

Film Review: Oceanic Adventure of ‘Kon-Tiki’ Still Enthralls

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on May 3, 2013 - 6:00pm

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CHICAGO – Mention the name Thor Heyerdahl or his sea-faring vessel “Kon-Tiki,” and half-remembered images of a voyage across the sea in a ship that looks like it was built on “Gilligan’s Isle” might cross memory neurons. Why, when and how he did it is brought to screen in the excellent and appropriately titled “Kon-Tiki.”



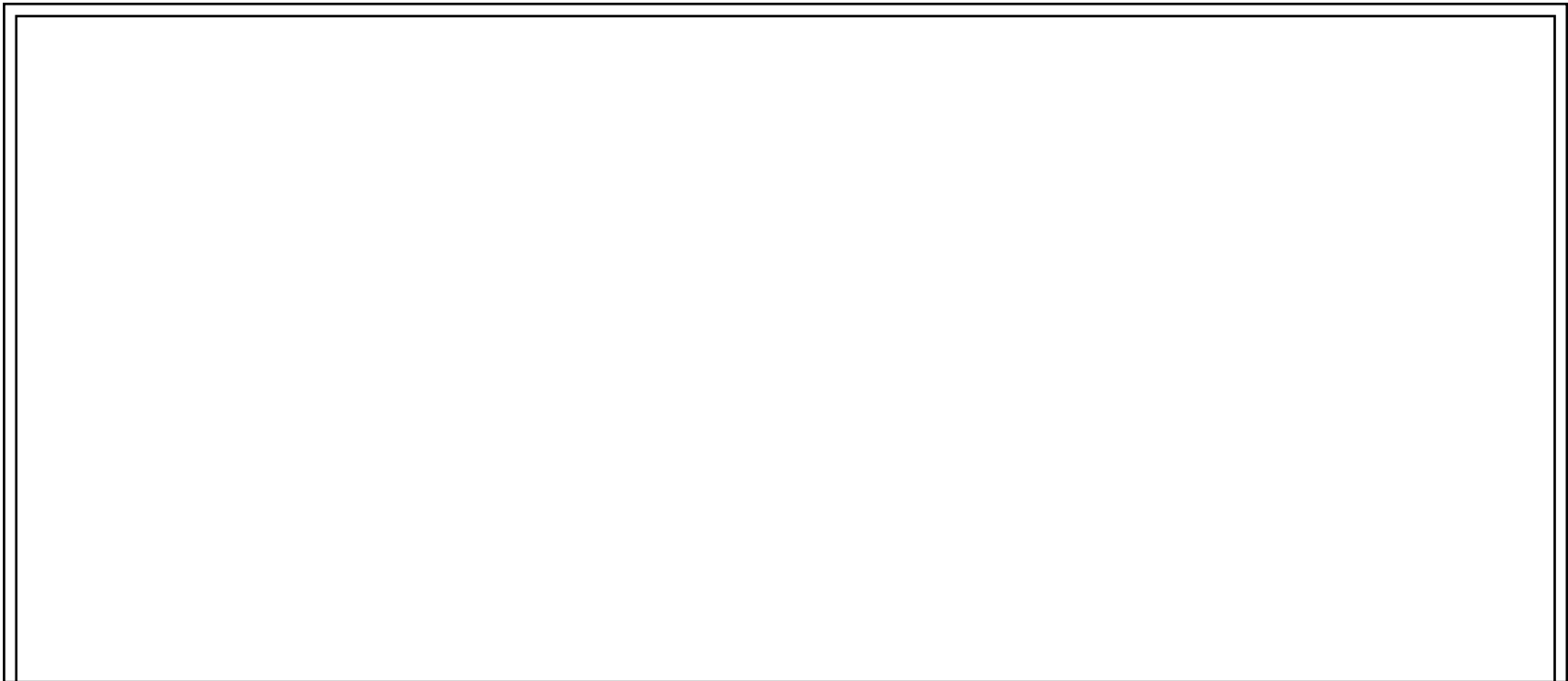
In the name and hope of man’s innate instinct to explore, “Kon-Tiki” serves as a lesson for visionaries, and was nominated for Best Foreign Language Film at the recent Oscars. Thor Heyerdahl simply had a higher calling to see what is “out there” and prove a point while doing it. The film meticulously and lovingly recreates the journey of that haphazard boat, and crispy reproduces the particular time frame in which it was done. All the sharks, odd sea life, storms, challenges and triumphs are explored, as well as a nicely wrought examination from co-directors Joachim Ronning and Espen Sandberg, that this small floating speck on the ocean was part of a larger sea of expansiveness in the universe. It may take a long time to get there, but it all waits patiently for the adventurers willing to try.

Thor Heyerdahl (Pal Severre Hagen) is shown to be risk taker, as the film begins with a flashback in Norway circa 1920, with little Thor falling into freezing waters trying to leap onto ice floes. Cut to his adult life, when he spends time on a Polynesian island with his wife Liv (Agnes Kittelsen) and develops theories about the native people that run counter to prevailing wisdom. Heyerdahl believes that the islanders originally came from South America, floating to the islands on boats – using currents and the wind – over 1500 years ago.

He decides to recreate the journey of Tiki (the original explorer), using the materials that were available for such a journey back then. He recruits other adventurers named Herman Watzinger (Anders Baasmo Christensen), Knut Haugland (Tobias Santelman), Bengt Danielsson (Gustaf Skarsgard). Torstein Raaby (Jakob Oftebro) and Erik Hesselberg (Odd-Magnus Williamson). In 1947, they set sail from Peru on the “Kon-Tiki,” and prove that wherewithal can still rule the sea.

“Kon-Tiki” continues its limited release in Chicago on May 3rd. See local listings for theaters and show times. Featuring Pal Sverre Hager, Anders Baasmo Christiansen, Tobias Santelmann and Agnes Kittelsen. Screenplay adapted by Petter Skavlan. Directed by Joachim Ronning and Espen Sandberg. Rated “PG-13”

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Thor Heyerdahl (Pal Sverre Hagen) in ‘Kon-Tiki’
Photo credit: The Weinstein Company

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