

Shipham Community Cinema

presents

Moonlight - Cert 15

Director: Barry Jenkins. Starring Mahershala Ali, Trevante Rhodes

Based on a play in three acts by Terrell Alvin McCraney and written and directed by Barry Jenkins, *Moonlight* is set around Miami's Liberty Square, an impoverished and predominantly African American neighbourhood where both McCraney and Jenkins grew up.

This superb film follows young Chiron, a quiet and shy African American who as a child, doesn't really fit in with the more aggressive and athletic boys in his neighbourhood. Chiron as a nine-year-old looks to Juan



Mahershala Ali

(*Mahershala Ali*), a Miami drug dealer and Juan's girlfriend Teresa (*Janelle Monae*) as replacement parent figures. Chiron struggles with being bullied by his classmates and has an awkward relationship with his mother Paula (*Naomie Harris*) who is addicted to narcotics. Chiron develops a significant friendship with Kevin, a relationship with strong undertones of a romantic connection. As the film progresses we see Chiron evolve into teenage-hood and manhood as he tries to make sense of his social difficulties, his mother's addiction, his more-than-friendship with Kevin, and his own emergent sexuality.



Director Jenkins has crafted with his adapted screenplay the smallest and quietest of films that lands with the force of a heavyweight uppercut. He gives us a trilogy of chapters that paints a whole. Chiron's three incarnations, the pre-teen 'Little' (*Alex Hibbert*), the adolescent 'Chiron' (*Ashton Sanders*) and the young adult, 'Black' (*Trevante Rhodes*) could not have been better cast. They portray the respective frustrations,

confusion, quiet acceptance of whom and where they are perfectly and naturally, without demanding that we, the audience, take notice of any 'injustice' they might feel.

The supporting cast members play their parts beautifully helping make Jenkins' film feel like something special. *Mahershala Ali* and *Andre Holland* (who plays Kevin), deliver soulful and at times heartbreaking performances in their roles as Chiron's protector and first-lover respectively. *Naomie Harris* is outstanding as is *Janelle Monae*. They give us character studies stretching from abusive and crack-cocaine addicted birth mother Paula to kindly and charismatic mother-substitute Teresa.

The film's production values are high. Nicholas Britell's score is exquisite, consisting almost entirely of piano and solo violin. The music accentuates the quiet and lonely sadness that permeates the film. The gorgeous lighting and polished cinematography act as a companion to the music. The saturated blues and yellows of Chiron's shuttered daily life give way to the dark navy freedom of the beach at night, acting as a symbol of who he is and who he is to become. All of this makes the movie's world feel vibrant and alive and sometimes even volatile capturing perfectly the dramatic nature of Chiron's character.

Moonlight has enjoyed much success on its release in the US and worldwide. It has earned back more than twice its production costs. More important than that, the movie represents a boon to independent cinema and shows that its audiences have a good appetite for unassuming, intelligent fare. Its success also represents a nuanced view of both racial and sexual diversity that has been under-represented in film in the past. Our movie is a haunting reflection on African American masculinity and fully deserves its outstanding Oscar nominations and its status as the 2017 Academy's film of the year.



Trevante Rhodes

Doors at 7.15pm, programme commencing 7.45pm.

TONIGHT'S PROGRAMME:

Announcements

Trailers for:

'The Olive Tree' - our extra show on 26th January

'Denial' - our main feature on 9th February

'Lady Macbeth' - our extra show on 23rd February

Short film - 'High Diving Giraffes' (no connection with tonight's film whatsoever)

Main feature (111 mins) with a break after about an hour. A lot of the dialogue in this film is difficult to understand so we have decided to display the Hard of Hearing subtitles.

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:

