

Run!

Run! is a short film, made for the EBU Youth series (edition 2009) and produced by NBS based in the Netherlands. The theme of this year was “temptation.” With a minimum of dialogue, the story is told through strong emotions that the young audience can empathize with, and a chain of actions and reactions. Run! is about nine-year-old Momo who is on holiday with his dad. At the campsite he is surrounded by boys who fancy girls. But he is not ready for all that just yet ...

Run! was one of the PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL 2010 finalists in the 7-11 Fiction category.

International experts’ opinions



Figure 1: Momo has a special relationship with his dad.

Almost all the international experts liked the program and found it to be inspirational. “It is good inspiration in many ways. It was really good; I thought it was really fun” (female expert, USA). They liked the children in the program. “I thought the kids were quite good in it. Their expressions were believable. I thought it was very sweet” (female expert, UK).

They admired the characterization in the program. “I really liked the almost switching of the roles. The parents were kind of the kids, and the kids were leading it. I thought that was amazing. I loved the vulnerability of the dad and the woman who was checking him out. There was a sort of tension, yet when the children are going through the same thing it was more sophisticated; it was more real, this role reversal in a sense” (female expert, South Africa).



Figure 2: The girl teaches Momo how to dry the dishes quickly.

The international experts liked the character of the girl and found her very strong and direct in her approach. “I guess it worked out, because they asked the boys to dance. So the first step was the girl’s step. She also asked him to go out together. She talked to him first when they were washing the dishes. She was very bold; it was great” (male expert, Poland).



Figure 3: Girls invite the boys to attend the disco.

The international experts also appreciated the relationship of the boy with his father. “And then the parallel relationship with the father. He chose to spend the time with his son. That was nice” (female expert, USA). “I think this film is a reaction to feminism. It is the father that cannot fill the role and cope with it, despite of how awkward they are. So men are fighting back the idea that all these women around – Run!” (female expert, Colombia). They loved the closeness that was shown in their relationship. “I think that the



Figure 4: Boys preparing for the disco.



Figure 5: The girl inviting Momo to dance.



Figure 6: Momo panics and runs away when the girl invites him to go out.



Figure 7: Momo came back and told the girl he would not go out with her.

parent, the dad-boy relationship, for me that was in a way good; that little boy came all the way through, and I thought that was lovely at the end that he was able to make the football team, because that was ultimately the most important thing for both of them together. That was a lovely ending” (female expert, Scotland).

There were discussions about the interest the target audience might have in the program. Some liked the program and felt that the program was able to demonstrate the real feelings of teenagers at that point in their life. “It was so good: I thought the casting was excellent. I loved how the girl was bold, and she asked him out. She asked him to dance. You kind of felt all uncomfortable the way they were dancing – and you had to look at her. It was very real. Everybody feels that way. It shows people – kids at that age. I think that is real that boys don’t know what to do, and then all of a sudden they switch and they like girls” (female expert, USA). Others too found the program to be “age appropriate” (female expert, Germany). “I think this was an illustration of a boy who was ready – so in that peer-group pressure thing, that is a good story to be telling him this” (female expert, New Zealand). Some appreciated the program for making them aware of the feelings of the boys at that age. “I really liked that it put for me a portrait of the feelings of the boys, in general, and I thought it was a good platform for identification for boys that are worried. I thought it was a little different and a good idea” (female expert, Germany).

Some were apprehensive about the interest of the target audience in the program. “From research, I notice that boys like to think of boys, and when they are working together in a group they always work against each other. I don’t see them coming together at that age. Maybe when they are around 14, 15, they start showing off, they compete with each other. But 7 to 11 is quite hard” (male expert, Lebanon). Some also felt that the program was more related to the girls than the boys. “But, it would seem to me that these kinds of programs are actually more for the girls in this segment than for the boys” (male expert, Germany).

Other international experts, too, felt that the program was not appropriate for the target audience of 7-11 category. “I had a more general reflection on the target audience thing, because I am thinking myself as a boy at 7-11, and these kids: I sometimes have the feeling that maybe we television makers are trying to induce interest in the boy-girl topic in boys much earlier than they actually have” (male expert, Germany). “I don’t think that you reach the target age group with this program. I don’t think that the boys will look at this program.” (male expert, USA).



Figure 8: Momo's Dad comes out of the disco party and plays football with him.

Some experts also had discussions about the production values of the program. "I thought that they kids were good, but I think the directing, or the instruction of the kids, was more from an adult perspective. There were very few kids – four adults. The choice of music also was disturbing to me" (female expert, Denmark).

*Prof. Dr. Dafna Lemish, Namrata Bansal and Hao Cao
(Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, USA)*