

CHELMSFORD FILM CLUB

An Independent film society based in Chelmsford

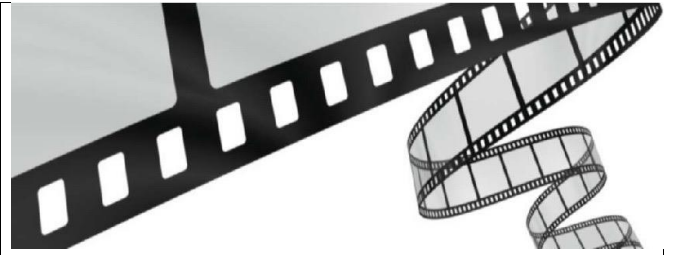
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Wednesday 11th December: THE HOLDOVERS 2023 USA 133 mins

Director: Alexander Payne

Cast:

Paul Giamatti (Paul Hunham); Da'Vine Joy Randolph (Mary Lamb);
Dominic Sessa (Angus Tully)

The highly acclaimed US director Alexander Payne reunited with his Sideways actor Paul Giamatti for possibly his best film yet. It tells the story of a rather strict and very dour Classics teacher who has to chaperone a group of students who have been left to reside at their boarding school over the Christmas holiday. The warm, yet world weary cafeteria manager is also on hand to support. As events unfold the three central characters begin to warm to each other and to us as we learn more about their often deeply troubled lives. The authoritarian Professor (Giamatti) also learns more about himself and his own issues as the narrative progresses.

To say the film is a simple character study of a man who has been the perennial loser in his own life is to do it a great disservice. Giamatti is mesmerising as Paul Hunham, with a face that tells what he is feeling and thinking, with no need for words at all. He was rightly nominated for an Academy Award for this performance and was at one stage, the favourite to win. Da'vine Joy Randolph rightly won best supporting actress as Mary, the second chaperone. She serves as a conduit to the film as we may initially struggle to warm to the other characters. Mary also provides the voice of reason throughout, as arguments and mishaps begin to pile up.

This may not be the most festive film for Xmas but it is a heartwarming tale of acceptance and redemption that is sure to warm the hardest of hearts. It also consolidates Payne's reputation as one of the most interesting directors currently working out of the US.

Our next film: **La Chimera** on **Thursday 23rd January, starting 8pm.**