



Valentin
(Spain, 83 minutes)
Director: Alejandro Agresti

Synopsis

Eight year old Valentin lives with his grandmother in Buenos Aires in the late 1960s. Valentin dreams of becoming an astronaut, finding a new wife for his absent father and of being reunited with his missing mother. While caught in the middle of his family, he attempts to better the bewildering world around him. This heartwarming (and at times heartbreaking) tale follows the smart and resourceful Valentin, as he reacts to and observes the troubled individuals he encounters.

Study Ideas/Questions

1. Valentin lives in Buenos Aires in the 1960s. How does his childhood compare or contrast to your upbringing in? Were you raised in an “unconventional” atmosphere like he was?
2. The director of the film, Alejandro Agresti, says that *Valentin* is based on his own childhood. Do you have stories or memories from your childhood that you express through art (song, poetry, dance, etc.)?
3. Often it seems that children have the ability to deal with life’s difficulties more than adults. Do you feel that Valentin handled his challenges and problems well, or that he created more conflict with his actions?
4. What perceptions did you have about Spanish culture before the film, and did they change after you saw the film?
5. When Valentin is at church with his uncle Chiche, the priest briefly defends and discusses Che Guevara. What do you know about Guevara, and why do you think so many people walked out of the church when he was mentioned?
6. The actor who plays Valentin (Rodrigo Noya) received many nominations, awards and critical praise for his performance. What did you think of his portrayal of Valentin? Did you find him believable? What other films have been told from the point of view of children, and what effect did they have on you?
7. What do you think happens to Valentin? We know that he brought Rufo and Leticia together, but do you think he is reunited with his mother? Does he go on to live with Rufo and Leticia?
8. Do you think this is a happy or sad story? Why?
9. Who was the most interested character to you? Why did this person stick out to you in the story?
10. Do you speak Spanish? If so, were you able to understand the film and dialogue without using the subtitles? If you cannot speak Spanish (or speak only a little), did you notice any differences of rhythm, expression or emphasis within the Spanish language?

Useful websites

<http://rogerebert.suntimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20040521/REVIEWS/405210303/1023>

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0296915/>

www.chicagofilmfestival.com

