



Fahimeh's Story

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Russell Edwards, STAFF

An Australian Film Commission, Pacific Film & Television Commission presentation of a Faraway Prods. production, in association with SBS Independent. (International sales: Ronin Films, Canberra/TVF, London.)

Produced by Ian Lang. Directed, written by Faramarz K-Rahber.

Cultural differences, marital expectations and family obligations make for an intriguing mix in "Fahimeh's Story," a basic DV documentary that, thanks to helmer's perseverance and astute eye, manages to transcend its low-budget origins to provide a touching, emotional experience. Centered on a 47-year-old Iranian woman married to an Australian WWII vet 30 years her senior, film depicts their relationship with good humor and compassion. Item deserves to find an appreciative home at international fests, especially those with a docu bent.

Fahimeh, at film's beginning, is already a Brisbane resident who, in the five years she's lived under Australian law, has managed to divorce her first husband and keep her two adolescent sons. Now married to the elderly John, she's clearly enjoying the freedoms her adopted country has to offer, and the pair are openly affectionate.

The left-leaning John is a convert to Islam and, though demonstrably lazy, does his best to fit into her family and make his new wife happy. Both Fahimeh's and John's offspring are challenged by the relationship and pic follows the ups and downs of all involved, including the emigration of Fahimeh's ex.

The vivacious Fahimeh comes over as someone who believes in grabbing life with both hands. Though helmer Faramarz K-Rahber, himself an Oz-based Iranian refugee, was lucky to find such a delightful protag, he shows an eloquence in his direction that encompasses both a benelovent attitude towards his subject as well as an ability to confront issues.

Scenes with the various children particularly bear witness to this versatility, as K-Rahber's camera is just as comfortable with (and curious about) traditional Aussies as it is with Fahimeh's troubled sons. Tech credits are occasionally rough, but of broadcast quality.

Camera (color, Digi-Beta), Shing Fung Cheung, Axel Grigor, K-Rahber; editor, Grigor; sound, K-Rahber. Reviewed on videocassette, Sydney, Aug. 12, 2004. (In Brisbane Film Festival.) Running time: 83 MIN.(English, Farsi dialogue)