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NOW PLAYING

ROMÁNTICO

John Anderson

November 3, 2006

(3 1/2 STARS) ROMÁNTICO (unrated). No one would pick Carmelo Muñoz Sanchez, itinerant mariachi singer and champion of his own lost cause, as a romantic movie hero. Yet, in Mark Becker's beautiful, intimate "Romántico" he is exactly that. Becker, creating an intimate portrait of downtrodden nobility, follows singer-guitarist Sanchez and his alcoholic partner, Arturo, as they play the streets and restaurants of San Francisco, living six to an apartment and sending what little they can afford to back to their families in Mexico. Becker also follows them home, where we are made witness to the sacrifices made, the burdens borne and the inequities of North American economics rendered as poignantly as a Mexican love song. Shot on actual 16mm film, "Romántico" is visual poetry on the run and, as any work of art does when it's successful, improves our perceptions of the world: No one who sees "Romántico" for what it is will likely ever again brush off a strolling musician, bypass a handbill or lobby for a border wall. Directed by Mark Becker. 1:20. In Spanish with English subtitles. In Manhattan at the IFC Center, Greenwich Village.

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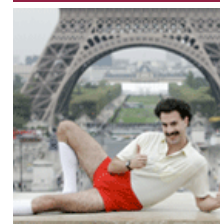
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Borat interview by Tom O'Neal

"Borat"

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