

LE PLAN (D'ÉTUDES AU) CINÉMA:

SELMA

En anglais sous-titré anglais
Jeudi 7 avril 2016 à 19h00

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2016 - scolaire n° 6

Scénario
Image
Musique
Avec

Paul Webb
Bradford Young
Jason Moran
David Oyelowo
Carmen Ejogo
Jim France
Trinity Simone
Mikeria Howard
Jordan Rice
Ebony Billups
Nadej k Bailey
Elijah Oliver
Oprah Winfrey

SELMA

Ava DuVernay - Etats-Unis - 2014 - vost ang - 128 min. - Couleurs

Selma retrace la lutte historique du Dr Martin Luther King pour garantir le droit de vote à tous les citoyens. Une dangereuse et terrifiante campagne qui s'est achevée par une longue marche, depuis la ville de Selma jusqu'à celle de Montgomery, en Alabama, et qui a conduit le président Johnson à signer la loi sur le droit de vote en 1965.

The unforgettable true story chronicles the tumultuous three-month period in 1965, when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led a dangerous campaign to secure equal voting rights in the face of violent opposition. The epic march from Selma to Montgomery culminated in President Johnson signing the Voting Rights Act of 1965, one of the most significant victories for the civil rights movement. Director Ava DuVernay's «Selma» tells the story of how the revered leader and visionary Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr and his brothers and sisters in the movement prompted change that forever altered history.

W J Mcdermott

Proposé par le Plan (d'Etudes) au Cinéma et CinéStaël

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TARIFS

- > En classe: 5 francs par élève et gratuit pour les accompagnants
- > Carte 20 ans/20 francs: 5 francs
- > Enseignants sans élèves: 8 francs
- > Réservations: scolaires@cinemas-du-grutli.ch

Remarkably, this is the first biography about MLK made for the big screen. The film is about a very specific moment in the city of Selma, Alabama, when black civil rights activist Martin Luther King (MLK), had given his «I have a dream» speech and received the Nobel peace prize, but was still frustrated by the lack of genuine progress on civil rights.

Selma shows that although the Civil Rights Act of 1964 legally desegregated the South, discrimination was still rampant in certain areas, making it very difficult for blacks to register to vote. Oprah Winfrey, who was a producer on the film, plays a part of an elderly woman rejected time and again whilst trying to sign up and register. (Oprah did all she could to help this film get made, but annoying she pops up or is focused upon every few minutes, clearly due to who she is, which is distracting).

In 1965, the city of Selma, Alabama became the battleground in the fight for justice where the Selma to Montgomery voting rights marches changed history. Despite violent opposition, MLK (played by British born Nigerian actor David Oyelowo) and his followers pressed forward on an epic march from Selma to Montgomery, and their hardship resulted in President Lyndon Johnson signing the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

(...)

NARRATIVE

During the film, I kept wondering when MLK, would recite those famous 'I have a dream' lyrics. But alas he never does onscreen. I then found out that this was due to the fact that MLK's bickering children did not give the film permission to quote their father's speeches, and in the past had charged around £500,000 for his words to be inscribed into a statue on

Americas National Mall. Then I was even more impressed with the clever way the film got away with this.

In Selma, It was at times hard to watch innocent people young and elderly, clubbed to within an inch of their lives or being killed. However these scenes weren't the focus of the movie and the scenes were not gratuitous. While the landmark 1964 Civil Rights Act had legally desegregated the South, towns like Selma remained very dangerous places to be a black man or woman, with Jim Crow discrimination still in effect, especially with regard to the contentious subject of voter registration. I watched the film and felt exasperated at the fact that it's still dangerous to be a black man in America and many other parts of the world today. (...)

The Huffington Post

Selma is tragically timeless.

The Civil Rights Movement, and in particular, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, should be a completed accomplishment. It should be something we look back on, shake our heads at the ignorance and hatred of the time, celebrate those who were brave enough to fight back, and then we can go on with our daily lives. But that didn't happen, and director Ava DuVernay doesn't let her movie sit as a nice, historical relic that smoothes over difficult events and complicated people in an attempt to placate her audience. While we know King's march ended in an important victory for African-Americans, Selma goes deep into the politics and personal relationships behind that success. Although the timeline can be a bit fuzzy and some characters could be better defined, DuVernay has crafted a powerful film anchored by a remarkable performance by David Oyelowo and an unflinching resolve to observe the brutality and complications of a Civil Rights Movement that's sadly far from over.

