

CHELMSFORD FILM CLUB

An Independent film society based in Chelmsford

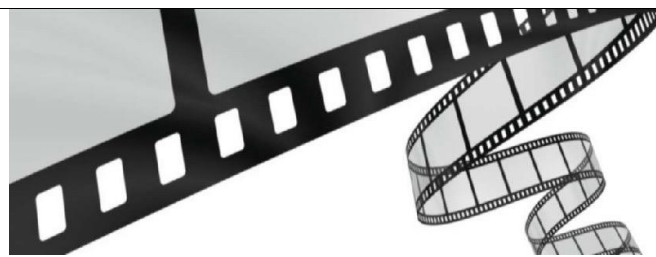
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Wednesday 5 February 2025 **BLACKBIRD, BLACKBIRD, BLACKBERRY**

Dir Elena Naveriani 2023 Georgia 112 mins.

Cast: Eka Chavleishvili (Etero); Temiko Chichinadze (Murman).

Peter Brandshaw in The Guardian of May '24 really enjoyed this film, rating it '4' stars. We hope you might give it '5'! "It starts with a bigger bang than most thrillers" he wrote, though a slow burn to start is often enjoyable if it leads to a final massive conflagration?

Etero is a middle-aged, single woman in a remote Georgian village who is out walking near a steep ravine, collecting blackberries for the cakes she likes to bake. She looks up, transfixed by the beauty of a blackbird - having been, we are perhaps invited to assume, only waiting for this moment to arrive? She loses her footing and disappears from the frame. Director Naveriani switches the viewpoint to something terrifying and vertiginous, straight down to a near death experience. Etero sees her own corpse in a parallel universe of her own stricken imagining. But this heart-stopping near miss, together with early menopausal symptoms, coincide with what could be a whole new lease of life.

While minding the family shop, Etero meets flirtatious delivery man Murman and is soon having a gloriously passionate, sensual and thrilling affair with him. Though Murman isn't always around, Etero, in her solitude, becomes full of gorgeous wondering: what has nearly ended her life has resulted in the ending of her forty-eight years of virginity. What has been, in many ways, a difficult life, has been changed by a miracle.

The film is adapted from a 2020 novel by Georgian writer Tamta Melashvili. Naveriani, in her film version, tells us what most films contrive to ignore: love and sex is not just for the lovely, the sexy and the young.

Please note: our next screening is THE ZONE OF INTEREST on Thursday 27 February, followed by THE COMMANDANT'S SHADOW on Wednesday 12 March. On 12 March there will an opportunity to remain behind in The Studio bar for a discussion of these two Holocaust-themed films.

Our fund-raising raffle! We would love to have your feed-back on this recent innovation. On 23 January we sold 68 tickets and so made £68 for the club. Many thanks to all who supported us!

