



Cinema/Chicago Education Program Screening : *International Shorts Program*

Films :

Rita, Italy, directed by Antonio Piazza/Fabio Grassadonia

Stanley Pickle, UK, directed by Victoria Mather

The Descent, Israel, directed by Shai Miedzinski

Muscles, Australia, directed by Edward Housden

Faster !, US, directed by, Marie Ullrich

Approx 70 minutes

Various languages, not rated.

Please use the below synopsis, study ideas and questions, and helpful websites to lead your students in preparation and post-screening discussion. Following the film, students in the audience are required to respond to the screening with a one page essay that is sent to Cinema/Chicago. *

Synopsis

A 10-year-old blind girl has a mysterious encounter that leads to a rare moment of freedom in the claustrophobic *Rita*; twenty-year-old Stanley's uneventful life with his clockwork family is turned upside down by a beautiful young lady in *Stanley Pickle*; on a journey to find materials for their son's tombstone, a family's repressed feelings of loss come to the surface in *The Descent*; Millie is a testosterone-driven 14-year-old girl who wants to be a bodybuilder in *Muscles*; a tough female bike messenger runs roughshod over everyone in her path in *Faster!*

Study Ideas/Questions

1. In *Rita*, the camera never moves far from Rita's face. Why do you think the director shot the film this way, and how does the effect make the audience feel?
2. What do you think happens in *Rita*? Who is the dying woman on the floor? Who is the thief in the house? Why does Rita trust him, and what happens to Rita when she is left in the sea?
3. In *Stanley Pickle*, Stanley is constantly repairing his family. Do you think the literal repairs are a metaphor for something else? What comment do you think the filmmaker is making about family, relationships and growth?
4. *Stanley Pickle* is an animated film. How is it different than other animation you have seen? Do you think the style was more effective in conveying the film's messages and themes? Think about if the film had been done in "Disney style." Would you react differently to it?
5. In *The Descent*, the family is searching for a perfect headstone for their son/brother's grave site. Do you think they will ever find this headstone? Why or why not?
6. *The Descent* is a very quiet film. How would adding music (classical, dramatic, piano, etc.) change the pacing, style and mood of the film?
7. The brother in *Muscles* causes damage and destruction. Why do you think he behaves this way?
8. Think about the music in the film. What does it add to the film? Does it change the way we perceive the body builders?

9. In *Faster!*, the bike messenger is shaken up by an accident and returns the money she took from the blind man. Have you had an experience that made you think twice about previous actions or that made you regret a decision you had made?
10. Think about the different characters in *Faster!*. The tough bike messenger, the rich lady on the street, the trusting blind business man. Discuss how they interact with one another and how certain characters are taken advantage by others. How does their status, money, handicap and/or profession effect how they treat others?
11. These are all short films. Discuss the difference between a short film and a feature length film. What challenges, advantages and disadvantages do short films have?

Useful websites

<http://www.fastershortfilm.com/>

<http://stanleypicklemovie.com/>

<http://www.shortfilmcentral.com/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Short_film

<http://www.cinemachicago.org/education/>

***Teachers who do not facilitate the completion of this requirement will not be invited to attend future Education Program Screenings**