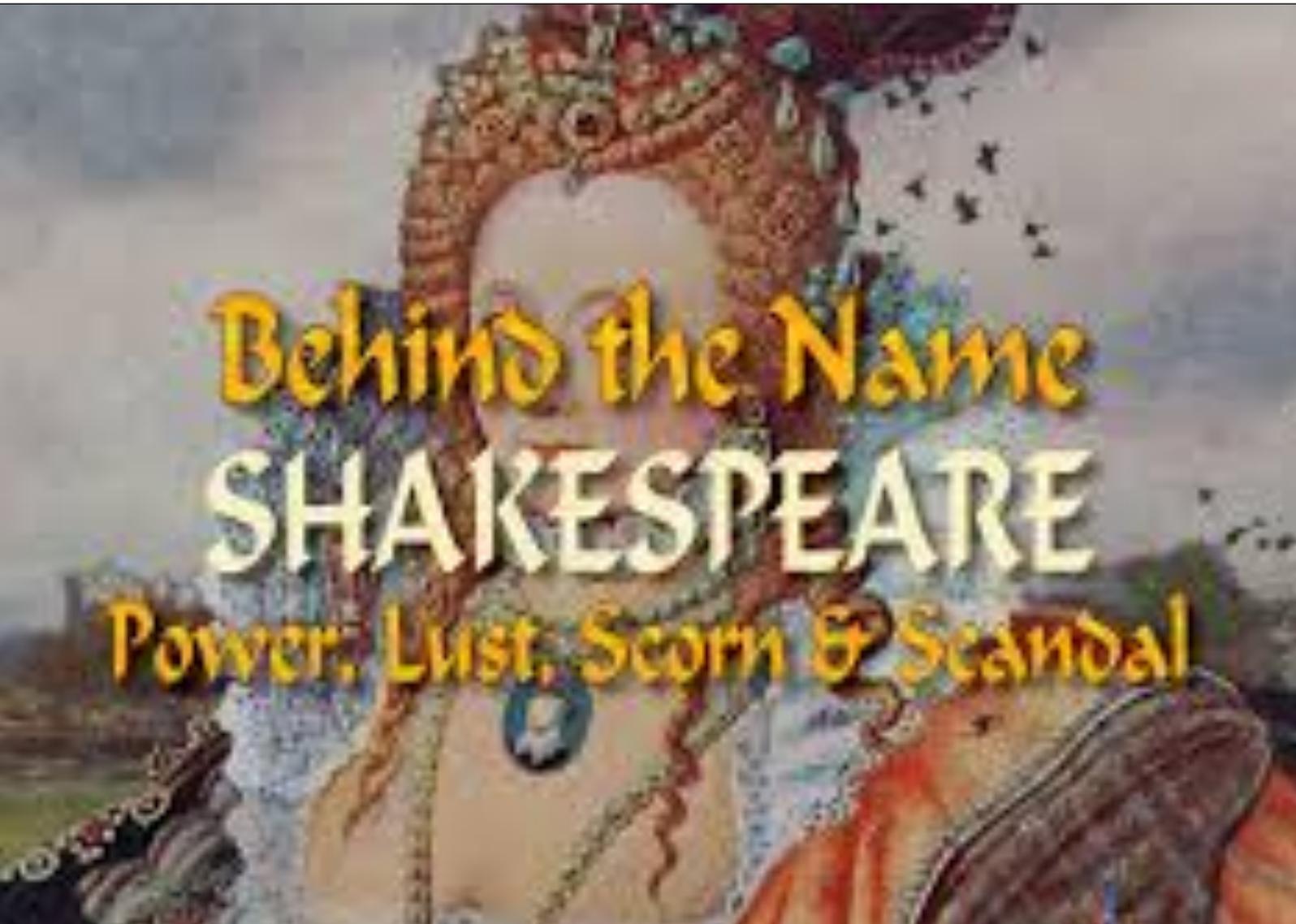


"Behind the Name SHAKESPEARE: Power, Lust, Scorn & Scandal"

Directed by
Robin Phillips
Shakespeare uncovered and discovered.

Country: US
Year of production: 2020
Genre: Documentary,
Experimental



Synopsis

The controversy surrounding the true identity and persona of the most famous and appreciated playwright in our entire history, William Shakespeare, is at the core of this enlightening documentary. Taking us on an in-depth and compelling array of evidence and interpretations as to why Edward the Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford could be the personality behind the authorship of all the works attributed to the famous bard is Robin Phillips, whose passion and extensive knowledge on the subject comes across as accomplished and fascinating but most importantly....convincing.

