

Willow Press Quotes

“Subtle, profound [...] Three stories of Macedonian motherhood echo across eras in Milcho Manchevski powerful, evocative, beautifully played drama.”

Variety

“One of those films that feels casual when you watch it, but digs deep and remains, both poignant and profound [...] appealing storytelling [...] extraordinarily affecting.”

Screen International

“The complexity of this apparently simple film is how one story flows into the next, illuminating it in unexpected ways [...] superbly atmospheric camerawork and a confident command of the camera [...] dazzling [...] sensual.”

Hollywood Reporter

"Manchevski masterfully weaves the threads of the three stories together. [...] Visually, this is a lush film."

Cineuropa

"A profound portrait of longed-for motherhood. Milcho Manchevski approaches this very feminine experience with the utmost respect and sensitivity [...] Two powerful, evocative and beautifully performed dramas [...] The emotional challenges of pregnancy and adoption are reflected with so much truth, sensitivity and respect that it seems incredible that this feminine work is directed by a man. Manchevski has claimed that "humans are human" and that Willow speaks of human experiences."

Laura Botta

“A magnificent film, with a narrative pulse that intelligently rations tension, enhances uncertainty and presents a gallery of well-defined characters [...] extremely interesting [...] It is a tough, tragic film with a script that plays with coincidences and connections... Sprinkled with brushstrokes of well-constructed humor.”

Rafa Rodriguez Gimeno

“Brilliant [...] Perfectly balanced [...] A film of asymmetric connections in which the protagonists must deal with a personal search to control their own bodies and respond to the social pressures assigned to their gender... Great sensitivity and respect for its protagonists”

Pablo Alberola

“Manchevski's film defies the conventions of linear narrative [...] Three very different stories architecturally [...] Manchevski has built three powerful female characters full of nuances, which invites a permanent rereading or rediscovery of what they represent.”

G. Leon

“Manchevski masterfully intertwines the three stories, through recurring themes and situations, as well as small clues that the viewer can interpret for himself [...] Considered a

very meticulous director with a tendency towards perfectionism, Manchevski speaks with precise, intricate ideas and clear knowledge what territories his camera is exploring.“

Culturplaza

“Superbly directed [...] Willow is one of those movies that stay with you when you leave the room.“

Apositivar

“A multi-layered fictional exploration of fertility and infertility [...] Haunting and at times heartrending, Willow is exactly the kind of filmic poetry we can expect from Golden Lion winner and Academy Award nominee Milcho Manchevski.“

Dan MacCannell

“Magical vision of the past whose fragments remain entangled in the present. [...] An expert eye for photography.“

Il Manifesto

“A beautiful, poetic, thought-provoking film. The delicate narrative structure and profound motifs touch the audience’s souls.“

You-chien Huang

“A film of bewitching visual beauty paying homage to Flemish and medieval paintings; cinematographically to Tarkovski, Bergman and Kieslowski. The latter is also an inspiration for the dramaturgy of this film. There is indeed all the existential and ethical conflict of Kieslowski's films and a persistent dimension of sacredness reminiscent of the Decalogue. [...] Cinema imbued with magical realism and visual strength, really a pleasant surprise and a welcome return. It is a return in great style, with a stratified but not complicated work, which deals with great themes by inserting them in a tripartite, fluid and interconnected narration. [...] Willow is a film of women, motherhood and female fragility, punctuated by the charm of the cyclical nature of human fate and the immutability of human emotions in distant times and places.“

Re-Movies, Corrine Vosa

“Full of poetry [...] Defense of the woman and her right to be a mother are the leitmotifs of Willow. [...] A poignant and exciting portrait, light as a willow leaf but as deep as its roots. [...] A narrative strongly charged with meaning for a complex film that has its common thread in the willow, a symbol of strength and genesis, a film intertwined with mystical/religious themes that make the atmosphere charged with almost tangible sorrow, reminiscent of Bergman and Tarkovski. [...] An articulated and original narrative system, which shows the strength of a woman from the Middle Ages until today.“

Eco del cinema, Chiaretta Migliani Cavina

“Sophisticated structure [...] A highly consistent masterpiece inside-out.“

Chen, Douban Movies

“Manchevski allows us into his film universe where the laws of elastic time are in effect, spoken and unspoken messages run through, the brutal reality and rich mysticism clash and

co-exist. [...] Rich scenes that draw on the collective memory. A multi-layered film, open to multi-faceted reading and reflection. [...] A complex story that spreads its emotional folds over the surface of several eras, systems of belief and philosophies.”

Josip Kocev, PopUp

“Manchevski’s work is much more complex than can be imagined. A narrative that – because of the unusual nature of its development and themes – is highly charged with meaning and a religious/mystical subtext that gives Willow a flavor of times gone by – halfway between Bergman and Tarr, a painful fairy tale halfway between the past and the present.”

