

EIFF – God's Own Country (2017) 104 mins ****



Billed as the UK's version of *Brokeback Mountain*, *God's Own Country* is certainly about a love affair between two men on a farm. But it is softer, more thoughtful and more romantic somehow than its US forerunner. The farm work is often brutal, physically challenging and carried out in all weathers during an English winter but Gheorghe (Alec Secareanu), a Romanian migrant worker, teaches Johnny (Josh O'Connor) about a gentleness, kindness and affection he has known little about. The climax comes when Johnny's dad (excellently played by Ian Hart) has a further stroke and Johnny lapses back into heavy drinking and promiscuity. The two main protagonists are superb and they play their parts with absolute soul. Meanwhile Johnny's nan (a superb Gemma Jones) finds the men's affair difficult to bear.

Francis Lee set out to showcase the Yorkshire countryside near Keighley where he grew up and it makes an idyllic backdrop as the film plays out. Indeed the lambing scenes were filmed on his own father's farm. His light touch ensures that the actors come across as genuine and understated. The music by Dustin O'Halloran and Adam Wiltzie subtly supports the action and complements the scenery.

At the [2017 Berlin International Film Festival](#) the film received the Harvey Award, presented by the [Teddy Awards](#) program for LGBT-related films in conjunction with a reader jury from the German LGBT magazine [Männer](#).

See it:

Thursday, 22nd June 1810 Cineworld (plus Q&A)

