

From the Baugs

By Deepa Gahlot | *Afternoon Despatch & Courier* | March 14th, 2009

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ADC Reviews

17

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● **LITTLE ZIZOU**
At: PVR and other cinemas
Directed by Sooni Taraporevala
Cast: Bomab Irani, Sohrab Ardeshir, Imaad Shah, Jahan Bativala and others
Rating: ★★★½

Sooni Taraporevala may just have made the definitive film on the Parsis—and any Mumbai-ite who knows a Parsi family will appreciate the affection and care with which she has captured her beloved and rapidly dwindling community.

The film, part real, part whimsy and beautifully observed is mainly about two families; on one side is the patriarchal Cyrus II Khodaiji (Sohrab Ardeshir), who is hated by his sons, football fan Xerxes (Jahan Bativala) and graphic artist Artaxerxes (Imaad Shah). On the other side is the Presswala family, the father (Boman Irani) runs a community newspaper, his wife Roxanne (Zenobia Shroff) keeps

an eye on her two daughters Liana (Iyana Bativala) and Zenobia (Dilshad Patel) and mothers little Xerxes too.

As a war breaks out between the conservative Khodaiji shouting for racial purity, and the liberal Presswala, Artaxerxes and his buddies are trying to create the cockpit of a

Francorsi) or the confused militant (Kurush Deboo).

Such is Taraporevala's labour of love, that Parsis like Shiamak Davar, Gary Lawyer, Cyrus Broacha, Farid Currim and the half-Parsi John Abraham make friendly appearances and she gets to capture the old world beauty of Parsi homes.





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jet for a flight simulator, in an old abandoned building. Painted in delicate strokes around them are other Parsi characters like Roxanne's mother (Mahabanoo Mody Kotwal) keeping her crumbling hotel going in Udwada, Khodaiji's subservient assistant (Shernaz Patel), the half Italian Tito ('I know

Little Zizou is charming with its delicate humour, compassion for the community and concern for its future. The performances are wonderful and little Jahan Bativala is an absolute natural. The film may not be commercial, but it is a must-watch for lovers of good cinema. ■