

<p>A MAN CALLED OVE (15) Date: Tuesday 21st January Director: Hannes Holm Sweden 2015 116 mins (subtitles) <i>Starring:</i> Rolf Lassgård, Bahar Pars, Filip Berg</p> <p>This comedy-drama is a celebration-of-life story about a cranky widower called Ove. He's a misanthrope, who constantly complains, and lashes out at anyone who violates his perception of how things ought to be done.</p> <p>He decides to kill himself, but his new neighbours repeatedly interrupt his efforts. Despite meeting for the first time when they accidentally flatten his mailbox, Ove eventually forms an unlikely friendship with a noisy extroverted family. They force him to change his mind about a number of things, including his neighbours, and modern times. It's a delightful story and somehow Ove charms you into developing an affection for this disappointed, lonely man.</p>	<p>THE WHITE CROW (12A) Date: Tuesday 28th January Director: Ralph Fiennes UK/France/Serbia 2018 127 mins <i>Starring:</i> Oleg Ivenko, Ralph Fiennes</p> <p>The White Crow tells the story of ballet legend Rudolf Nureyev and his sensational escape to the west in the early '60s at the age of 23, while on his first European tour in Paris. Like Billy Elliot's defection from his working-class childhood, Nureyev's flight involves crises of loyalty with family and community.</p> <p>David Hare wrote the screenplay and Ralph Fiennes directs and gives a performance of spaniel-eyed sadness as Nureyev's dance teacher and mentor Alexander Pushkin. Nureyev is played by the Ukrainian ballet star, Oleg Ivenko, so the ballet scenes are wonderful.</p>	<p>3 FACES (15) Date: Tuesday 4th February Director: Jafar Panahi Iran 2018 100 mins (subtitles) <i>Starring:</i> Behnaz Jafari, Jafar Panahi</p> <p>3 Faces starts with a film within a film, shot by an aspiring young actress, Marziyeh, on her cell phone. She talks about her shattered dreams of studying at the prestigious Tehran drama school, after she is married off by her disapproving family. She is frantic and apparently suicidal.</p> <p>The film is sent to the celebrated Iranian actress Behnaz Jafari, who is distraught. She ditches her professional duties and sets off across country, with friend Jafar Panahi. Reaching the village, the pair meet up with the wry-humoured townsfolk who hold on to their traditions for dear life, in strangely amusing ways. Although exploring Iranian society's views on art and female actors, 3 Faces ends on a surprisingly optimistic, yet open-ended note.</p>
<p>SINK OR SWIM (15) Date: Tuesday 11th February Director: Gilles Lellouche France 2018 122 mins (subtitles) <i>Starring:</i> Mathieu Amalric, Guillaume Canet, Benoît Poelvoorde</p> <p>Sink or Swim concerns a man in his forties who is depressed because he has been unemployed for two years. He joins an all-male synchronised swimmers' group which is trained by a woman and here he meets other men who, although dealing with their own problems, together are able to understand and help each other while still trying to find meaning in their own lives.</p> <p>Although being teased for doing something associated with women, they all keep focused on sorting out their difficulties. The film succeeds in conveying a credible, feel-good factor and at the same time encapsulates the mid-life crisis syndrome in a humorous and empathetic way.</p>	<p>BAIT (15) Date: 18th February Director: Mark Jenkin UK 2019 89mins <i>Starring:</i> Edward Rowe, Mary Woodvine</p> <p>Tensions rise between locals and tourists in a once-thriving Cornish fishing village. Culture clashes abound as traditional trades and lifestyles are under threat. While one brother scrapes a living selling his catch of fish and lobster door-to-door, the other takes tourists on fishing trips. Forced to sell the family home to incomers from London, arguments about quayside parking and the noise of early morning sailings threaten to turn violent. The Cornish film-maker addresses pressing social issues, but he doesn't caricature the incomers. Shot in grainy black and white, this dreamlike, witty and intriguing tragicomic portrait of Cornwall has been hailed as a modern masterpiece.</p>	<p>THE FAREWELL (PG) Date: Tuesday 3rd March Director: Lulu Wang China 2019 100 mins (some subtitles) <i>Starring:</i> Shuzhen Zhao, Awkwafina</p> <p>To western eyes, this film has a curious plot but it becomes understandable in the telling. Billi has left China aged six, to be brought up in New York. Twenty-four years later, she is called back to attend a wedding that has been arranged purely to conceal from her grandmother that she is dying of lung cancer. Such kindly subterfuge is apparently common practice but Billi finds it hard to accept. She sees again many family members and it is her gradual reacquaintance with her Chinese heritage that provides this compelling, spiky exploration of family duty.</p> <p>A heartfelt, funny, emotional and rewarding film. The screenplay and production are wonderful, prompting The Irish Critic to call it the Best Film of the Year.</p>

THE CHAMBERMAID (15)

Date: Tuesday 10 March

Director: Lila Avilés

Mexico 2018 102 mins (subtitles)

Starring: Gabriela Cartol

Avilés' first film quietly pulses with life in a multi-storey luxury hotel in Mexico. We see the engrossing work of a young, single mother trying her best to be promoted by thorough work, and to study in what spare time she is allowed. There is no life-saving Hollywood romance, just the drudgery of her daily work, problems with her fellow workers and managers and her efforts to improve her life. Cartol acts with sublime understanding of her role. With persistence and wry humour, she rearranges her tasks for variety, wickedly teases the window-cleaners, goes to evening classes and reads Jonathan Livingston Seagull.

A subtle gem of a film, beautifully shot against the boring and colourless back-rooms, lush guest-rooms and the stunning city views.

SORRY WE MISSED YOU (15)

Date: Tuesday 24 March

Director: Ken Loach

UK 2019 101 mins

Starring: Kris Hitchen, Debbie Honeywood

The latest Ken Loach film is full of drama, tension and heartbreak. Ricky and Debbie are the parents of teenage children. Ricky joins the 'gig' economy with a franchise for a parcel delivery firm. The job is sold to him as one where he will become master of his own destiny. Providing, that is, he complies with the labyrinth of deadlines, rules and conditions imposed by the company, a near impossible task.

Debbie is a care worker who wants to care for the old people as though they are her Mam. But her working conditions thwart her in doing the job as she thinks fit. This modern Dickensian story dramatises the conflict between work and family life in contemporary Britain.

OFFICIAL SECRETS (15)

Date: Tuesday 31 March

Director: Gavin Hood

UK/USA 2019 112 mins

Starring: Keira Knightley, Matthew Goode, MyAnna Buring, Matt Smith

In this thriller about true-life events, Keira Knightley stars as Katharine Gun, the British intelligence translator from GCHQ who turns whistleblower. It is 2003 and the run-up to the Iraq invasion. She leaks a top-secret US National Security Agency memo eliciting British help in an illegal spying operation on members of the UN Security Council. The aim was to blackmail them so that they voted for the war in Iraq. Gun leaks the memo to the press where it becomes a sensational front-page scoop in The Observer and subsequently headlines around the world.

Also starring Matt Smith as the Observer journalist and Ralph Fiennes as the human rights lawyer, Ben Emerson.

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