

The Lunchbox (Dabba)

India 2013

Directed by
Ritesh Batra**Screenplay**
Ritesh Batra**Cinematography**
Michael Simmonds**Music**
Max Richter

104 mins

Cast
Irrfan Khan
Saajan FernandesNimrat Kaur
*Ila*Nawazuddin Siddiqui
*Shaikh*Lillete Dubey
*Ila's Mother**Our next screening...***Lore**

Tue 14 Oct 2014 8:00pm

Dir: Cate Shortland

A dramatic tale of a young girl leading her siblings across Germany at the end of the World War 2.

We are delighted to be back at Winchester Science Centre and their amazing planetarium. We look forward our journey over the next 16 films; all around the globe, from tears to laughter and home again. It looks to be a great and varied ride and we are all glad you are here to share it with us. Welcome to our new season!

This is a real charmer of a film: a wry and gently comic Mumbai-set drama with a level of quiet observation that rekindles memories of Bill Forsyth in his prime. British office workers accustomed to rancid sandwiches will look on with envy at the delicacies savoured by their Indian counterparts through the “dabbawala” system.

Geoffrey Macnab, The Independent

Traditional wisdom has it that the more culturally specific a story, the more likely it is to attain universal resonance. *The Lunchbox* could be used as Exhibit A to support that proposition. This is a film of finely judged reserve, and acutely anti-sentimental. There's an utterly satisfying literary construction to the narrative logic, and Michael Simmonds's photography navigates elegantly between the composed, interior-bound fiction and the quasi-documentary energy of the street and train footage.

Jonathan Romney, Film Comment

The great thing about *The Lunchbox* is that there is a lot that potentially could have gone wrong but never does. The character of Ila is initially presented as a happy-clappy housewife whose sole purpose in life is to tend to her disinterested hubby. Batra's writing doesn't do anything untoward, such as having her transform into a man hating maniac, but instead traces her slow realisation that she is mercilessly trapped inside her life rather than controlling its forward momentum. The top trump, though, is Irrfan Khan, who proves he may be one of the greatest living actors in the world right now. There's a Keaton-esque trim of deadpan to his performance, which is drawn out and modulated beautifully via the interactions with his colleague, Shaikh. His lightly taciturn demeanour cloaks the oceans of pain, and Khan manages to channel it beautifully. As with the Dabbawalas's method, marriage is that sacred, paradoxical institution which defies the nature of human desire and yet is something that, apparently, just works. More than a tale of random hearts connecting through fast food delivery, this is a heartbreaking movie about things that won't and don't and can't go wrong, going seriously wrong. It deserves to be played in a double bill with Satyajit Ray's 1963 masterpiece of marital bliss gone awry, *The Big City*.

David Jenkins, Little White Lies



Voting - the scores from the previous film will be put here throughout the season!