

EIFF – Newton (2017) 104 mins



Newton (Rajkummar Rao) is a precise, pernickety young clerk in this Hindi-language film from second-time director Amit V Masurkar. His principles will not allow the eponymous hero to be married to an underage friend of the family (with whom to be fair he has nothing in common). Similarly his scruples get him into hot water when he is drafted in to be the Election Officer in a remote part of North East India, where insurgents have been perpetrating murder and mayhem to stop the democratic process taking place. Black humour and tension sit cheek by jowl as he goes to extremes to make sure he carries out the letter of the law despite the local police and army's best efforts to cut the opening hours of the polling station short and get back to safety.

Some of the more amusing scenes take place when Newton talks to his clever mentor, who is not afraid to point out his shortcomings, and when he is with his adoring mother and scathing father. Seeing their reactions to Newton's predicament and burgeoning romance towards the end of the film would perhaps have made the plot more rounded and presented a more satisfactory conclusion but this is a pleasing, good-natured film within the EIFF's World Perspectives strand.

Newton premiered at Berlin International Film Festival where it won the International Confederation of Art Cinemas award in the Forum section.

See it:

Friday, 23rd June, 1810, Odeon 4

Sunday, 25th June, 1535, Odeon 4

