



The Main Feature

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UK/Canada/Ireland 2016 Cert 12A 1hr 52m

Directed by John Crowley
Screenplay by Nick Hornby
Cinematography Yves Belanger
Music by Michael Brook
Edited by Jake Roberts

Cast

Saoirse Ronan as Ellis Lacey
Emory Cohen as Anthony "Tony" Fiorello
Domhnall Gleeson as Jim Farrell
Jim Broadbent as Father Flood
Julie Walters as Madge Kehoe
Brid Brennan as Miss Kelly
Fiona Glascott as Rose Lacey



In light of the recent executive order issued by President Trump, allied to the content of tonight's film, I thought it appropriate to recall that the plaque at the base of the Statue of Liberty reads: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Brooklyn received a standing ovation at its Sundance Film Festival premiere. On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes the film holds an approval rating of 97%, based on 222 reviews, with an average rating of 8.5/10. Made on a budget of \$11 million, it became a box office success. It grossed a total of \$38.3 million in North America and \$23.8 million in other territories.

Montreal served as the main setting for *Brooklyn* in the film for most of the interior as well as exterior scenes as there simply weren't enough original 50s buildings left to film in the Big Apple.

In his own novels, including *High Fidelity*, *About a Boy*, and *Fever Pitch*, Nick Hornby always displayed a knack for tuning in to the concerns and neuroses of the modern man, but his career in adapted screenplays has surprised many by focusing on women's stories. With *An Education*, *Wild* and now *Brooklyn*, he has helped to create three memorable leading roles for women, all of them Oscar-nominated.

Your adaptations of other people's work have largely had female leads, which is unusual for Hollywood.

Yes. Not *Wild*, because Reese was there and it was easy, but we had trouble funding the other two. The advantages are that when you've got a big female part then you have the choice of the best actresses in the world. So I've enjoyed it because of that choice that you have. Whereas, you know, if it was a guy, they'd be tempted to go and put a superhero suit on and earn \$50m instead.

What do you think America meant to European immigrants of the time period of Brooklyn?

I know kind of exactly what it meant because I lived through a milder version of it. I was a kid in the 1960s and I read Marvel Comics. For me it was the adverts in the back of the comics that made me think, "People can buy this stuff in America? These bug toys and x-ray specs?" We had nothing like that at all. I think Americans cannot understand just how different it was to live in U.S. society then. We just envied everything. There's one line in

Brooklyn where Eilis is talking about the winters to one of her customers and she says, “You’re only cold outside here.” Even in the 1960s and the 1970s there were so many parts of England where you were cold inside. Nobody had central heating because the housing was incredibly old. Lots of people still had outside toilets.

Religion is a major undercurrent throughout the film. For example, the whole reason Eilis is in America is because a priest helped her, and God is mentioned in each one of those wonderful dinner conversations at Mrs. Kehoe’s boarding house. Why is religion so important to this story?

Because it was important to Irish people in the 1950s. The Church permeated everything and was incredibly important. Last night one of the questions from the New York Film Festival audience mentioned divorce and Colm [Tóibín, author of the novel] had a brilliant answer. He said, “My mother didn’t know everything, but she was absolutely sure that were two people in Hell. She knew that Adolf Hitler was in hell, and the other was Elizabeth Taylor!” [Laughs] It was Elizabeth Taylor because of all the divorces. There was no doubt in Colm’s mother’s mind that Elizabeth Taylor was going to Hell, and that’s why Eilis doesn’t divorce Tony. Divorce was kind of a big deal then.

There are three supporting characters that stand out to me because of their dialogue: Miss Kelly, Mrs. Kehoe, and Tony’s youngest brother. Do you enjoy writing scene-stealing characters like that, or do you find them more difficult to write because they have moments where they have to hit the audience and then get out before the next scene?

I absolutely love writing minor characters. One thing that I think I’ve realized is that minor characters are where it’s at in terms of lifting the quality of a film. You have to take care of your leads, but if people love minor characters you’re on a different plateau. Then it feels like the movie is being made with love and care. For a start – and this is a huge thing – if you’ve written a proper part for a minor character you’re going to an actor of an altogether different magnitude to do it. There are not too many of those Mrs. Kehoe scenes and it’s probably just two days work. But there are not millions of those parts, and we got Julie *fucking* Walters, Oscar-nominee, to do this part and having a blast with it as well. If you don’t provide that kind of stuff for those roles you might get a good and competent actress, but you’re not going to get someone who sets the screen on fire. We got Rosamund Pike in *An Education* and she really gave that movie an extra something just being Rosamund Pike in that part.

But again, if you haven’t provided something for them to do, you’re not going to get them. Independent filmmakers especially talk all the time about “casting up” because you need all the help you can get, and the best way to cast up is to make sure that the minor characters are interesting, funny, different, and memorable. Then if you want to send the script to a really good actor and say, “Look, it’s a day or two day’s work, but you get to say this” then something really great could come out of it.

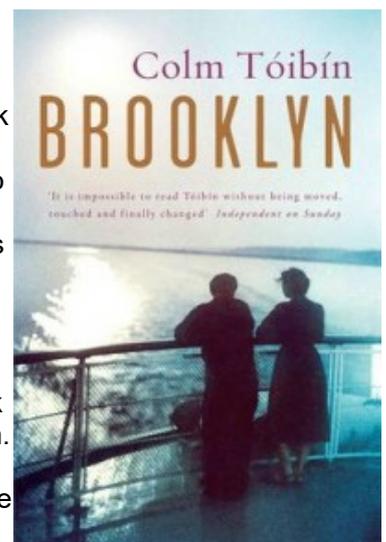
What was the toughest part to adapt?

