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Leilani's Fortune

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Leilani's Fortune

Abstract

This is a film review of *Leilani's Fortune* (2024), directed by Loveleen Kaur.

Keywords

Witch

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Author Notes

William Blizek is the Founding Editor of the Journal of Religion and Film, and is Emeritus 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). Monica Blizek is a retired mental health professional.



Leilani's Fortune (2023), dir. Loveleen Kaur

This documentary film follows the fortune of Ayo Leilani's musical career. Leilani, known as the Witch Prophet, is a Canadian musician, song writer, and singer with a unique voice. She is a queer immigrant of Ethiopian-Eritrean background who has developed a committed fan following. Her success, however, comes at a high price. Since she does not have financial support from Canada's music industry, she has to do all of the work herself. This is exhausting and discouraging. At the end of the movie, we discover that the Witch Prophet has been awarded a significant grant that will enable her to hire help. She is now able to produce an album of her prophecies, entitled *The Gateway Experience*. In this album she is able to tell the story of her creativity, community, and the need to remain true to herself. This is a story of someone who is courageous, determined, and persistent.

What makes Leilani's story particularly interesting is that she is a self-proclaimed psychic who gives readings to friends and others. In addition to being a psychic, Leilani experiences

seizures, dreams, and prophecies. It is this spiritual experience that influences her songs and her performances. It is also the spiritual elements of her music that allow her to have an intimate connection with her fans.