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Farah Goes Bang: Tribeca Review

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The Bottom Line

This loosely entertaining road movie provides fresh elements to its familiar genre.

Venue

Tribeca Film Festival

Director

Meera Menon

Cast

Nikohl Boosheri

Kandis Erickson

Kiran Deol

Meera Menon's sexually and politically charged road movie depicts three young women stumping for John Kerry's 2004 presidential campaign.

Familiar road movie tropes are re-energized with a gender switch and infusion of politics in *Farah Goes Bang*, director **Meera Meno**'s loosely entertaining debut feature receiving its world

premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival. This tale about a trio of multi-cultural, twenty-something women traveling cross-country to stump for **John Kerry**'s ill-fated 2004 presidential campaign occasionally succumbs to juvenilia—as with its winking title, for starters—but it features many evocative moments along the way.

Best friends Farah, Roopa and K.J.--of Persian, Indian and American heritage respectively—are assigned the task of driving to Ohio to canvass door-to-door for their candidate in that all-important swing state. Despite being warned by their handler to avoid the hopelessly red states, they can't resist the opportunity to try and change a few minds along the way.

That their task will be a difficult one is signaled by their very first stop, in which they encounter a woman who regales them with a musical ode to **George W. Bush**. An encounter with a redneck who advises them to “tell your friend to friend to go back to whatever Taliban camp she came from” is similarly dispiriting.

REVIEW: Red Obsession ^[3]

These being healthy young women, they also have sex on their minds, as evidenced by the industrial-sized box of condoms they bring along. In particular, Farah is hoping to lose her virginity along the way, a goal that her friends are eagerly encouraging.

Director Menon, who co-wrote the screenplay with **Laura Goode**, delivers a friskily realistic portrait of her three protagonists, who playfully banter about sex, grooming (“I look like Magnum, P.I., complains a horrified Roopa upon scrutinizing her facial hair) and men, including a debate about whether they're rather sleep with Kerry or **John Edwards**.

Along the way, they interact with a gallery of disparate types, including a drag queen who says of Bush that “he's the only weapon of mass destruction,” and, in a quietly moving scene, a Korean War veteran who graciously invites Farah to have a beer and make her case.

The storyline has its predictable moments, such as its conclusion in which—spoiler alert--Farah enjoys a one-night stand, accompanied by a background of exploding fireworks, no less, with a hunky young man who teaches her to shoot a gun.

Ultimately, however, the film's warm-hearted treatment of its central characters and incisive portrait of a politically divided America provide ample compensation, as do the engaging performances by **Nikohl Boosheri**, **Kiran Deol** and **Kandis Erickson**.

(Tribeca Film Festival)

Production: Farah Goes Bang, LLC

Cast: Nikohl Boosheri, Kandis Erickson, Kiran Deol, Michael Steger, Samrat Chakrabarti, Lyman Ward

Director: Meera Menon

Screenwriters: Laura Goode, Meera Menon

Producers: Danielle Firozzi, Liz Singh, Erica Fishman

Executive producer: Laura Goode

Director of photography: Paul Gleeson

Editor: Kate Hickey

Production designer: Ashley Margo

Costume designer: Bri Xandrick

Composers: Samuel Jones, Alexis Marsh

Not rated, 90 min.

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