

Volume

28

Number 10

October 2025



Website
<https://www.williamstown-film-society.org>
Email
michaeljslee58@gmail.com
Phone
0490 863 602

Council Chamber of the Town Hall, 104 Ferguson St, Williamstown, 7.30pm, Wednesday 29th October, 2025.

On A Clear Day

A review by Anna Smith, 30th August 2005, *timeout.com*

Aiming squarely at the family-friendly 'Full Monty' market, this Scottish-set drama follows the feelgood formula with dogged determination. Not unlike the determination of its hero Frank (Peter Mullan), a redundant shipyard worker who – macho pride dented by job loss and panic attacks – resolves to swim the Channel. A gruff man of few words, the benefits of



Peter Mullan as Frank about to enter deep water

Frank's actions become clear when he begins to make tentative amends with his estranged son (Jamie Sives). Empowered by proxy are Frank's chums, ex-colleague Danny (Billy Boyd) and takeaway restaurant owner Chan (Benedict Wong). By helping Frank train, weedy Danny proves his strength while Chan gains the confidence to stand up to dismissive locals. Their male bonding is light-hearted and broadly humorous (mostly thanks to Boyd), and characters' psyches are not probed too deeply. Still, Mullan effectively conveys Frank's troubled character and Brenda Blethyn is equally reliable as his wife Joan, whose own mission is to become a bus driver. That each keeps their plans secret from the other indicates the general themes of failed communication and repressed emotions. It takes a dramatic event to rock the entrenched barriers between wife and husband, father and son, with the latter relationship providing an unexpectedly moving moment at the end. It's the only surprise in a pleasantly predictable film which ultimately demonstrates rather less ambition than its protagonist.

Another review by Rich Cline, 3rd June 2005 *shadowsonthewall.com*

Yet another film in the *Full Monty* mould--about men seeking dignity and meaning after losing their jobs--this engaging film has a thoughtful, witty tone that makes it worth seeing even if it feels a bit simplistic.

Frank (Mullan) is a 55-year-old Glaswegian, made redundant when his shipyard closes. He's never recovered from the death of his son years ago, which has strained his relationship with his wife (Blethyn) and surviving son (Sives), who's now a father himself. His passion is swimming with his pals (Boyd,

McGinley and Cook), so he hatches a secret plan to swim the English Channel, and to achieve something in a world that seems to have passed him by.

This is the kind of film that sinks or swims (sorry!) in its performances and in the filmmakers' ability to avoid syrupy sentiment. Fortunately, everyone maintains an open-hearted honesty while avoiding too much sap. When the emotion comes, the film has earned it, simply because the characters are so believable. Mullan, as always, finely captures Frank's shattered emptiness and tenacious pursuit of what looks like a pointless goal. And he's very strongly supported by the entire cast. Sives has the most interesting role, as a young man who can't escape the pain of his past and yet still loves life. And Boyd is good fun in the comic relief role, which is rather simplistically goofy but gives the film a badly needed shot of cheeky energy.

Director Dellal and cinematographer David Johnson shoot the film beautifully, skilfully catching the natural beauty. But the elegiac tone is almost undermined by corny TV-movie music and some wobbly editing that includes hokey montages and lots of wispy flashbacks. These are rather overdone and also annoyingly elusive, since Dellal and writer Rose take their time telling us exactly what happened to create all this familial tension. Fortunately, the central relationships--father and son, husband and wife--are strong enough to overcome this. And a willingness to let the characters be fairly unlikeable actually adds grit and verve to the film, and makes the final sequence surprisingly thrilling.



Supper Roster

MONTH	MEMBER(S)	MONTH	MEMBER(S)
June 25 <i>The Terminal</i>	Jayne & Mary (Thank you)	July 30 <i>I'm Your Man</i>	Annie & Therese (thank you)
August 27 <i>Red, White & Brass</i>	Jake & Ollie (Thank you)	September 24 <i>The Colour of Paradise</i>	Vicki & Peter (Thank you)
October 29 <i>On A Clear Day</i>	Doug Bews	November 26 <i>The Long, Long Trailer</i>	Dee Falloon

Starbox Results

	5	4	3	2	1	Average
The Colour Of Paradise	8	8	3	2	0	4.0

To watch a trailer (& read more) head to the 2024 program on our website

[https://: www.williamstown-film-society.org](https://www.williamstown-film-society.org)