My real worry was how late Jim [Domhnall Gleeson] came into the story, and that was where the most fine work went, to try to shove him up a bit. In the book, I think he comes in on page 220 of a 260 page book. Domhnall understood that his job was to be a viable alternative [to Emory Cohen’s Tony]. He said to John, “I have to think that this is my tragedy,” which was a very good way of looking at it. So even though he only had a limited amount of screen time, the way to approach it was as a film about how he falls in love with this girl and she leaves him.

Was there any scene in particular that was hard to lose?

The thing that we tried to keep and it didn’t work is a really good scene in the book about the trouble in the store when they sell stockings designed for ‘negro’ women. One of Eilis’s colleagues quits over it. But the movie is so close on her all the time that anything that felt like a detour didn’t work. It was shot, and you can still see the stockings in the store, but we had to take it out.

Iain McGlashan



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Saroo Brierley: The real-life search behind the film Lion



He was the tiny boy from a poor family in India who fell asleep on a train and woke up 1,000 miles from home.

After fending for himself on the streets, five-year-old Saroo made it to an orphanage, where he was adopted by Australian couple Sue and John Brierley to begin a new life in Tasmania.

Years later, as a young man, he yearned to discover more about his origins. So he began an ambitious Google Earth search that would prove to be fateful.

Now his story has been told in *Lion*, a Hollywood film starring Dev Patel and Nicole Kidman

The image of Saroo's birth mother burned in his mind. He set out to find her with a laptop and unwavering determination.

It became an obsession. For years he pored over satellite photos night after night.

"I used mathematics and everything I could remember about the landmarks and the architecture of my home town," Saroo tells the BBC.

Saroo wrote down his experience - including what happened next - in a memoir that spawned *Lion*, which opens in the UK and Australia this week. It has already screened in the US, and is hoping to generate awards buzz.

"I never thought that something like this would come to someone like me. I'm a pretty laid-back kind of person," Saroo says. "People are just so enthralled and enchanted by the movie."

When his book achieved success, Saroo took time out from his job selling industrial equipment in his father's business in Hobart. Now he has a packed schedule of film promotional tours. His life has changed again.

Saroo's adoptive mother, Sue, hopes the film could help transform other lives too.

"Sadly we've got a lot more war happening [now] and I believe there are just as many children wishing they could join a family," she says. "They're orphans of war, and just abandoned in camps." Adoption should happen "a lot more", she says.

The film's cast has also supported fundraising to help the millions of children living on India's streets.

Nicole Kidman has said she was moved to tears by the film's "beautiful" depiction of an adoptive mother's love. "I really admire her as an actress," says Sue. "She's Australian, she's an adoptive mother - we're really on the same page."

Slumdog Millionaire star Patel spent eight months honing his Australian accent, bulking up and growing his hair out for *Lion*. "His devotion in this film has just been amazing," Saroo says.

As for himself, Saroo says he has returned to India more than a dozen times, but Tasmania remains home. "That's where my heart is, that's where my family is, that's where my friends are," he says.

Comments and reactions to: **Eddie the Eagle**

I did have fun - splendid

Great fun

Fun film

Feel good movie

A great feel good film!

A wonderful feel good film

Heart warming film very well made

A happy happy film

The ultimate Brexit feel good movie

Absolutely great

The ultimate feel good movie - brilliant

Great photography – loved it

A bit formulaic and about 20 minutes too long

Not great but truly enjoyable

Interesting but a 30 min doc. would have done it! Mad but fun

Uplifting

My sort of film – good fun and feel good factor: much enjoyed

Uplifting

I remember Eddie in Canada – a good film for a dull January night

A wonderful entertaining film – production, effects, acting all first rate!

Quite good fun, interesting crash photography – got better after the interval

Very exciting – I would like to know how they set up the cameras for the ski jumps

Highly enjoyable. Another WNCC good choice. We enjoyed having a good laugh

I suppose the moral is you must bear a lot of pain to realise your dreams. Keep on dreaming!!

Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	~	~	~	~	~	1	4	6	20	5	2

No of reaction slips received = 38

Average Score = 7.79

Position	Film	Average Score
1 st	Bridge of Spies	8.24
2 nd	Spotlight	8.17
3 rd	Eddie the Eagle	7.79
4 th	The Good Lie	7.5
5 th	Carol	6.97
6 th	Gunfight at the OK Corral	6.9
7 th	The Big Parade	6.82
8 th	Hector	6.44
9 th	Comme Une Image	5.82

Our next film on 23 February 2017:



A positive and personal Israeli film that offers an understated and thought-provoking vision of the West Bank troubles.

“It’s worth seeing Lemon Tree simply for the performance of Hiam Abbass, who is magnificent in her dignity and determination.”

“A poignant performance from Hiam Abbas lies at the heart of this allegorical drama which is sensitively observed and patiently directed by Eran Riklis.”

“Inspired by a real-life incident, this captivating Israeli film is both a compelling story of self-determination and an astute evaluation of the current state of a divided territory.”