Francesco Parrino

“An emblematic work on the condition of the feminine, always poised between human responsibility and paroxysmal maternal desire, between myth and religion, between irrationality and right. [...] Once again Mančevski, as in *Before the rain*, plays on temporal planes, deconstructs the stories, follows narrative lines that are not perfectly chronological, uses powerful ellipses that disorient the viewer and reshapes events not simply to tell stories but rather to communicate the main essence of this work: to freely describe the feminine, making it an eternal theme, out of time and out of history. [...] The Macedonian director hits the mark and presents us with dense – and in some ways shocking – feminine portraits.”

Cultframe, Maurizio G. De Bonis

The complex folding of time highlights stratified and fragmented flashes of life, moments that are forgotten, non-expressible, buried deep inside the memory, or are legendary, moments that reflect the loop of destiny.

Watching Manchevski's movies is like walking on M.C. Escher's staircase, seemingly going upward but going downward while walking.

The breath-taking photography, beautiful music and magical-realistic ambience make the audience forget the time sequence and walk into the seemingly illogical narrative.

Yang Yuan-ling

“What a great comeback! Milcho Manchevski’s *Willow* is bucolic, mythological and contemporary reflection on the scary urge for motherhood and fatherhood. Desperate, tragicomic fairy tale. Amazing directing and acting.”

Simona Nobile

“Three stories masterfully connected.”

Cinecitta News

“The return of Milcho Manchevski, master of cinema.”

Sentieri Selvaggi

“A great Macedonian film story powerfully emerges [...] Direction that is intimate and meticulous [...] A mythological narrative between the fairy tale and the raw realism, with

Love as the only solution to ancestral curses. [...] On a structural level, Willow has a very strong impact. [...] Profoundly respectful of life, strong women and fragile men.”

Cinematographe

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Yang Yuan-ling

“Speaks to the heart. [...] Brilliant performances.”

paroleacolori.com

“Milcho Manchevski returns, his gaze has become more universal and comprehensive.”

Asbury Movies

“Profound meaning”

Letterboxd

“Masterpiece”

Katerina Kolozova

“A narrative weave of one willow tree and three women. [...] Emotionally turbulent, quiet as a prayer. A film that gives a humane and humble answer to the 21st century reproductive debates. [...] A genius span of emotions. [...] Firmness of character, emotional fragility and a mother figure that leaves no one indifferent. [...] Willow is a victory for all women.”

Ivana Smilevska, Radio MOF

“A film that awakens empathy even in the coldest heart in the audience. After watching Willow you don't feel like talking right away. As if you need to let silence overcome you and plunge deep inside you. [...] Our spiritual treasure.”

Srebra Gjorgjievska, Fakulteti.mk

“Willow squeezes our heart. And it reminds us of the things that matter, the ones close to home. [...] Weeping willow. Weeping Macedonia.”

Iliina Jakimovska, Bookbox

“Brilliant [...] It leaves a lump in your throat, silences you in spite of the happy ending. [...] Being an excellent storyteller, Manchevski plays with time using the elliptical structure of narration again in Willow. With incredible ease the story leaps over centuries, moves from countryside to the city, from myth to reality. [...] Visual complexity [...] Willow looks like a

new beginning, a new phase in the complex artistic exploration and experimentation – and perhaps it is precisely this excitement that is the happy ending.”

Marina Kostova, Sakam da kazam

“The bewilderment caused by the surge of emotions that will undoubtedly overcome you during the film and, especially, after the end credits – which will not be long enough for you to sort out your impressions and to close the cracks in your emotional armour – is probably the biggest compliment for the master of moving images whose film brings back empathy to the emotionally devastated Macedonia in a big way.”

Toni Cifrovski, Macedonian Radio

“The script keeps you on the edge of your seat from the first to the last minute of the film which develops in front of your eyes with lightning speed. [...] Manchevski weaves it perfectly. [...] As if Willow wants to say that the way of honesty is the means for people to cut the knot of social decadence which we repeatedly reproduce. And Manchevski is not afraid to show this. [...] Manchevski has created a film which – in addition to the universal message – also sends an intimately Macedonian one. [...] The film will not leave anyone indifferent. It seems as if the Macedonian film master wanted for the viewers to feel physical pain while watching his new work. But, finally, after the film ends, there is a sense of liberation when you realize that you can't cheat life.”

Daniel Evrosimoski, Radio MOF

“Milcho wrote and shot a story about us. The director masterfully manages (without imposing judgment, thoughts or ideas about our past and present) to give a cinematic reflection of that thing we carry inside and which we cannot escape. Whether you like that or not – is another matter altogether. [...] Stories connected in a wondrous way. [...] A new chapter for male characters from our parts: the man (from these parts) can burn and suffer internally for offspring in a way that is more insane and less rational than the woman! [...] Excellent acting without an exception, and a plethora of emotions. [...] The risk which Milcho took with the actors was not a risk at all; it was faith, love and professionalism. Most of all – it was directorial understanding of the cinematic possibilities and tools. [...] A film which can be read, understood, seen and felt in many (different) ways because of its wealth of layers.”

Sinolicka Trpkova