



The Main Feature

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The Banshees of Inisherin

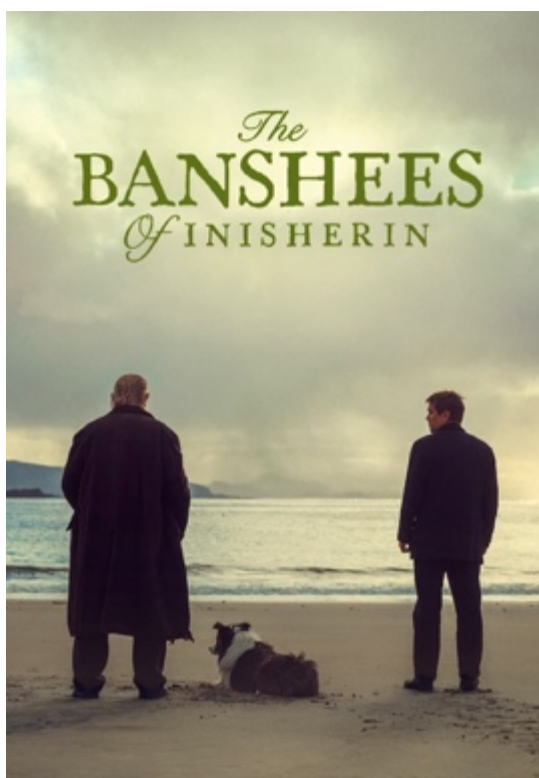
Ireland 2022

100 mins. Certificate 15

Director	Martin McDonagh
Writer	Martin McDonagh
Cinematography	Ben Davis
Music	Carter Burwell

Cast

Pádraic Súilleabháin	Colin Farrell
Colm Doherty	Brendan Gleeson
Siobhán Súilleabháin	Kerry Condon
Jonjo Devine	Pat Shortt
Peadar Kearney	Gary Lydon
Gerry	Jon Kenny
Dominic Kearney	Barry Keoghan
Mrs McCormick	Sheila Flitton



When I was a student, I spent a couple of summers working in a factory-cum-building site that made prefabricated concrete parts of buildings. It was my first encounter with working life, and with men outside my family and my teachers. I was fascinated to watch the behaviour of the permanent employees (all men) I worked with. I concluded firstly that they didn't like students (nobody has to), and secondly that men are mainly children in bigger bodies. This sentiment is echoed by one of the characters in tonight's film *The Banshees of Inisherin* when he says 'What is he, twelve?' as Colm (Brendon Gleeson) decides to cut Pádraic (Colin Farrell) out of his life.

The film is set on a fictional remote island off the west coast of Ireland (actually Inishmore in the Aran Islands in Galway Bay) in 1923, during the Irish civil war which ran from June 1922 to May 1923. The civil war followed the Irish war of independence and the establishment of the Irish Free State. The conflict was between the Provisional Government of Ireland and the Irish Republican Army and centred on the Anglo-Irish treaty which the IRA believed was a betrayal of the Irish Republic that had been proclaimed during the Easter Rising in 1916. The civil war was won by the pro-treaty National Army but

the conflict left Irish society divided. The three largest political parties in Ireland, Fine Gail, Fianna Fáil and Sinn Féin, are all directly descended from the opposing sides in the civil war.

The film is written and directed by Martin McDonagh who is also a playwright. His heritage is Irish although he was brought up in London. His previous films include *In Bruges* (2008, which also brought together Gleeson and Farrell), and *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri* (2017, which the club showed in January 2019). He has a reputation for setting comedy alongside melancholy, and *The Banshees of Inisherin* is no exception. The film revolves around the upset,



confusion and shocking incidents that occur after Colm abruptly ends his lifelong friendship with Pádraic. When Colm expresses his desire to focus on writing folk music and enjoy his remaining years rather than listening to his friend drone on, the humour soon turns to tragedy as his mental state deteriorates along with the companionship.

Interviewed in the Guardian, Martin McDonagh is described as a 'writer, director and creator of small, crazed worlds of fierce people taking their pain out on each other'. He said "It's a really beautiful film, with brilliant performances. And it's funny... but it's sad. No one really tries to make sad films any more." He went on to say he tried to imbue the friends' breakup "with all of the sadness of the breakup of a love relationship... because I think we've all been both parties in that equation. And there's something horrible about both sides. Like knowing you have to break up with someone is a horrible, horrible thing as well. I'm not sure which is the best place to be in."

Interviewed by IMDb, Colin Farrell said about the film "We are an island culture, not just the small island of Inisherin. I forget myself sometimes that the whole island of Ireland has an island culture. We have that sense of coming together, and one of the things that's explored in this film is the importance of community, but to the degree that community can either be the life buoy that allows you to stay aloft or can be the foot that is on the back of your head and is drowning you. Martin McDonagh is always looking at something, always digging. His questions are trying to get at the centre of the human condition and why we express ourselves the way we do, how we love, how we experience loss, why cruelty exists as such a central part of this experience."

The film won four 2023 BAFTAs (Outstanding British Film, Best Supporting Actress (Kerry Condon), Best Supporting Actor (Barry Keoghan) and Best Original Screenplay) but, despite six nominations and being hotly tipped, missed out at the 2023 Oscars.

And what is a banshee? In Irish folklore it is a female spirit who heralds the death of a family member, usually by screaming, shrieking, or keening (wailing a lament). Enjoy the film!

