



## BORDERLINES FILM FESTIVAL

### **RADICAL (12A)**

Director: Christopher Zalla

Starring: Eugenio Derbez, Daniel Haddad, Jennifer Trejo

Mexico, 2023, 2 hours 1 minute, Spanish + English dialogue

Derbez, always a charismatic screen presence, is at his best interacting with young people, as he did playing the music teacher in *CODA* and the quirky doctor in *Miracles from Heaven*. The young actors are exceptionally expressive, particularly Jennifer Trejo as Paloma. - **Roger Ebert**

Idealistic teachers propel some of the most shamelessly schmaltzy tearjerkers of cinema, but whether we like it or not, we all respond to them at some sincere, emotional level. Christopher Zalla's resolute crowd-pleaser *Radical* is a heart-tugger in the mold of such old-school "inspiring teacher changes everything" tales as *To Sir With Love*, *Dead Poets Society* and even recent Oscar winner *CODA*, with which it shares star Eugenio Derbez. It's a conventional film with broad audience appeal — watch it without tissues at your own risk — and hits all the expected notes. - **Variety**

Along with DP Mateo Londoño and production designer Juan Santiso, Zalla presents Matamoros with unforgiving precision and occasionally, a touch of sweet hopefulness. *Radical* captures both the poverty and helplessness of a sweltering region that sees frequent killings and drug-related crime, and the modernity that exists on the other side of its tracks. Zalla also unearths pockets of bliss and humor in the kids' everyday lives across numerous non-traditional classes with Sergio, who ruffles some feathers in the system as he puts his students' wellbeing above all else. - **Variety**

*Radical*, directed by Christopher Zala, is the first dramatic film role for Mexican superstar actor and comedian Derbez (*Instructions Not Included*, *Overboard*, *How To Be A Latin Lover*). It won the Festival Favorite Award when it premiered at Sundance. It had the biggest local-language opening in Mexico since Covid, selling more tickets than Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour. - **Deadline**

Preview courtesy of Altitude

Notes compiled by Holly Dennison

### **If you like RADICAL, you may also enjoy:**

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**PRESSURE (15)** - Britain's first Black feature, newly restored by the BFI National Archive, is a groundbreaking depiction of second-generation experience in 1970s London.