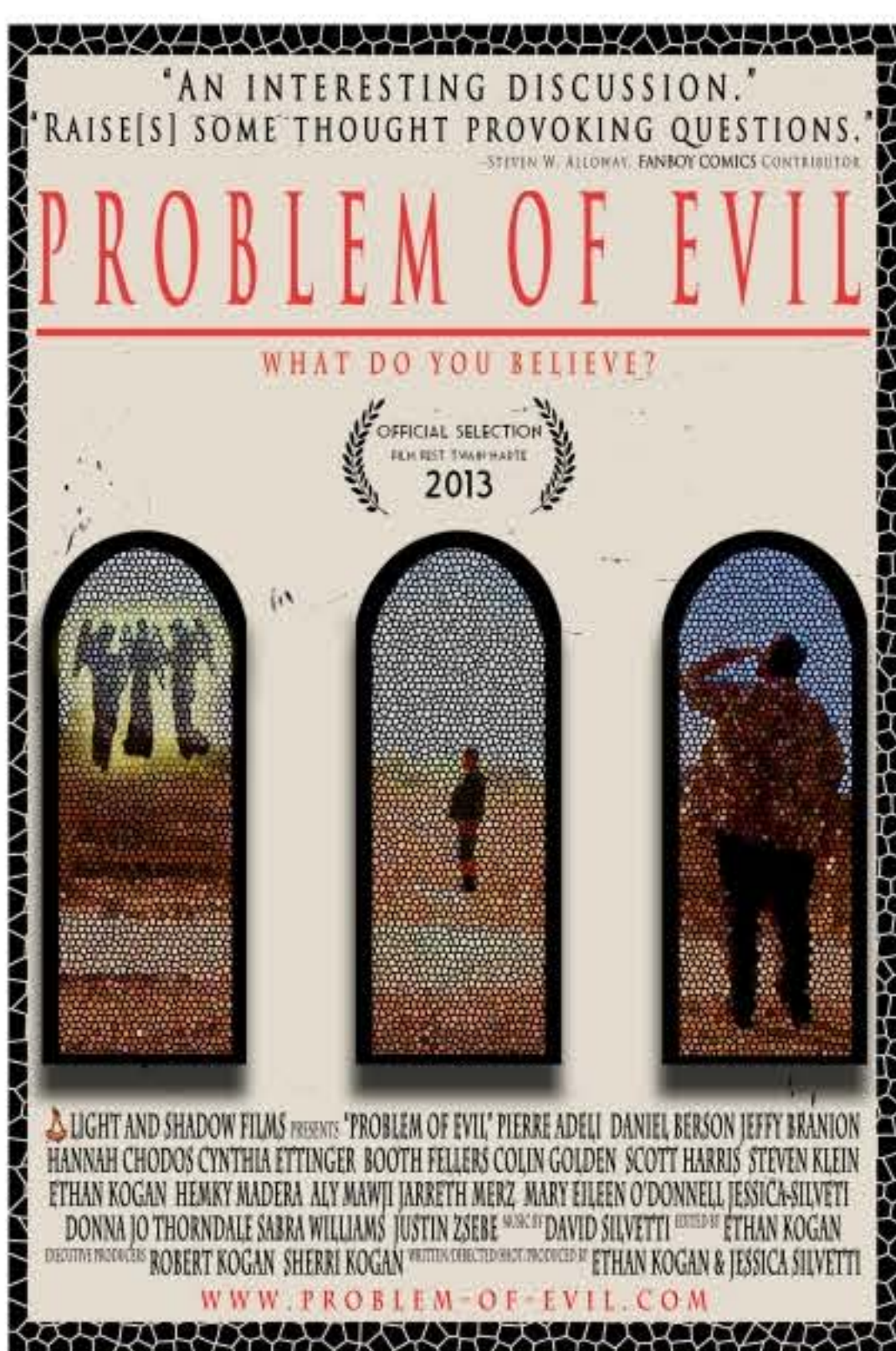


Review: The Problem of Evil

Jan 21, 2014 Priyanka Mogul Independent , Reviews 0



Rating: ★★★★★ 3.5/5

A fiction film shot as a documentary, *The Problem of Evil* ([website here](#)) offers a peek into the world of religious cults, telling the tale of Jason – a filmmaker who is struggling to deal with the death of his wife. Amidst his pain, he encounters a woman who seems to know personal details of Jason's life – including the loss he is suffering from. When the woman reveals that her "spiritual leader" told her about Jason years earlier and that Jason was to be the one to carry the message of her "religious group" to the rest of the world, a sceptical Jason is cast head first into the world of religious belief and faith.



Determined to find out what this group wants from him and how they know what they know about him, Jason finds himself playing the lead role in a mission to track down the cult's spiritual leader – a man who claims to be an angel sent from the heavens. In his paranoid state over having his privacy violated, Jason recruits friend and cameraman, Pete. Together, the two begin searching for answers, with Jason hoping to expose the group – although he isn't sure what he is going to find.

One aspect that makes *The Problem of Evil* interesting is the way the film is shot. Following a documentary style, with Jason or Pete doing the recording as though they were making a home video, we are able to view the situation as it unfolds from the perspective of the characters themselves. The constant recording that Jason insists on emphasises his agony, suspicion and grief – emotions that all come together to form a crazed obsession with this religious cult he has stumbled upon.

As Jason tracks down members of the cult to interview them in the hope that he may be able to find their leader, we are opened up to a fascinating world of faith. What makes the film intriguing is not Jason's story about loss, neither is it Jason's quest to find some mysterious angel man. Instead, the film comes to life through the interviews Jason carries out with various people who have been associated with this religious cult. Each one comes with their own story of what it means to believe in a higher power and each one introduces us to a new perspective on the philosophy of faith and belief.

However, while each new person comes with an intriguing insight, the varying viewpoints and personal stories of each of them make it difficult to focus on what it is that Jason is trying to achieve. At certain points in the film, it's easy to lose track of what Jason has learnt and how close he is to finding the man he's looking for. Instead, it's the interviewees' personal stories are likely to stick in your mind and be the most memorable aspect of the film when it's over.

Despite Jason's chase being difficult to follow at times, directors Ethan Kogan and Jessica Silvetti are successful in keeping their audience captivated for the entire length of the film. Whether it's the fascinating insight into religious faith or the mysterious workings of a cult that seems to know all too much about a man dealing with loss, the film will leave you feeling like you were introduced to a very mystifying world indeed.

Whatever your beliefs are, if you are a fan of intelligently written, slightly sinister films – and are creeped out by the idea of strangers who know everything about you and midnight phone calls with no one on the other end – *The Problem of Evil* should be up your street.

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The problem of Evil will be available on Video on Demand from the 29th January 2014