

SING STREET – Film at CONCA VERDE on 06.02.17 - Talk by Tia PEYTON

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The film

SING STREET takes us back to 1980s Dublin seen through the eyes of a 14-year-old boy named Conor who is looking for a break from a home strained by his parents' relationship and money troubles, while trying to adjust to his new inner-city public school where the kids are rough and the teachers are rougher. He finds a glimmer of hope in the mysterious, über-cool and beautiful Raphina, and with the aim of winning her heart he invites her to star in his band's music videos. There's only one problem: he's not part of a band...yet. She agrees, and now Conor must deliver what he's promised - calling himself "Cosmo" and immersing himself in the vibrant rock music trends of the decade, he forms a band with a few lads, and the group pours their heart into writing lyrics and shooting videos.

Sing Street is a 2016 musical comedy-drama film written, co-produced and directed by John Carney. Starring Lucy Boynton, Maria Doyle Kennedy, Jack Reynor, Kelly Thornton and Ferdia Walsh-Peelo, the story revolves around a boy starting a band to impress a girl.

The plot

Sing Street takes place in Dublin, 1985. The so-called Celtic Tiger is years in the future, and prospects for Irish kids look bleak. In the opening sequences, the Irish are shown emigrating to London in droves, seeking work and a hopeful future.

That moment-in-time backdrop is essential to the wonderful "Sing Street", a movie about escape, identity, dreams vs reality, young love, and music (and because this is 1985, it's also about that new-fangled mind-blowing innovation called a "music video"). John Carney has a humorous and loving eye for detail, an intuitive ear for dialogue, and the film is extremely personal in a way that is universal.

This is the beginning of the eighties and everybody is moving to the beat of Pop music, as the brand-new concept of the music video appears on television for the first time. On the other hand, in Dublin, Conor, a teenager with a sensitive heart, is trying to deal with a tense family relationship, reconnect with his older brother, while dealing with the hostile environment of his new public school... But then one day, he saw her. Tall, with long chestnut hair, a buttery complexion and big, blue eyes, an enigmatically beautiful girl was standing in front of the gate of his school, indolently observing people passing by. Who is she and how could a boy ever get noticed by such a distant girl? Easy... he would form a band! With every lyric Conor writes, the gap narrows and with every song he plays, her heart fills with affection. In a sea of opportunities ahead of them, what does the future hold for a love like this?

The surrounding cast is superb, both the broad stereotypes and the eccentric weirdos in the band. Adolescence is one of the most self-involved phases of life, and that's as it should be. Kids develop their characters and try on different identities, looking for a good fit (Conor goes from dressing like Simon LeBon to Morrissey, and you get the sense he's just getting started). One of the most essential elements of adolescence is finding like-minded friends: people who obsess about the same things, people who "get" you. Whether it be serious-jock baseball players (as in Richard Linklater's "Everybody Wants Some!!!") or devoted music obsessives, it's the same goal: Find your people, find your own tribe.

CONNECTIONS TO ACTUAL EVENTS

Ever heard of a band U2 or as you in Italy call them "Gli U DUE"!!!

Well, their story is not that different.

The band formed at Mount Temple Comprehensive School in 1976 when the members were teenagers with limited musical proficiency. Within four years, they signed with Island Records and released their debut album *Boy* in 1980.

Reviews

The film had its world premiere at the Sundance Film Festival on 24 January 2016. It was released in Ireland on 17 March 2016, in the United States on 15 April and in the United Kingdom on 20 May. The film received positive reviews from critics and grossed \$13 million worldwide, and was nominated for Best Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy at the Golden Globes.

On review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, the film has an approval rating of 96% based on 167 reviews and an average rating is 8.1/10. The site's critical consensus reads, "*Sing Street* is a feel-good musical with huge heart and irresistible

optimism, and its charming cast and hummable tunes help to elevate its familiar plotting." On Metacritic, the film has a score of 79 out of 100 based on 37 critics, indicating "generally favorable reviews".

Guy Lodge of Variety.com gave the film a positive review, writing "Perched on a tricky precipice between chippy kitchen-sink realism and lush wish-fulfilment fantasy, this mini-*Commitments* gets away with even its cutesiest indulgences thanks to a wholly lovable ensemble of young Irish talent and the tightest pop tunes —riffing on Duran Duran and the Cure with equal abandon and affection—any gaggle of Catholic schoolboys could hope to write themselves. Given the right marketing and word of mouth, this Weinstein Co. release could *Sing* a song of far more than sixpence."

In *The Observer*, Mark Kermode gave the film four out of five stars, writing: "When it comes to capturing the strange, romantic magic of making music, few modern film-makers are more on the money than John Carney." He added, "The bittersweet, 'happy sad' drama that follows has drawn inevitable, if misguided, comparisons with *The Commitments*, yet tonally this is closer to the teen spirit of Todd Graff's 2009 film *Bandslam* [...] or even Richard Linklater's sublime *School of Rock*. As Carney has proved previously, he knows how to straddle the line between the sound in the room and the sound in your head – a sequence that goes from bedroom composition to living room rehearsal (with tea and biscuits) to full studio production perfectly negotiates the space between kitchen-sink realism and musical fantasy in which this lovely, lyrical movie casts its spell". Kermode concluded by saying, "Happy sad indeed. I laughed, I cried, I bought the soundtrack album."

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The film show

This is the fourth film in English this year. The next film will also be in English – the title being AMERICAN PASTORAL and followed by INFERNO. There will be 21 films altogether till the summer – 18 in English, 1 in French, 1 in German and 1 in Spanish.

Enjoy the film!