

THE QUIET GIRL (An Cailín Ciúin)

Ireland (2022) 94 minutes

Director: Colm Bairéad

Cast: Catherine Clinch (Cáit), Carrie Crowley (Eibhlín Cinnsealach), Andrew Bennett (Seán Cinnsealach), Michael Patric (Da), Kate Nic Choncaonaigh (Mam), Carolyn Bracken (The Woman)

Screening 20th September 2023 at Swindon Arts Centre



Synopsis

Rural Ireland 1981. A quiet, neglected girl is sent away from her dysfunctional family to live with foster parents for the summer. She blossoms in their care, but in this house where there are meant to be no secrets, she discovers one.

Reviews



This beautiful and compassionate film from first-time feature director Colm Bairéad is a child's-eye look at our fallen world; already it feels to me like a classic. There's a lovely scene in which the "quiet girl" of the title, 10-year-old Cáit (played by newcomer Catherine Clinch), is reading *Heidi* before bedtime, and this movie, for all its darkness and suppressed pain, has the solidity, clarity and storytelling gusto of that old-fashioned Alpine children's tale – about the little girl sent away to live in a beautiful place with her grandfather.

The setting is the early '80s, in a part of County Waterford where Irish is mostly spoken (subtitled in English). Cáit is a withdrawn little kid, one of many siblings, always wandering off on her own over the farmland: the opening shot of her is a deception of sorts, hinting at a chilling destiny...In another kind of movie, a lazier kind, all this stillness and rural beauty, seen by an enigmatically silent child who is accustomed to vanishing invisibly into the landscape, would be the ominous foretaste of something horrible or violent to come just before the final credits. But *The Quiet Girl* is doing something gentler than this, as well as realer and truer. It is a jewel.

Peter Bradshaw, The Guardian

The Irish coming-of-age drama *The Quiet Girl* is a quiet film. A whisper of a film, really, and its unassuming nature makes it all the more effective...

The fireworks here are more like sparklers, really. There are tiny revelations and emotional wrinkles that bump up and are ironed out over the course of the story. But mostly, *The Quiet Girl* functions as a graceful story of love and family, and finding love wherever it can be found.

Written and directed by Colm Bairéad, *The Quiet Girl* was a huge hit in its native Ireland, where it became the highest-grossing Irish-language film of all-time. (Of all-time!) It's up for Best International Feature Film at the Academy Awards, where it's likely to be bested by one of its louder competitors. But that doesn't make it any less impactful. It's a story that finds its strength in its silence.

Adam Graham, Detroit News Film Critic

Film Facts

- The film is based on the short story *Foster* by Claire Keegan.
- The first-ever film in the Irish language to be shortlisted for an Oscar (Best International Film). As predicted by Adam Graham (see above), it did not win the Oscar.
- At around 40 minutes into the film, a radio commentator in the background can be heard mentioning the name of Michael O'Hehir was a hurling, football, and horse-racing commentator and journalist whose career spanned from 1938 – 1985.