

Blu-Ray Review: Searing Drama of Intense, Dark ‘Incendies’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on October 5, 2011 - 9:49pm

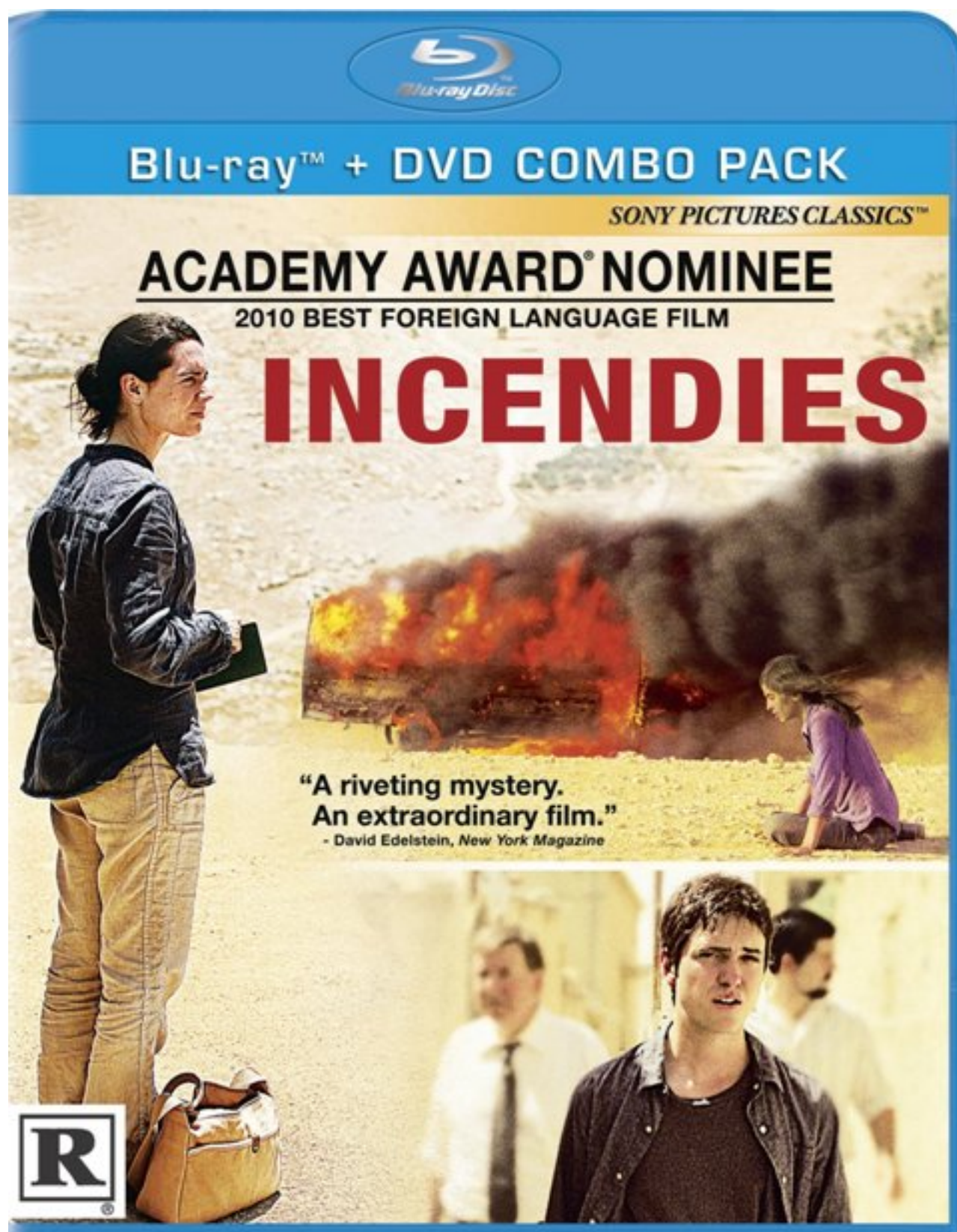
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CHICAGO – Damn, last year’s Oscar nominees for Best Foreign Language Film were a dark, dark bunch. I thought “Biutiful,” “Dogtooth” and “In a Better World” had their brutal edges but I hadn’t yet seen the incredibly intense “Incendies,” a historical drama wrapped in a very personal story. The film is a bit more flawed than some of the critical praise had led me to believe but it’s definitely worth a look, especially for renters looking for international drama.



Blu-Ray Rating: **3.5/5.0**

This highly-acclaimed suspense thriller is essentially the tale of two children discovering incredible secrets about their mother’s past and the true identity of their father. On her death, a woman leaves a letter for her twin children that instructs them to find the father that they believed was dead and the brother that they never knew existed. The male half of this fraternal twin pair ignores the wishes of a mother that he long thought was crazy while the female half begins a journey to unlock the secrets of her past, which are simultaneously revealed to viewers via flashback in a parallel structure. Taking place mostly in the Middle East, “Incendies” is about pain so deep that one can’t possibly reveal it while they’re still alive and what it means when those buried secrets are unearthed.



Incendies was released on Blu-ray and DVD on September 13th, 2011

Photo credit: Sony Pictures

"Incendies" is undeniably well-made and engaging but I found the structure of the storytelling a bit of an emotional cheat. I couldn't help think that the structure of the piece was a bit more of a trick than the drama of the story needed. Though this is a minor complaint for a very strong film that is more than worth your time if you're willing and able to handle deep, dark drama. This is not for the faint of heart or those easily turned off by atrocities represented on film. And it's incredibly well-performed and directed (by Denis Villeneuve). It's a work that I've delayed writing about it and still don't feel like I can at length — in large part because I'm still conflicted about what I think of it. I will say this — it's a work that gets stronger as each day passes and some of its powerful imagery and characters linger in my memory. See if it does the same for you.

Synopsis:

In the highly-acclaimed suspense thriller Incendies, a mother's dying wish creates a painful puzzle her children are forced to solve. At the reading of their mother's will, twins Jeanne and Simon are given instructions to locate the father they believed was dead and the brother neither knew existed. They travel to the Middle East, to piece together the story of the woman who brought them into the world only to make a shocking discovery.

Special Features:

- o Commentary with Director Denis Villeneuve
- o Remembering the Ashes: Incendies Through Their Eyes
- o BD Live Enabled

"Incendies" stars Ludna Azabal, Melissa Desormeaux-Poulin, Maxim Gaudette, and Remy Girard. Written and directed by Denis Villeneuve. It was released on DVD and Blu-ray on September 13th, 2011.

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