

Warda

Warda was produced by Camera-etc based in Belgium. Everyday Warda brings food to her grandmother. But one day – Warda is on her way to bring rice and chicken – a giant wall suddenly blocks her way. Warda thinks hard how to get to the other side, but the ideas she comes up with never work out. Finally a pencil, that Warda receives as a present, seems to bring a solution ...

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

International experts' opinions



Figure 1: Everyday, Warda brings food to her grandma.



Figure 2: One day, Warda finds a wall built on her way to her grandma's house.

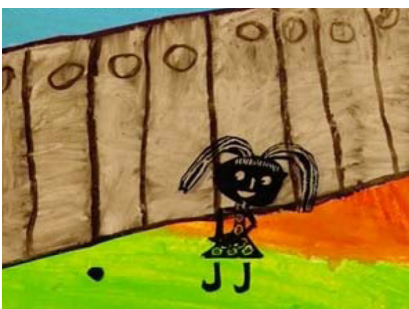


Figure 3: Warda tries to use stones to break the wall but fails.

Many international experts liked the fact that the animation was made by the children. “I personally liked it very much, and I think it is important to have their images also represented – and their way of doing it. It was also done in a very beautiful way. It doesn't always have to be the professional way of doing it” (female expert, Germany). “It was magnificent. The kids' drawings were fabulous. I thought it was also interesting to see this after having seen the fall of the Berlin Wall earlier in the program. I thought the drawings and how it was done was really nice” (female expert, USA).

However, few international experts doubted this. “I am not so sure whether children like it when it is made by children; I don't think so. And another opinion on it – we have a lot of investigations and they say children would rather see a good film than a children's film, unless they know the children from their own friends or own classroom. I am not so convinced that children would watch this. Therefore, you should ask the target group, maybe the younger the better” (female expert, Netherlands).

Some questioned the theme of the program and the way it was treated. “I have a political comment. Somehow this seems to me to be a problem when we have on one hand a very gentle, beautiful little kind of sketch. But behind it, there is a horrific inhuman situation. Of course, the kids know it as well. Then suddenly, once you start talking about an issue as sensitive as that – can it stay this gentle? It does make us uneasy somehow.” (male expert, Germany). However, some defended the way the theme in the program was treated. “I think it was gentle, but I think it was intended. I think for them this is just a dire reality. It was a way of creating a parable on a language discussed, which is fantastic to do for children, so that they are not voiceless and helpless” (male expert, USA).



Figure 4: Warda attempts to use a tree trunk to go over the wall but fails again.



Figure 5: Finally, Warda uses a pencil to draw a bird.



Figure 6: The bird turns into life and helps Warda cross the wall.

There were also discussions among the international experts about the relevant age of the target audience. Some could not relate the program to children. “I was wondering if you know what it is about? This made me wonder who the audience is for this film and made me suspicious of the intentions of the filmmaker, because it is not a kind of a pure story that kids anywhere in the world can relate to” (male expert, USA). Some associated the program with kids across ages. “About *Warda*, I think that maybe when you watch the show, you could think that it is for preschoolers. But I think maybe it works for older children if they are into conflict, because they live this story everyday of their lives. Maybe this works also with older ages” (female expert, Colombia).

Some experts admired the production of the program. “And making the use of the transparent eyes in the background, and showing of those. It was very sweet. The kind of kids in there, their creating the sort of audio language and with the right pacing – somebody really gave it space. It wasn’t rushed along. There was a lot of room. It was brilliant. It was very nice” (male expert, USA).

Some international experts were apprehensive about the political statement that the program was making. “It is a story about a very particular political moment, but it doesn’t actually explain the political moment or give kids a way to grapple with the issues in the political moment. It kind of just makes a very, very strong powerful statement that assumes that you are going to agree with it. I had a little trouble with it at that level. I felt that it was on the verge of propaganda and manipulative of the kids watching it” (male expert, USA). Some thought that the program was using political moments to demonstrate conflict which was not a good idea. “But maybe we should know the wall theme is such a strong theme. So, when you are using it, you are making a political statement also. We should know this. You cannot just tell about a conflict and put up a wall, because then you are telling a political thing” (female expert, Denmark).



Figure 7: Since then, the bird took Warda to her grandma’s home everyday.

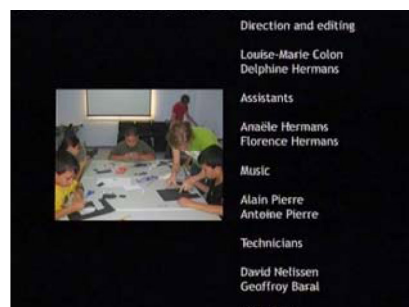


Figure 8: This is a film produced by children themselves.