

MURAT VE ISMAIL

The film “Murat ve Ismail” grew out of Rizzi’s three month residency in Istanbul. He considered different options for portraying life in the city and focused on a single family-run shoemaker’s shop in the neighbourhood of Beyoğlu. The film lasts 80 minutes and needs to be seen as a narrative from beginning to end. It has some of the appearances of a recording of reality, but its drama and emotional perception are almost too intimate to be true, pushing us to question where the border between fact and fiction is drawn.

As the nature of the relationship between the father (Ismail) and his son (Murat) gradually emerges, we are introduced to other characters that visit the shop and try in different ways to take advantage of their difficult economic situation. Rizzi’s interest in the subject came from his observation of the different value systems that Murat and Ismail represent and the way they could serve as a distillation of the general situation in Istanbul. Tied together by the love and loyalty of family and familiarity, they constantly clash, make up and clash again, in a recognisable cycle that is always endangered by threats to the continuation of the shop itself.

“Murat and Ismail” is filmed with great affection, depicting two lives caught up in the economic transformations ripping through Istanbul as we stand here. As with much of Rizzi’s previous work, the piece manages to be both sympathetic and direct, recording with amazing intimacy the hopes and fears of people who are generally subject to forces beyond their control.

Charles Esche

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