

Just saw "Patriots Day". This powerful docudrama centering around the Boston marathon bombing is directed by Peter Berg("Lone Survivor", "Deepwater Horizon"). The film stars a power packed cast including Mark Wahlberg, Michelle Monaghan, John Goodman, Kevin Bacon, J.K. Simmons, Melissa Benoist, Jimmy O. Yang, Rachel Brosnahan, Christopher O'Shea, Jake Picking, Alex Wolf and Themo Melikidze.

This film has been on my highly anticipated list for several months now. After seeing "Deepwater Horizon" back in September I was more than ready for this. Now here we are. Berg's been on a roll lately with his films. "Lone Survivor" is said to be extremely well done(I haven't seen it yet) and I thought "Deepwater Horizon" was a incredible movie. So I was looking forward to seeing if he could not only continue this trend but deliver a even better film than his previous two. I'm very happy to say that he has indeed done just that. This is a excellent film and I feel it's his best one of the 3. So let's dive headfirst into the movie and talk about what made it great.

The first aspect I'm going to talk about is the acting. No surprise here. It's very good all around. Wahlberg and Monaghan turn in very compelling performances husband and wife despite being the only fictional characters in the film. John Goodman is a force to be reckoned with as the police commissioner Ed Davis. Kevin Bacon gives a very cautious and calculated performance as FBI agent Rick Deslauriers. J.K. Simmons is terrific as Seargent Jeff Pugliese despite having limited screen time. Alex Wolff and Themo Melikidze as the two bombers were startlingly accurate with their portrayals. Every time they had a scene together I was on edge. They were very believable. There was also a handful of actors who portrayed victims of the bombing and it's aftermath including Rachel Brosnahan, Christopher O'Shea, Jimmy O'Yang, Jake Picking and Dustin Tucker. They were all very good as well. Solid acting across the board.

Next topic of discussion. The actual recreation of the marathon bombing. One thing I've always appreciated is Berg's painstaking attention to detail with his projects. This aspect of him is no more apparent than in this film. The explosion took me off guard and it made a ballsy move by showing the bloody aftermath. Powerful, shocking and heartbreaking all at the same time. They filmed most of the movie in Boston and I was amazed by how realistic the film felt. It didn't feel glamorized at all. Everything was filmed where each key event took place. I thought this helped create the authenticity that the film ultimately had.

Next aspect to discuss. The filming and cinematography. A good portion of this film is shot in the handheld camera view/angles. This not only heightened it's sense of realism but also grounded the film and in part helped it be more relatable. I also found it interesting that Berg used actual security cam footage of the bombers and interspersed it throughout. That added a already building sense of tension.

Next area to mention is the film's musical score by Trent Reznor a land Atticus Ross. This was a great score for the movie. Both suspenseful and heartwarming, these composers knew when to hit the right notes. Whether it was a intense street shootout or an emotional embrace, the score was a welcome addition.

The final aspect I'd like to touch on is the film's message. The message of defending yourself in the face of insurmountable odds. The message that love triumphs over evil and is the only weapon you have to fight back with. That is what made the movie for me. Two men took days to spread their evil but love responded in an instant. This film properly honors the everyday heroes who defend our nation with incredible resilience and determination. I was a mess by the time the film ended and showed the interviews with the real people. Perfectly executed.

In conclusion I thought "Patriots Day" was an incredibly powerful film that honors its subject material as well the people involved. This film hit really close to home for me. I vividly remember that day and what I was doing when I heard about it. It will always be forever etched in my memory. It's definitely a tough watch but I feel it's also a necessary one. If you can see this film at some point, I strongly suggest you do. I'm going to give "Patriots Day" 5/5 stars.