Michael Hipkins



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Club website: www.wncc.org.uk. Prefer to leave your comments on the film and your score online rather than on paper? Email to reactions@wncc.org.uk by Wednesday 20 September 2023

Barbie v Oppenheimer lures Britons back to struggling cinemas

Tom Ambrose, The Guardian, 26 August 2023

It was billed as the definitive box office showdown, but the summer phenomenon that was Barbie v Oppenheimer ultimately proved to be the catalyst to get the UK's struggling cinema sector back on track.

The extraordinary success of both films, released on the same day, pushed admissions in July to more than 17.6m – the biggest month for UK cinemagoing since December 2019. And the popularity of “Barbenheimer” has continued into this month, with experts predicting 13.5m admissions for August.

Their combined takings are now more than £130m, according to the UK Cinema Association, with further screenings to come over the weekend, a bank holiday in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Directed by Greta Gerwig, Barbie has raked in more than £86m at the UK box office, making it the biggest film of 2023 so far. The first movie launched from toymaker Mattel's newly created in-house film division, it has already overtaken Tom Cruise's blockbuster Top Gun sequel Maverick.

Christopher Nolan's Oppenheimer has taken north of £51m, with the two contrasting films combining to give Vue its best weekend since Covid.

The summer's figures are something of a boost to UK cinemas, which have been struggling to recover from closures during the Covid lockdowns. Admissions from May to August are forecast to total about 49.6m – up 8% compared with summer 2022.

However, this is still some way short of 2019, the last full year pre-Covid, when there were 176m admissions, and the 177m in 2018, the highest since 1970. By contrast, admission numbers fell to 44m due to the pandemic.

“For all the positivity, the sector still faces considerable challenges, including cost increases in a range of operating areas, in particular around energy and staffing,” said Phil Clapp, the chief executive of the UK Cinema Association.

“While we all hope for a positive resolution to the current disputes involving actors and

scriptwriters in the US, anything which risks disrupting a supply of film content which is still not back to pre-Covid levels must be a concern.”

In July, the union representing Hollywood actors formally announced a strike, expanding the standoff between Hollywood workers and studio executives over wages, artificial intelligence technology and how to divide the profits of the digital streaming era.

Clapp said: “For all of the rhetoric around audiences having left the cinemagoing experience, box office in 2022 was proportionate to that pre-Covid, when the number of major film titles released is considered. While it is a fool's errand to predict end of year results this far out, we've seen nothing to suggest that that will not also hold true for this year.”

Box office takings from the beginning of May until mid-August this year stood at £396.4m, up 12% on the same period in 2022 and only a few percentage points down on the same time in 2019. This could reflect the significant proportion of premium tickets, such as Imax, bought for Oppenheimer, Clapp said.

It seems there has been no letup in consumers continuing to prioritise spending income on entertainment. There was a 15.8% year-on-year rise in spending in the sector in July, according to Barclays' consumer spending report.

Despite the cost of living crisis, 11% of people cut back on other expenses to afford tickets for concerts and cinema trips, while 10% said they treated themselves to a concert or film ticket in July even though they could not really afford it, the report said.

It comes as parliament launched an inquiry into British film and high-end TV, examining issues around skills and retention as well as challenges posed from the rise of AI. MPs on the culture, media and sport committee will investigate what needs to be done to maintain and enhance the UK as a global destination for production and how the independent film sector can best be supported.

The committee will also examine challenges for British cinemas, following the recent Cineworld restructure and the collapse of the Empire chain.

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2023/aug/26/barbie-oppenheimer-britons-back-struggling-cinema>

Comments and reactions to: **Dream Horse**

No of reaction slips received = 17

Average score = 8.24

Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	~	~	~	~	~	~	1	~	11	4	1

Excellent film to end this season. Very entertaining.

Heart-warming, tear-jerking, crowd-pleasing movie.

Fabulous, funny and a little sad, but all ended well – super.

Immensely likeable. Great performance from Toni Collette. Fun spotting all the 'TV faces'

A suitably feel-good, enjoyable film to end this film season with. I will be back next season!

Nice to have a feel-good film to end the season

Nice end to the season

Brilliant end to the season

Very enjoyable

Position	Film	Average score
1	Dream Horse	8.24
2	Belfast	7.96
3	The Duke	7.75
4	Seven Chances	7.61
5	Elvis	7.59
6	Mandela and de Klerk	7.47
7	After Love	7.36
8	The Perfect Candidate	7.16
9	A Private War	6.95
10	The Band Wagon	6.91
11	Flee	6.79
12	Day for Night	6.57
13	Midnight Cowboy	6.22
14=	The Mole Agent	6.00
14=	Son of Saul	6.00
16	Guardians of the Galaxy	5.53
17	Shadows in Paradise	5.00
18	Pickpocket	4.20
19	L'Eclisse	3.00



Forthcoming attraction: 28 September 2023 - **Mrs Harris Goes to Paris**

Adapted from the 1958 novel *Flowers for Mrs Harris* by Paul Gallico, with Isabel Huppert and Lambert Wilson. *Lesley Manville's Mrs Harris is a warm, hard-working cleaning lady in 1950s London, doggedly going from house to house, quietly tidying up after lives far more exciting and glamorous than hers. But when she sees a Dior dress in one of her regular client's bedrooms, she falls in love and sets her mind on travelling to Paris to get one herself.* Guardian