come from a religious family; so the question becomes, if you are not a person of faith, how do you deal with death?

Beatriz finds herself attracted to Rogerio, the lead singer of a band. She manages to find out where he lives, attaches herself to the singer and starts an on again/off again relationship with Rogerio that lasts for many years. Early in the relationship, Beatriz is too young to understand her dependence on Rogerio, who is a self-centered *@%#*. But her relationship with Rogerio is what

gives her life meaning, the very meaning that allows her to deal with the death of her mother—with death itself. Since the relationship is both satisfying and toxic, the meaning of life that she finds in that relationship does not seem to provide the kind of meaning that would give her a healthy way to deal with death. The evidence for this is that at the end of the film we find out that Beatriz is getting married, but she returns to Rogerio to invite him to the wedding. She has moved on, but the attachment lives on. Beatriz also introduces Rogerio to her son, Miguel. Since Beatriz is not yet married, and Miguel is old enough to be Rogerio's son, Miguel might be a continuation of Beatriz's attachment to Rogerio. The movie does not answer this question for us.

This film asks us to consider what system of meaning will help us deal with the death of a parent, especially at an early age, when we do not have the guidance of a religious system of meaning. Whatever system of meaning that is, it also may help us deal with our own mortality. The film does not provide an answer to this question because each individual must select the system of meaning that works for himself or herself. Nor does the movie suggest that only a system of meaning provided by a traditional religious community will enable us to deal with death. And, the movie reminds us that death is the one thing that we all share in common.

Boni Bonita is a gentle movie that deals with a profound and emotional element in our lives—death. It is gentle because it does not lecture or preach to us, thereby making it possible for us to consider what meaning will help us to understand and respond appropriately to death.



Director Daniel Barosa, Bill Blizek, and Executive Producer Nikolas Maciel on the Red Carpet for *Boni Bonita*.
Photo by Monica Blizek.