

<p>Volume 25 Number 9  SEPT 2022</p>		<p>Website <a href="https://www.williamstown-film-society.org">https://www.williamstown-film-society.org</a> Email michaeljslee58@gmail.com Phone 0478 624 528</p>
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Council Chamber of the Town Hall, 104 Ferguson St, Williamstown, 7.30pm, Wednesday 28th September, 2022.

## 2022 Program

# The Insult

Tony Hanna (Adel Karam) is a householder, Yasser Salameh is a builder and one day, in a Beirut street, they have an argument about a drainpipe.

Insults are exchanged and a stalemate is reached until Yasser's boss, a practical man of moderate temperament, persuades him to apologise. But Tony, a Phalangist Christian, rejects the apology. His hot-tempered response contains such an inflammatory infusion of political venom that Yasser, a Palestinian refugee, punches him, breaking two of his ribs.

Legal proceedings follow and things accelerate to the point where the case becomes a cause celebre – an intimate replay of the scenario which kept the Lebanese civil war on the boil for 15 years.

Underpinning this scenario is a raw authenticity, shaped no doubt by the fact that the film's director and co-writer, Ziad Doueiri, was inspired by his own domestic run-in. He quarrelled with a plumber, thought better of it and unsuccessfully tried to make amends. In the wake of this, the plumber was sacked and Doueiri found himself on his side. He also decided that he had the makings of a screenplay.

He's added a few contrivances. Tony's wily old lawyer (Camille Salame), also Christian, is embroiled in his own feud with his daughter, a Palestinian sympathiser who happens to be representing Yasser. It's an extra layer the story doesn't need. Its fulcrum is in the ferocity of Tony and Yasser's feud followed by their gradual realisation that they have more in common with one another than with any one else in the courtroom.

While the reasons for this take you back decades, their potency doesn't depend on a knowledge of Lebanon's history or its politics. They reside in the same tribal grudges that have fuelled the wars in the Middle East for the past century.

What matters is the film's success in distilling them into the characters and personalities of these two men. Yasser comes across as the most rational. He's older with a reticence and a watchfulness which hint at a lifetime of sobering experiences. Tony, in contrast, has a hair-trigger temper which doesn't admit compromise. His instinct is to object first and consider the consequences much, much later – something that his loyal but exasperated wife knows only too well.

But he, too, has his excuses, which are spelt out at the story's climax. You can see them coming, but any sense of predictability is dispelled by the film's ending which triumphantly unites the political and the personal by crystallising their connection in two great performances.

**By Sandra Hall - Sydney Morning Herald & The Age, 25th August 2018**

To watch a trailer head to the program on our website

<http://www.williamstown-film-society.org>

## **Starbox Results**

	5	4	3	2	1	Average
Yesterday	22	11	0	0	0	4.7