

A Perfect Day

★★★★★

Dir Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil

Joreige Lebanon 100 mins

Circuit Empire Theatres

Released April 20

As Lebanese films go Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige's first feature 'A Perfect Day' is up there with Ziad Doueri's acclaimed 'West Beirut'. Unlike the latter which is set intermittently at the beginning of and during the conflict, this film's astuteness lies in its comment on the legacy of Lebanon's Civil War in today's Beirut, amongst the young generation and the old all living in a permanent state of guilt, anger, fear and pain in a world they cannot or seem reluctant to change. The film follows a day in the life of Malek (Ziad Saad), a 26-year-old man who suffers from sleeping disorders and is haunted by memories of his ex-girlfriend (Alexandra

Kahwagi). Malek and his mother Claudia (Julia Kassar) are also struggling to come to terms with the disappearance of Malek's father, Claudia's husband, who was kidnapped during the Civil War in Lebanon. Should she sign the documents that will pronounce him dead so they can leave the past behind? Malek can't deal with his mum's hesitation and so avoids the issue instead falling asleep randomly and driving round the city after his uninterested ex. 'A Perfect Day' deservedly won the FIPRESCI (Critics Guild) prize at the 2005 Locarno Film Festival, possibly for the nuanced and compelling performances from the leads and its brilliant evocation of the unchanging stagnation at the centre of Beirut's urban life. Moody and moving the Lebanese audience will recognize much in this film. *Ramsay Short*



No wonder Malek (Saad) is searching for his ex! *Will it be a perfect day?*