

MVAH ZOOM Movie Club

January 3, 2023 @ 3pm

Next movie club: February 7, 2023 at 3PM

Attendees:

Caryl Curry
Carol Mattaino
Joe Mattaino
Louise McLean
Robert McLean
Betsy Stephens
Cher Terry
Kathi Hanrahan (host)

JANUARY MOVIES

Movie 1: The Wonder (Netflix, 2022)

Rating: 2.9

The Wonder is a 2022 psychological period drama film directed by Sebastián Lelio, Emma Donoghue, Lelio, and Alice Birch wrote the screenplay based on the 2016 novel of the same name by Donoghue. Florence Pugh leads an ensemble cast.

In 1862, Elizabeth "Lib" Wright, an English nurse who served in the Crimean War, is sent to a rural village in Ireland where she is tasked with closely watching Anna O'Donnell, a fasting girl who according to her family has not eaten for four months. She is to be assisted by a nun, Sister Michael, and the two are to report their findings independently to a council of local dignitaries. The trauma of the Great Famine still looms over the community, and many locals are wary of the English nurse. (Wikipedia)

Movie 2: The Swimmers (Netflix, 2022)

Rating: 4.3

The plot follows the true-life story of teenage Olympian refugee, Yusra Mardini, who, with her sister Sara, swam alongside a sinking dinghy of refugees to lighten it, eventually helping it reach safety across the Aegean Sea. Subsequent struggles as a refugee are vividly depicted, but Mardini's swimming career sees her reaching the Rio Olympics as a member of the Refugee Olympic Team.

In a footnote it is revealed that Yusra's sister Sara, who had returned to Lesbos as part of voluntary efforts to assist incoming refugees, had been arrested and faced charges carrying potentially long-term prison sentences if convicted. Called “undeniably powerful” by the Hollywood Reporter, this drama won a four-minute ovation at the Toronto Film Festival. (Wikipedia, Netflix)



BONUS! Group suggestions for favorite (or new) Holiday movie:

- Joyeux Noël (2005, Prime Video, YouTube) – a foreign war drama film based on the Christmas truce of December 1914.
- A Christmas Story (1983, Prime Video) – often watched story of Ralphie and his dream of a Red Ryder air rifle for Christmas.
- A Charlie Brown Christmas (1965, Apple TV+) – animated classic, limited availability only on Apple TV+.
- It’s A Wonderful Life (1946, Prime Video) – James Stewart classic
- Klaus (2019, Netflix) – A recent highly rated animated film about a desperate postman accidentally bringing about the genesis of letters to Santa Claus.

FEBRUARY MOVIES

Movie 1: Elvis (Prime Video, 2022)

The biographical film follows the life of American Music icon Elvis Presley, from his childhood to becoming a rock and movie star in the 1950s while maintaining a complex relationship with his manager, Colonel Tom Parker. It is told from the perspective of his manager, Colonel Tom Parker, whose financial abuse of him is a major plot point. The American Film Institute named *Elvis* one of the top ten best films of 2022. Priscilla Presley lauded the film as a realistic portrayal of Parker by Tom Hanks and Austin Butler received accolades for his portrayal of Elvis. (Wikipedia, various reviews)

Movie 2: Descendant (Netflix, 2022) – Documentary

The community of Africatown near Mobile, Alabama is made up of the descendants of The Clotilda, the last known ship to smuggle stolen Africans to America. The ship's existence was covered up, as the vessel was burned down in the attempt to erase it from history. After a

century of secrecy and speculation, the 2019 discovery of the ship turns attention toward the descendant community of Africatown and presents a moving portrait of a community actively grappling with and fighting to preserve their heritage while examining what justice looks like today. (Tom's List, Rotten Tomatoes score: 100%)