

MINARI

USA (2021) 115 minutes

Director: Lee Isaac Chung

Cast: Steven Yeun (Jacob)
Yeri Han (Monica)
Youn Yuh-jung (Soonja)
Alan Kim (David)
Noel Kate Cho (Anne)



Screening 4th January 2023 at Swindon Art Centre

Synopsis

A tender and sweeping story about what roots us, *Minari* follows a Korean-American family that moves to an Arkansas farm in search of their own American Dream. The family home changes completely with the arrival of their sly, foul-mouthed, but incredibly loving grandmother. Amidst the instability and challenges of this new life in the rugged Ozarks, *Minari* shows the undeniable resilience of family and what really makes a home.

Reviews



With liberal use of the expansive mid-western skies and gauzy afternoon sun, Chung conjures something elemental and sweeping from this tapestry of small moments. *Minari* takes his own experiences as a boy growing up in Arkansas and forges something almost Malickian from them (think *The Tree of Life* without the dinosaurs and intellectual grandeur) as it explores our link to, and responsibilities for, the land and each other. It's at once intimate and expansive – a film with a big heart and not a bad word to say about anyone.

Phil de Semlyen, Time Out

Part of Chung's film has the gentle, hazy energy of a memory – set in the Eighties, it draws partially from his own childhood experiences. Lachlan Milne's cinematography is drenched in golden rays, Emile Mosseri's score twinkles like stars, and the narrative often focuses on Jacob and Monica's endearing but mischievous son David (Alan Kim, who is impossible not to love). When his parents fight, he and his older sister Anne (Noel Kate Cho, who's more passive, but absorbs everything like a sponge) make paper airplanes scribbled with the words "Don't fight!" and propel them into the air. Their white neighbours are shown in a fairly generous light. Their racism is limited to the odd ignorant comment and intrusive question.

Clariss Loughrey, Independent

Film Facts

- Oscar 2021 & BAFTA 2021 : Best supporting actress for Youn Yuh-jung.
- Grand Jury and Audience Awards – 2020 Sundance Festival.
- Minari is the Korean word for an edible plant that is native to east Asia.
- The American author Willa Cather who wrote about life on the Great Plains inspired Lee Isaac Chung for *Minari*.