



The Main Feature

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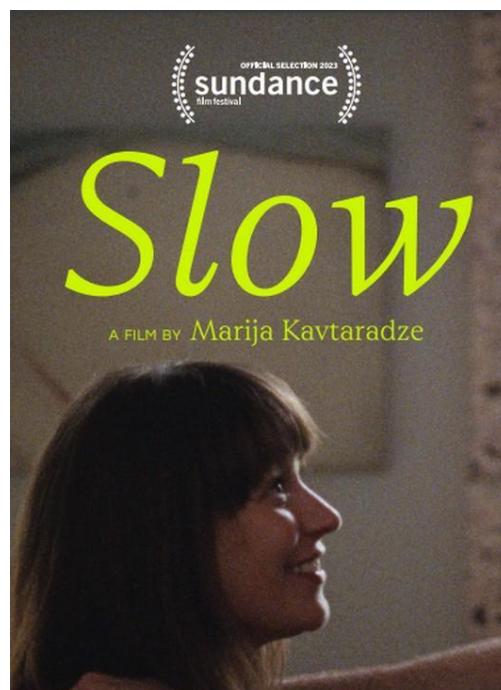
Slow (Tu man nieko neprimeni)

Lithuania 2023, 108 min Cert 15

Director	Marija Kavtaradzė
Writer	Marija Kavtaradzė
Cinematography	Laurynas Bareisa
Production Design	Sigita Simkunaite
Editing	Silvija Vilkaite
Music	Irya Gmeyner and Martin Hederos

Cast

Greta Grinevičiūtė	Elena
Kęstutis Cicėnas	Dovydas
Pijus Ganusauskas	Vilius
Laima Akstinaite	Viktorija
Vaiva Zymante	Vilte
Mantas Barvicius	Jokubas
Rimante Valiukaite	Elena's mother



As far as I know, tonight's film *Slow* is the first example of Lithuanian cinema shown by the club. The director is Marija Kavtaradzė who studied filmmaking at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre from 2010 to 2014. In her short career (she is only 33 years old) she has: directed five short films; co-wrote the feature film *The Saint* in 2016, directed by fellow Lithuanian director and screenwriter Andrius Blaževičius; and in 2021 co-wrote another feature film *Runner*. She wrote and directed her own first feature film, *Summer Survivors* in 2018 which she describes as a film 'which tackles mental health problems in a very delicate way'.

The title *Slow* was inspired by a Leonard Cohen song, and differs from the Lithuanian *Tu man nieko neprimeni*, whose literal meaning is 'You Don't Remind Me of Anything'. *Slow* tells how dancer Elena (Greta Grinevičiūtė) and sign language interpreter Dovydas (Kęstutis Cicėnas) meet and form a bond. As they progress into a new relationship, Dovydas reveals he is asexual, but would still like to

pursue a romantic relationship with her. For Elena, who feeds on the electricity of flirtation and sexual arousal, this proves to be a difficult concept for her to fully comprehend.

Marija Kavtaradzė describes it as a love story where characters try not to be led by any representation of how love should look. 'For me *Slow* is about different physical needs and how it affects the relationship, relationship with your own body, expectations that we have for romance, gender roles in relationships, the need to get approval through desire and sex. Above all it's about self-acceptance and honesty with yourself and others.'



She was asked in what way dance is a way of expressing the physicality of the characters? She said 'I think you can tell everything through dance. One of my favourite (and also most awkward) scenes is when Elena and Dovydas are dancing at the wedding. He is doing this silly dance and doesn't care what others think at all. Elena, a professional dancer, is following his lead but is super self-conscious. She is worried that others are

not dancing, she is aware of how silly they look. It's beautiful, but at the same time I think this dance already shows the biggest difficulties that they will encounter. So yeah, I think you can tell everything through dance. Also, through dance we get to know Elena's physicality, her sensuous nature, and even see her desires and passion for life and love.

The film was made in 'luscious 16mm' (BFI), a format presumably chosen because of the lower cost. 16mm was widely used for television documentaries and dramas before the advent of digital cameras, and was employed for the cult mockumentary *This is Spinal Tap* as well as the Cornish drama *Bait*, shown by the club in 2021.

The critics were largely kind to the film. The BFI said 'Since asexuality – defined by a lack of sexual attraction – is perceived as largely invisible, films about it seem deprived of desire's more conventional signifiers. But even when Elena and Dovydas kiss or have sex, this is not where their intimacy blooms. Like the film's internal rhythm of long takes and rapid cuts, their love also ebbs and flows. *Slow* maps out desires and dreams through minute glances, gestures, and silences. Watching it feels like falling in love.'

Variety said 'Theirs is a love story that touches on well-worn tropes (about jealousy, commitment and the like) and yet they're made to feel quite new. Neither dryly didactic nor neutered when it comes to its depiction of asexuality, *Slow* reveals itself to be quite a tender portrait of love and companionship, of what our bodies yearn and want in others, and how we could do well to upend the stories we tell each other about living and loving another.'

