

Shipham Community Cinema

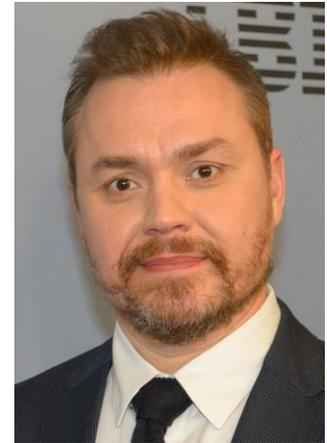
presents

Hidden Figures - Cert PG



Director: Theo Melfi. Starring Taraji P Henson, Olivia Spencer, Janelle Monae, Kevin Costner

It is the early 1960s and the Soviets appear to be ahead in the space race following the successful flight of Yuri Gagarin. The US is desperate to gain the upper hand and push their nascent NASA programme to the limit in order to be the first nation to send a manned spacecraft to the moon. Our film tonight, '*Hidden Figures*' tells the relatively unknown story of Katharine G Johnson (played by *Taraji P Henson*), Dorothy Vaughan (*Olivia Spencer*) and Mary Jackson (*Janelle Monae*), three black women in Virginia who hold important and valuable positions within the NASA organization, computing numbers and making engineering contributions that lead to the USA's groundbreaking achievements in the space race. Our film interweaves tales of human excellence amidst the tense and bewildering background of race discrimination.



Director Melfi's movie, based on a true tale told originally in Margot Lee Shatterley's book, shows us a group of black women buried deep in the basement of a building far away from the main research and development action within the NASA complex. '*Hidden Figures*' follows three of them who eventually



helped John Glenn's first successful manned flight into space. Dorothy does the work of a supervisor without the status or the pay. Not only does she get the work done, she realizes that the future of her computing department is changing and so takes it upon herself to learn the new computer language in order

to understand the code of the new IBM mainframe installation and to teach that code to others. Mary has an engineer's talent but struggles to progress because the higher qualifications are only available from an all-white college from which she is barred. Katharine is a single mother, as well as a mathematical genius, who works to invent new calculations so that Glenn's flight may be successful whilst she is even denied the opportunity to use the department's coffee pot reserved for white colleagues only.

Melfi's film is assured and well executed and establishes the difficulty women and black women in particular experienced as they struggled for recognition. The difficulties they faced are handled humorously on some occasions and depicted more dramatically at other times. Dorothy finds herself

frequently at odds, for example, with a white personnel supervisor (played by *Kirsten Dunst*), who has a penchant for looking down her nose at African-American employees. Al Harrison, the lead Director of the space flight project (*Kevin Costner*), is the character who, whilst seemingly oblivious to the difficulty that his black technicians are experiencing, eventually prioritises talent over race in order for the project to succeed.



Perhaps *Hidden Figures* doesn't quite reach the heights of a true classic but the inspirational swell of emotion that its story portrays makes for a truly entertaining cinema experience. Dorothy, Katharine and Mary whose know-how and competence were so strong could not be denied either as women or black Americans. Enjoy!

Doors at 7.15pm, programme commencing 7.45pm.

TONIGHT'S PROGRAMME:

Pre-show: Some music from one of tonight's main feature stars, Janelle Monae

Announcements

Trailers for:

'Their Finest' - our main show on 8th December

'Sing' - our family Christmas show on Saturday 16th December

A Short film - 'Secret Number'

Main feature (121 mins) with a break after about an hour

We welcome your feedback. Tell us what you thought of the show on our Facebook page, by email to cinema@shiphamhall.co.uk or by filling out a feedback form, (hand it to any committee member).

Our usual many thanks to our sponsors:

