

Storage

Director: Michael Craft / Rated: MA 15+

Screens 26-28 August at Mercury Cinema

I'm a big fan of Indie films, because you never know what you're going to get. When you pay for admission to a Michael Bay ZOMFG explosive blockbuster you pretty much know what you're going to be exposed to, but with any indie film, you just don't know what's going to happen. Will it be a failure? Will the complete lack of budget ruin the director's true vision or will the hard work and band-aid covered fingers of everyone involved have carried the film to what is a complete success? In the case of 'Storage', the latest Australian thriller, we have complete success.

It's a great looking film, with fantastic colours, effective lighting and a dark washed out feel to its environment. As the film ended I imagined the director, Michael Craft, giving himself a massive pat on the back as he watched the film after its final edit. It not only has a fantastic visual direction, but also a solid cast who are all directed perfectly. Every one of the cast members knows exactly what emotions, motives and hidden demons their characters are carrying. Add to that slick production, a confident and capable cast, cutting edge yet practical cinematography and sound direction, and a very tense story.

'Storage' opens with Jimmy (Matt Scully) and his father, watching the mighty 'Death Wish 2', starring good ol' Charlie Bronson. This was a fantastic homage to what was a quirky yet brutal series of films... Jimmy and his father walk through the dark, seedier streets of Brisbane on the way home. They have a little argument as Jimmy expresses how ridiculous 'Death Wish 2' was. Unfortunately, for the pair of them, this light-hearted moment is interrupted by a masked man who holds them up at knife point. He asks for their wallets and while Jimmy shits himself, his dad (being the more aggressive man he seems to be) basically gives the guy a big fuck you and tries to wrestle the knife out of his hands and is killed.

Jimmy moves in with his uncle, Leonard (Damien Garvey) for some chill time and to work at his uncle's storage facility. Are you starting to see where the name of the movie came from? While working for his uncle, Jimmy meets his co-worker, a horny young woman and potential love interest, Zia (Saskia Burmeister). He also happens upon many other dark figures that use his uncle's bleak underground storage facility for their own depraved reasons. One of these mysterious people is Francis (played with a frantic authenticity by Robert Mammone), a sweat-soaked, dishevelled man, who Jimmy suspects of murder after observing him sniffing some clothes.

My main (and only) issue was some of the writing. The dialogue was perfect, the story was intense and enthralling, but at times things felt forced, as when Jimmy and his dad argue and make up at the beginning of the film. The scene seems there only to evoke emotions within the viewer, because his dad dies almost immediately afterwards. 'Storage' gives off a gritty David Fincher vibe in almost every way, yet Craft has retained the dry Australian drama feel at the same time. From the Australian slang, to the scenery, it's stylish, yet home-grown, always recognising it's roots, while not being typically Aussie daggy.

Jim Jenke