Rating: Excellent

Idea

William Shakespeare and his true identity has become one of the most obsessive questions of our history. Since the middle of the 19th Century, when it's authorship was first questioned, more than 80 candidates have been proposed as alternatives to the tradesman, born in Stratford-upon-Avon whose link to the writing of the plays has not been questioned for centuries and has been supported by both scholars and historians. However, the many questions and mystery surrounding the context of the writing of these superb plays have raised doubt as to the true identity of the genius poet.

Rating: Excellent

Script



Experienced from an informative perspective "Women in the Sand" reveals no big secret in that the U.S. Government has systematically tried to undermine, diminish and intimidate at a national scale the culture, traditions and area of influence of the Indian population. But when you are introduced as a viewer to these relentless women who had direct contact with such practices, prepare yourself to get mad and be shaken to your core. We are presented with the shocking

written affirmations of an American early 19th century article from a magazine portraying the Timbisha people as "more beastly than bests"; "from the anthropoid ape when the white man first saw them" and as "miserable, worthless creatures". This sort of slandering and its ongoing repercussions is what the Shoshone people are left to deal with in the last hours of their civilisation.

Rating:



Cinematography & Editing

Filmed against some of Death Valley's most spectacular scenery "Women in the Sand" sets a well befitting tone for the vision of the documentary. There is good cinematic effort displayed in the depiction of the natural landscape and what it has to offer. This also links well to the story, setting up an initial most vital context. The rest of the camera work and cinematic composure is struggling however in terms of originality and vision, leaving room for improvement and artistic reformation.

Rating:

Acting

Whilst we can't really assess the acting component in the case of a documentary, the charming personalities of Pauline and Maddy Esteves are coming off as a breath of fresh air in this portrayal of the declining condition of the native Americans located in the Death Valley.

Their authentic simplicity, feistiness and experience contribute to the creation of a very intimate and friendly atmosphere, which helps shape the strong points of this documentary.

Rating:

Dialogue

There is indisputable value to every testimony of everyone interviewed, from the passion and endurance of the elders, to the contradictory attitude of the Chairman of the Tribal Council and to the pressure felt by the younger generations. It is all so relevant. The length and way in which is presented doesn't manage however to reward and harness the essence to a full extent, meaning the most valuable parts are being well hidden and concealed contributing to an unnecessary detachment from the viewer. When given the chance, the narrator is doing an excellent job at pulling the viewer in with his way of transmitting information.

Rating:

Sets

The impressive and daring landscape, along with the natural space of each and everyone interviewed grant a specific type of authenticity and sets a relevant mood for this documentary. Steve Jarvis's efforts and persistence over the 4 years to gather and capture the struggles of all these people and their stories is coming through soul-stirring.

Rating:

Music

Music is utilised well most of the time, using naturally inspired scores with a good contribution and support to the atmosphere and mood of the film. What is also working well in the benefit of the documentary is the occasional use of specific environment sounds facilitating a stronger connection between the spectator and the people on the other side of the screen.

Rating:

Film Ending/Array of Meanings

The director's personal attachment to this documentary comes across strongly and it is obvious this subject and his desire to share this matter with the rest of the world is very important to him. The very decent one hour and a half inclusion into the humbling efforts of the Timbisha last two women holding the direct link with the tribe's cultural testimony is proficiently and heart achingly accomplished. Whilst there could be debate on the slow pace and limited cinematic value of the "Women in the Sand", there is no question in regards to its social and human value. There is much to be learned from the Timbisha elders. Today more than ever and director Steve Jarvis's vision is steadily facilitating that.



Directing & Director's Vision

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Rating:

Final Conclusions



“Women in the Sand” offers an inspiring insight into the powerful connection that we, as humans, can establish with our ancestors, traditions and culture. While there is not much artistry and cinematic vision displayed in the conveying of this journey into the history of the last standing pillars of the native Americans tribe located in the Death Valley, this documentary offers a much needed platform to support their never ending battle to save their legacy and their essence.

We are left trusting and hoping along with these last warriors that “Everything has to come to a full circle at some point”.

Reviewed by



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