

EIFF – About Time – The Surprise Movie



I haven't been able to catch much of the Edinburgh International Film Festival this year, and didn't have any plans to go this evening. But I had a fairly rough day at work and decided I needed to do something. So, idly scrolling through Twitter at lunchtime, I saw a tweet about the Surprise Film.

For those that don't know, the Surprise Film does exactly what it says on the tin. You buy a ticket and turn up having no idea what you are about to watch. It's got a good track record though with Pulp Fiction and Spirited Away being two Surprise Films of note.

As the film was introduced, they were giving nothing away. "And tonight's Surprise Film is....." *audience on tender hooks*

".... a surprise!" *audience tuts*

As the titles started, Richard Curtis' name came up...

To be honest, I was hoping for something a bit more edgy, and I probably did let out a little sigh. This was nothing, however, compared to the loud groan from the man beside. Obviously not a Four Weddings fan.

The film begins and we get to know our hero, Tim, who seems lovely but is awkward and a bit of a dweeb – as you can imagine, he doesn't have much luck with the ladies. It gets to New Year's Eve and he's having a rotten time at his parents' party – all very cringeworthy.

The next morning his life changes. At 21, his father had decided that it's time he knew the family secret. Tim is told

that he comes from a long line of time travellers (but they only go backwards, not forwards, that would just be daft.)

Err, OK. I know this was called About Time, but I really didn't expect time travelling! (That is one of the benefits of seeing a film you know nothing about and isn't due for release for another three months: a real Surprise Film!)

Curtis then takes us through Tim's hapless adventures as he tries to find love and generally make things better, jumping back in time to have another go at another situation that has gone horribly wrong for him. He does soon learn that his actions can have consequences and things can quickly unravel.

Bottom line, if you didn't like Four Weddings and Notting Hill, then this is unlikely to be your bag, but otherwise, it's what you'd expect from an on-form Curtis – a charming, enjoyable film with some genuinely tender moments, lots of laughs (I'm sure I even heard the groaning man behind me titter) and great turns from Domhnall Gleeson and Bill Nighy. Give it a go.

The film company are trying to generate some online chatter about the film using the hashtag #abouttime

Good luck following that, as it's mostly sarcastic teenagers tweeting about how they've finally booked their driving test or they've had a long needed haircut.
#pickabetterhashtagnexttime

Submitted by Louise Swanson

And in case you are moved to wonder about the film... here is the trailer...