

Tuesday 10th December 2024
Studio 609, 7.30pm



The Holdovers

US, 2023, 15, 2hr 13mins

Director: Alexander Payne

Writer: David Hemingson

Producers: Mark Johnson, Bill Block, David Hemingson

Comedy, Drama

A curmudgeonly instructor at a New England school remains on campus during Christmas break. He forms an unlikely bond with a brainy but damaged troublemaker, and with the school's cook, a woman who has just lost a son in the Vietnam war.

Cast includes:

Paul Giamatti

Paul Hunham

Da'Vine Joy Randolph

Mary Lamb

Dominic Sessa

Angus Tully

Carrie Preston

Miss Lydia Crane

Andrew Garman

Dr Hardy Woodrup

Film Notes by David Fowler

Christmas is coming, and for an ill-matched group forced into each other's company at a snowbound boys' boarding school in 1970s New England, it seems like anything but the season of goodwill.

Mr Hunham is the strict, grumpy and disliked classics teacher who's been forced into the unwelcome task of looking after the "holdovers" – those pupils who are unable to rejoin their parents over the holiday. Chief among them is Angus, who has been left behind by his parents for the duration. And there's the school cook, Mary Lamb.

All are harbouring anger, hurt, or grief. Mary is grieving for her son, a recently casualty in Vietnam. Angus is seething with suppressed anger at being abandoned. And beneath his pompous, acerbic, classics-quoting exterior, Mr Hunham is depressed and disillusioned, perhaps knowing or perhaps refusing to admit that his life is a failure.

They are stuck in the school with nothing much to do, and friction and mutual dislike inevitably follow. But as the story progresses to reveal the characters beneath the surface and their inner angst, will we discover sympathetic or even likeable human beings?

The Holdovers unfolds with wit and style, sometimes hilarious, sometimes poignant and melancholy. A plot that could become formulaic is handled imaginatively and inventively, with stellar performances from the three central actors: Paul Giamatti as Hunham, newcomer Dominic Sessa as Angus, and Da'Vine Joy Randolph as Mary. Randolph won this year's Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress, and both she and Giamatti won Golden Globes.

Giamatti and director Alexander Payne have shown their flair in bringing to life sad (in both senses) characters before. In 2004's **Sideways**, Giamatti played an unsuccessful author and wine lover, who takes a week long road trip to California wine country with a friend who is about to be married. It won Payne and co-writer Jim Taylor an Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay – a category they'd been nominated in previously for Payne's earlier success, **Election** (1999), in which Reese Witherspoon plays an over-achiever running for president of the student body at her high school.

The Holdovers was hailed as an instant new Christmas classic on its release. What better way to kick off the festive season?

Our Next Presentations



Thursday, 16th January 2025
In Studio 609 at 7.30 pm

Thelma
US, 2023, 12, 1 hr 38 mins
Dir: Josh Margolin
Comedy, Drama

When 93-year-old Thelma Post gets duped by a phone scammer pretending to be her grandson, she sets out on a treacherous quest across Los Angeles to reclaim what was taken from her.



Wednesday, 29th January 2025

In the Performance Hall at 7.30pm
The Dead Don't Hurt
Canada, Denmark, Mexico,
15, 2023, 2 hrs 10 mins
Dir: Viggo Mortensen
Drama, Romance, Western



In Studio 609 at 7.45pm
The Lobster
Ireland, UK, Greece, France,
Netherlands
15, 2015, 1 hr 54 minutes
Dir: Yorgos Lanthimos
Dystopian, Drama, Comedy

Latest Audience Film Ratings

How did you like our recent offerings? % voting "Excellent" or "Good"

