

EIFF – Okja (2017) 118 mins



Mija (An Seo Hjun) lives an idyllic existence with her grandfather in the high Korean mountains. The love of her life, her BFF, her confidante and her saviour on occasion, is her Super Pig, *Okja*. Bred by the evil GM empire, the Mirando Corporation led by horrific twins (Tilda Swinton) and fronted by the crazy Animal Magic presenter (Jake Gyllenhaal), a number of experimental pigs had been distributed years before to farmers around the world and now is the time for them to decide which is the winner of their Super Pig Competition. This winning animal is to be taken to and feted in New York, but is secretly to be experimented upon and slaughtered. Mija is tricked by her gullible grandfather and *Okja* is taken away.

A journey of disasters and adventures ensue in her quest to get her back, eventually helped by the Animal Liberation Organisation led by Jay (Paul Dano) but he too has his own agenda.

Directed by premier Korean filmmaker Bong Joon Ho, *Okja* is an unusual but interesting mix of idealistic CGI fantasy, thriller and cartoon-caricature comedy. While it engages and amuses, the cocktail of genres just does not quite work. An Seo Hjun is enchanting as the resourceful Mija attempting to return *Okja* to her home and previous existence and she and *Okja* along with the beautiful mountain scenery are the saving graces of the film.

WARNING: Not the film for a committed longterm vegetarian to be reviewing, due to the distressing CGI slaughterhouse scenes. But it begs the serious question about how we can

feed the world, living in harmony with our fellow creatures without unnecessarily exploiting them and indeed consumers.

See it:

Sunday, 25th June 1715 Filmhouse 1

Wednesday, 28th June 1805 Cineworld

