

# Review: Red Sea title 'The Banshees of Inisherin' explores a friendship that goes tragically wrong



JEDDAH: A hit at the recent Venice Film Festival, Martin McDonagh's "The Banshees of Inisherin" is part of the ongoing second edition of the Red Sea International Film Festival in Jeddah. McDonagh's latest adventure got its lead star Colin Farrell an acting award in Venice.



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Much like the director's "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri," which won its lead star Frances McDormand an Oscar in 2018, "Banshees" is a poignant story.

This time it is about a broken friendship between two men. It is set in 1923 on the fictional island of Inisherin as the sound of Irish civil strife is heard wafting across the sea. This is a harbinger of things to come – of an internecine struggle that is knocking on the door of dairy farmer Padraic (Colin Farrell) and his best friend is Colm (an equally brilliant performance by Brenden Gleeson). While Padraic is a simpleton, who can talk for hours about horse manure, Colm is an artist, writing music and playing the fiddle, and is prone to bouts of melancholy.

The pair are inseparable, but something triggers a stand-off. Colm begins to avoid Padraic. The musician sits on his chair in deep thought and the film never makes the reason clear – leaving us as confused as the poor Padraic, who nags his sister, Siobhan (Kerry Condon), for information. “Perhaps, he just does not like you no more,” she quips. This may have sounded like a joke, but the truth leads to horrifying incidents.

Colm is anxious about the passing years and does not want to waste his time with a “limited man.” He is serious about keeping Padraic away, and every time he tries to connect, the tortured artist cuts off one of his fiddle-playing fingers. But in the midst of all this macabre, there are lighter moments that will make the audience laugh.

Cinematographer Ben Davis and production designer Mark Tildesley create artistic interiors which look like a 17th century Vermeer painting. Meanwhile composer Carter Burwell makes the film feel like a fairy tale. The cast is absolutely flawless and “The Banshees of Inisherin” has an excellent chance of making a mark at the upcoming Oscars.

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