The film is based on the events leading up to and including the 1965 march from Selma to Montgomery to demand equal voting rights. Although the protest is spearheaded by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (Oyelowo) and the SCLC, we're shown the many players who participated in these events including other black leaders, President Lyndon Johnson (Tom Wilkinson), racist Alabama Governor George Wallace (Tim Roth), SNCC member John Lewis (Stephen James), and the many unnamed, noble individuals who risked their lives to stand up for civil rights.

It would have been easy to give into the temptation to follow only King and make him a saint who singlehandedly led the African American community to this monumental achievement. King's importance cannot be understated, and Oyelowo is incredible as he channels the leader rather than just doing a good impression. He shows us how King could command an audience with his speeches, but feel deep doubt and regret in his private moments. But more importantly, DuVernay and screenwriter Paul Webb are willing to do something I thought the film wouldn't dare,

which is accept that King was flawed, and not in the generic, "He cares too much!" cop-out. It's a brave move that humanizes King and is one of the reasons the overall struggle feels real.

The picture also feels real because DuVernay is eager to explore multiple points of view. The movie stresses the complicated politics not only between King and Johnson, but even amongst the black community as Lewis wrestles with whether or not to stick with the SNCC, or accept that King and his group have a better plan, and that he should join them. The March from Selma to Montgomery was hard not only because of the deep racism of the South, but because it required dedicated people to map out and organize the best plan possible. As King explains, his group will only pursue this march if they can utilize the media to win people to their cause, and that requires nonviolent protest being met with violence from cops so that the events will be televised and force people to acknowledge and hopefully join the protests.

Collider

This 1960s-set, US civil-rights drama works brilliantly as both expert historical re-creation and a powerful reflection of what's happening in the world right now. As recent events in Ferguson, Missouri show, there's nothing 'finished' about the issue of racism in America or beyond. Fittingly, 'Selma', unlike so many great-man biopics, lures us into a web of unsettled arguments and shifting strategies as Dr Martin Luther King Jr (David Oyelowo) makes his landmark 1965 Alabama march a reality – at a terrible cost. The film plays like a great episode of 'Mad Men', pitch-perfect in its details yet totally lived-in: a universe of rolled-up shirt sleeves, sweaty brows and screams that sound horribly real.

Time out London

"I speak tonight for the dignity of man and the destiny of democracy," said Lyndon Johnson, in his nationally televised address to a joint session of Congress on March 15, 1965. "At times history and fate meet at a single time in a single place to shape a turning point in man's unending search for freedom. So it was at Lexington and Concord. So it was a century ago at Appomattox. So it was last week in Selma, Alabama."

The President was referring to the "Bloody Sunday" confrontation in Selma, Ala., on March 7, when Dallas County Sheriff Jim Clark and his deputies met about 600 peaceful marchers on the Edmund Pettus Bridge with nightsticks, tear gas and charging horses. The naked brutality of this assault – just nine days after the young, unarmed black Baptist minister Jimmie Lee Jackson had died from an Alabama State Trooper's gunshot – spurred LBJ to bring the Voting Rights Act to Congress. A Texas Democrat who knew his party could lose the South for decades

if he championed equal rights for blacks, Johnson nonetheless boldly declared, "There is no Negro problem. There is no Southern problem. There is no Northern problem. There is only an American problem."

His comments reverberate eerily today, when police again can kill unarmed black men and face no legal punishment – and when the Voting Rights Act, which Johnson signed on August 6, 1965, with Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks and John Lewis by his side, gets effectively defanged 48 years later by the Supreme Court. So Ava DuVernay's Selma, a vivid retelling of the months leading up to the three historic marches from Selma to Birmingham, carries a message that has lost none of its heroic, tragic relevance. If not quite in quality then certainly in import and impact, this is the film of the year – of 1965 and perhaps of 2014.

Time

