

Review by Patrick Ricketts
Videoviews.org

About an agoraphobic woman who's trapped inside her house and thinks her husband is conspiring with her psychiatrist to drive her insane.

I don't normally review films this early unless I am not that busy but after I received this from Osiris Entertainment and read an article about the film that came with it I just had to sit down and watch it. Solitary is a Mystery/Thriller that was filmed on a shoe-string budget but the story behind the making of the film is what really caught my eye.

I will be brief but I have to tell you first about Director, Greg Derochie and his struggle to get the film made. First off He wrote the script with Charles Scalfani via the internet, the two of them were never in the same room together while writing "Solitary" which in itself is pretty damn amazing. Derochie had a hard time getting any financial backing since those willing to put up the money also wanted their own directors handling the film so after turning down four production offers because he didn't want to lose control over the film he decided to just make the film on his own and use his own home as the setting of the film. Another problem that faced him was getting together a good cast and crew but after selling them on the strength of the script itself he got everyone to work for profit sharing and after seeing the film I can see why these talented people decided to make it. The film was shot in just 28 days only filming on weekends and was shot on digital so he could edit the film by himself. Talk about a labor of love, everyone involved had to believe in this filmmaker's vision in order to make it work and I am sure it was not easy to get done by I can tell you it paid off big time.

The story centers around Sara and her husband Mark, as the film opens they two are talking and Mark mentions about attempting to have a child which seems to upset Sara so you get the sense she might of had a miscarriage or something worse might of happened. Mark then decides to get ready for work and Sara decides to go for a jog but she doesn't get very far from the house before panic attacks begin to set in and she rushes back indoors. It seems Sara has Agoraphobia or the fear of going outdoors. After Mark leaves her sister visits, you sense some friction between the two of them but once Sara tells her how she is feeling her sister suggests a Doctor who works in the field so Sara agrees to see him. As the film moves along you get the sense that maybe everything is in Sara's head since things she says happened only days ago others say differently but then you get the feeling that maybe she isn't losing it and that those around her are really trying to drive her crazy. A blur between what is real and what might be in Sara's mind begins to make you think long and hard about what is going on here.

Derochie said in the article one of his influences is Hitchcock and you can clearly that here but lets give him credit for creating his own brand of suspense. Nothing about the film looks cheaply made and the production values look loads higher than the budget would suggest. Derochie uses his home, camera work, lighting and the musical score to

create a film filled with more mystery, suspense, claustrophobia and paranoia than any 10 Hollywood films like it could produce. The film has you on the edge of your seat early on and it doesn't let up till it's shocking and brilliant ending. Not only a perfect ending to the film but it also brings closure to Sara. I am not going to give details away about exactly what happens in the film because to be honest there is just too much going on and I would rather not ruin it here for those that are going to want to see the film when it comes to DVD on March 29th 2011.

Director Derochie did a great job at using everything he had to make this film, the use of the long shots of Sara that close quickly on her and the quick cutaways then back again are just a few examples of just how amazing this film was shot, creating the perfect atmosphere needed. From what I can tell this is Derochie's first feature film and I have to admit when I see a film as special as this one it makes me a little angry at Hollywood and their remakes and sequels. It is about time they open their eyes to great filmmakers like Greg and start making good movies again. Independent cinema is where it is at right now for original and clever story-telling and "Solitary" is one example of making a great film on very little money, as hard as the shoot had to of been I don't think they could of made a better movie with millions of dollars. I think the budget made the film that much better since they had to concentrate of story more than effects or other things that just get in the way of what the filmmaker is trying to say.

Also I can't close out this review without mentioning the awesome cast of actors, everyone in the film is terrific but Amber Jaeger plays Sara perfectly, she makes her problems so real you believe that this woman truly has something wrong with her, brilliant acting and a beauty to boot. Believe me when I tell you "Solitary" is a must-see film and one that is going to gain a large audience once it is released next March. Write the date now and do not miss seeing this clever,original and heart pounding thriller, this is one film that would make Hitchcock proud.