Rigoberta Menchú - Daughter Of The Maya

Film Info:
This is a story about a family, a people, and a destiny -- "Rigoberta Menchu: Daughter of the Maya". After more than five decades of political turmoil, the courage and tenacity of the indigenous Maya people of Guatemala shines through in this beautiful, tragic, and ultimately triumphant film.

Written By:
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Something about these types of documentaries gets me every time. It sounds really bad to write it, but there's always something entertaining in these often sad, usually horrible true tales of struggle. Using the same reasoning, let's just say that "Rigoberta Menchú - Daughter Of The Maya" is one hell of an entertaining film. I know I know... how can I call something so tragic a good story? The simple truth is that horror and conflict make the best stories, and this film is packed full of it. There is more however, to making a good film, no matter the content. To make these often scary and true life films work, you need something to represent the good. In this film, in real life, our hero on the most basic level is Rigoberta Menchú, but if you dig a little deeper you may realize that even she is just a representation; even though she happens to be one of flesh and bone. The real heroes of this film are the people Rigoberta represents, as well as the victims whom she becomes a voice for.

"Rigoberta Menchú - Daughter Of The Maya" sheds light on a decades old conflict that some of you readers may never even have known existed. Rest assured, once watching this film you'll wonder how and why you were not aware. Ignorance is bliss, and once watching this movie you'll probably feel the need to do some researching; which is the
point isn't it? This film carefully navigates a world of horrendous crimes, using them as the backdrop to become the entertaining narrative a film needs to keep us watching. It's so easy for a film like this to either put a person to sleep, or become so graphic you simply don't want to watch anymore. Director Dawn Engle treads these waters like a pro and when it's all said and done, not only will you leave the film entertained... but also educated. It's all here, expertly laid out in the span of an hour.

Technically, "Rigoberta Menchú - Daughter Of The Maya" is exactly what you've come to expect from this type of film. Interviews and clips pieced together via the narrator, guiding us through the movie. The footage is put together expertly, taking us from point A to point B and C. The overall flow of the narrative is handled nicely, giving us an entertaining and solid piece of work. Only high praises will come from my lips, and possibly some genuine appreciation for whomever sorted through all the footage. Production-wise, this was a great watch and I'm thankful for that.

"Rigoberta Menchú - Daughter Of The Maya" presents one hell of a story. Jammed full of what makes great fiction. Of course, knowing that it is not fiction adds the scary factor, almost forcing you to watch through till the end. In real life, to write it simply, Rigoberta Menchú is a hero for the people. Just under the surface however, we see that she is simply a fellow human, fighting for what is right. The real beauty of this film is not the bad, rather the good. It reminds us that any one of us contains the ability to make a stand and fight. Being a hero is built into all of us, but only a select few have that special something. These people are special not because of their courage, rather their ability to bring out the courage in others, making heroes of many.

-JT