

Film Review: ‘The Imposter’ Plays Like Hollywood Thriller

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on August 24, 2012 - 10:52am

- [Bart Layton](#) [2]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [3]
- [Frederic Bourdin](#) [4]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [5]
- [Movie Review](#) [6]
- [Nicholas Barclay](#) [7]
- [The Imposter](#) [8]

CHICAGO – Bart Layton’s “The Imposter” allows an absolute scumbag to take center stage, a documentarian’s device that usually turns me off from a film altogether. Too many films give microphones to people who don’t deserve the attention and often have committed their heinous crimes just to get it. The first act of “The Imposter” gave me that creepy feeling like even hearing this story was making its horrendous criminal’s dreams come true. And then the movie not only gets under your skin with its fascinating story but takes a twist that makes it far more fascinating. Incredibly well-made and with a story you won’t forget, “The Imposter” is one of the better docs of the season.



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

What would bring a man to steal the identity of a stolen child? What would bring a family member to excuse things like accent, hair, and eye color to accept that her son has returned to her when she must know deep down that he has not? “The Imposter” starts as an amazing story of a gross human being who used a family’s pain for personal safety. He is afraid and he essentially seeks asylum in the arms of someone else’s tragedy. The filmmakers tell this unique story almost like a thriller, moving in and out of reenactment, interview, and archival footage with a deft touch that will keep you riveted throughout.



[Read Brian Tallerico’s full review of “The Imposter” in our reviews section.](#) [9]

In 1993, a Texas boy named Nicholas Barclay went missing. He needed a ride home, didn’t get one, and his family assumed that he was picked up by a stranger. One day he was there, the next day he was gone. After a few months, they assumed that Nicholas had been murdered and they merely hoped that they would one day find his body to give the family closure. Four years later, they got a call from Spain.

The caller said that a boy had been found and he claimed to be Nicholas. In actuality, it was Frederic Bourdin, a French con man looking for safety. As he was sitting in a Spanish police station while the officers tried to figure out the identity of this unusual drifter, Bourdin started calling U.S. police stations asking about missing children. He learned about Barclay, dyed his hair blonde, gave himself the tiny tattoos that the child had, and came up with an amazing story.



[Continue reading for Brian Tallerico’s full “The Imposter” review.](#) [9]

“The Imposter” was directed by Bart Layton and opens at the Music Box Theatre in Chicago on August 24, 2012.



The Imposter
Photo credit: Indomina

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 - [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/brian-tallerico>
 - [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/frederic-bourdin>
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