The Guardian noted 'Shot on 16mm film, *Slow* looks grainy and pleasingly tactile, a fitting look for a film that is interested in many sides of the human touch – how it can soothe, arouse and even spark discord. The gentle naturalism of *Slow*'s style – full of long takes, restrained dialogue and a moving handheld camera that makes liberal use of closeups – gives the story a homespun, intimate feel. Dovydas's experience of asexuality, an underrepresented subject on screen, is portrayed with care. With strong performances by Grinevičiūtė and Cicėnas, Elena and Dovydas's relationship unfolds at a gentle, unhurried pace, their growing attraction indicated by small details – coy glances, long, loaded pauses between conversation – that reward attentive viewing.'



The film was shown at the Sundance festival in January 2022 where it won the Directing Award – World Cinema.

Michael Hipkins

BAFTAs, Césars, Oscars: and social media

How did *Emilia Perez* fare at the recent awards ceremonies? The film, written and directed by Frenchman Jacques Audiard, tells the story of a Mexican cartel leader who plans to disappear and transition into a woman, with the help of a lawyer. The film won the Jury Prize at Cannes in 2024 and four Golden Globes; and had received 11 nominations for the BAFTAs and 13 nominations for the Oscars. The film stars Karla Sofia Gascón, a transgender actor, and the first trans woman nominated for the best actress Oscar. The film, a musical, won praise from critics and fellow film makers alike, although it attracted criticism from LGBTQ organisations¹, Mexico² and other South American countries, and for its portrayal of drug trafficking³.



All that was before it was revealed, in January 2025, that Gascón had posted controversial tweets on her Twitter account⁴, verbally attacking Muslims, George Floyd and diversity at the Academy Awards. She made another comment towards Islam, one of anti-Catalan sentiment and one attacking Christianity and Catholicism too. She made a racist comment towards China in August 2020. The film had been acquired by Netflix: a senior executive described the discovery of the tweets as 'a bummer'. The publicity campaign was altered and Gascón withdrew from some events. All this led to a

lengthening of the odds for a big Oscars win⁵.

So how did the awards season treat *Emilia Perez*? At the BAFTAs it won two awards, for best supporting actress (Zoe Saldaña) and best film not in the English language. At the Césars, it took seven awards for: best film, best director, best adaptation, best cinematography, best sound, best original music and best visual effects – but nothing for the actors. It left the highly tipped *Count of Monte Cristo*, which received 14 nominations, in the dust.

At the Oscars, it won just two awards from those 13 nominations: Zoe Saldaña took home Best Supporting Actress, and it won the award for best original song.

What might we conclude from all this? Maybe film producers and casting directors should keep a closer eye on social media.

Michael Hipkins



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Club website: www.wncc.org.uk. Prefer to leave your comments on the film and your score online rather than on paper? Email to reactions@wncc.org.uk by Wednesday 19 March 2025
Discs of previous shows are available to hire for a modest fee.

¹ <https://glaad.org/emilia-perez-is-not-good-trans-representation/>

² <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jan/08/emilia-perez-film-mexico-misrepresentation>

³ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/culture/article/20250121-why-some-mexicans-are-criticising-oscar-tipped-emilia-perez>

⁴ <https://variety.com/2025/film/news/karla-sofia-gascon-tweets-muslims-george-floyd-backlash-emilia-perez-1236291448/>

⁵ https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/emilia-perez-controversy_n_679bf39de4b0d0c917eb733b

Comments and reactions to: **Anatomy of a Fall**

No of reaction slips received = 36

Average score = 7.22

Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	~	~	~	1	2	2	3	11	10	6	1

Much too slow

Very slow!!

Worthy but wordy

So enjoyable. Typically French style, slow to burn. Excellent – but the end

Rather too long

I don't like not knowing the real end of it

Very wordy. A bit on the long side

Fascinating view of the French justice system as well as a slow-motion dissection of a complex relationship

An unusual film very well acted. I had to concentrate. I enjoyed it

Love the club. Relieved the child did not jump from the balcony at the end!

Very enjoyable film. Daniel and Snoop were both well-acted

A bit disappointed – Snoop was great, though!

A most unusual film, excellent!

Intriguing! Compelling acting. Still not sure ...!

Absorbing, exquisitely acted

Position	Film	Average score
1	One Life	8.80
2	Maudie	7.97
3	The Great Escaper	7.96
4	Wicked Little Letters	7.66
5	The Holdovers	7.62
6	Anatomy of a Fall	7.22
7	The Taste of Things	7.16
8	The Color Purple	6.77
9	Past Lives	6.46
10	Winners	5.88
11	Barbie	5.59

Forthcoming attraction: 27 March 2025 – **All of Us Strangers**



Andrew Haigh's utterly magnificent All of Us Strangers summons such depth of feeling — and by such subtle magic — that you may feel blindsided by it. Do not operate heavy machinery after watching. Sunday Times

Haigh's script shows a kind of genius for English humdrum understatement about the most wrenching matters. It's an adaptation of a 1987 Japanese novel, Strangers by Taichi Yamada and radically improves upon it. New Statesman

After an impressive body of work, Andrew Haigh levels up even further, with a flawless film that reaches for the stars, and gets there. It aches and shimmers. Empire magazine

Scott is in almost every frame of this movie, and his work is Oscar-worthy. Boston Globe