



**Patron: Jim Broadbent**  
**Registered Charity No. 1156478**  
**Friday September 15th 2017**  
**Paterson (Cert 15)**

*dir:* **Jim Jarmusch**

*Starring:* **Adam Driver, Golshifteh Farahani**

*Sponsor:* **Richard and Linda Hall**

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**Synopsis:** Seven days in the life of Paterson, poet and bus driver in the city of Paterson, New Jersey. Paterson lives with Laura. He goes to work in the morning, composes poems while driving, eats a packed lunch by the Passaic Falls, comes home in the evening, writes in his basement and eats the dinner that Laura has prepared. Laura encourages Paterson to publish his poems, and makes him promise to photocopy them at the weekend. She in turn expresses her aspirations - to run a cupcake company, to be a country singer - and he encourages her. On Thursday, she wins a spot at the farmers' market that weekend, for which she bakes a batch of cakes.

After dinner, Paterson takes Marvin, their English bulldog, for a walk, leaving him outside a local bar while he has a drink. On the Friday, Paterson's bus breaks down, and in the evening Everett, an actor who refuses to accept that his relationship with Marie, another regular, is over, pulls a gun on himself in the bar. Paterson disarms him and the gun proves to be a toy. The next day, Laura does well at the market, and the couple celebrate by going out to dinner and seeing an old movie. While they're out, Marvin chews Paterson's poems, which he has not yet photocopied. On Sunday, Paterson goes for a walk, encountering Everett, who apologises, and at Passaic Falls, a Japanese tourist, with whom he talks about poetry.

On Monday, having been given a new notebook by the tourist, Paterson carries on

Jim Jarmusch's *Paterson* is a quietly utopian film, and a balm to watch. Paterson (Adam Driver), bus driver and apparently contented unpublished poet, and Laura (Golshifteh Farahani), aspiring country singer, live modestly in the suburbs of Paterson, New Jersey, encouraging one another in their dreams but never pushing too hard. Paterson's repetitive job leaves him headspace to compose poems while at work; Laura, who doesn't work, is less focused but happy to experiment. In the evenings, Paterson goes to a bar with a largely black clientele, presided over by Doc (Barry Shabaka Henley), a proud Patersonian who refuses to install a television and knows just enough of everyone's business. Exultant after a successful day selling cakes at a farmers' market, Laura exclaims, "This is so much fun, it's like we're living in the 20th century."

Indeed, *Paterson's* minimal narrative and attractively downbeat setting hark back to the Jarmusch of the 80s and 90s. The action, such as it is, unfolds in uncluttered images at an unhurried pace over seven days in Paterson's life, each a variation on the last. The bus journeys are given time to breathe, and the most dramatic subplot, concerning two regulars at the bar, happily fizzles out. But the film can't help but generate suspense - will something happen, and will Paterson publish his poems?

Sharing Doc's pride in a place most people outside the US have never heard of, *Paterson's* small scale is deceptive.

Fragments of the city's past pepper the film, touching on the whole history of the republic. The city's rich literary heritage, above all the work of modernist poet William Carlos Williams and his long-gestated 'Paterson', is paraded throughout. In earlier Jarmusch films, poetry was the preserve of outsiders - Roberto Benigni the fan of Whitman and Frost in *Down by Law* (1986) Nobody (Gary Farmer), the Native American Blake aficionado in *Dead Man* (1995) - while the white Americans remained ignorant. *Paterson* includes a cameo from Nagase Masatoshi, who played the Carl Perkins fan from Yokohama in *Mystery Train* (1989), this time on a pilgrimage to the waterfall that Williams used as a leitmotif, and where Paterson eats his lunch.

Crucially however, *Paterson* is not the only poet or reader in *Paterson*. On his travels he encounters a rapper (played by Method Man) in a laundrette and a young girl poet who shares his liking for Emily Dickinson. Doc curates a Paterson hall of fame behind the bar. Moreover, the life of the city, seen through the windscreen, and its inhabitants, heard from the driver's seat, are invested with poetry, cast into a form one could call poetic, and the film is filled with visual patterns, especially in Laura's domain, the home. Whether or not Paterson's poetry is worthy of publication, and whether or not Laura, in Nashville mode, will be one of the 'greats', as she puts it, isn't the point; poetry (broadly understood) isn't about worldly success, and dreams don't need to come true to be worth having. Culture is ordinary, as Raymond Williams put it.

But, well, is it? Jarmusch's last film, *Only Lovers Left Alive* (2013), seemed to bring down the curtain on a cultural tradition whose exhaustion was manifest in the film itself, with its fetishisation of old guitars and vinyl, and its affected aesthetic snobbery was equally palpable. *Paterson*, Jarmusch's best film since *Ghost Dog* (1999), might be seen as an attempt to start over, but there is no escaping the fact that Paterson the unsung poet is post-industrial America as seen from the Lower East Side. Paterson's earnest refusal to use a mobile phone reveals an otherwise unlikely kinship with Adam Driver's character from Noah Baumbach's *While We're Young* (2014), a send up of the hipster technophobia indulged in by *Only Lovers Left Alive*.

Like many utopias, *Paterson* is sexless. Laura and Paterson are just adorable together, when they are together, but nothing more. Their domestic routine is resolutely 20th century, with Laura deprived of company and confined to the home during the day, decorating and baking and taking up

hobbies, and during the evening too. Paterson's artistic pretensions, even if disavowed, are treated with more seriousness than hers, which are made to appear kooky. One scene even makes fun of her cooking. Farahani's performance, of great exuberance and charm, conceals a fundamental repression; and it might be that this repression is itself the necessary condition of all such utopias.

#### Credits

<b>Paterson</b>	Adam Driver
<b>Laura</b>	Golshifteh Farahani
<b>Doc</b>	Barry Shabaka Henley
<b>Method Man</b>	Cliff Smith (aka Method Man)
<b>Marie</b>	Chasten Harmon
<b>Everett</b>	William Jackson Harper
<b>Japanese Poet</b>	Nagase Masatoshi
<b>Marvin</b>	Nellie
<b>Donny</b>	Rizwan Manji
<b>Director</b>	Jim Jarmusch
<b>Written by</b>	Jim Jarmusch
<b>Poems</b>	Jim Jarmusch
<b>Original Spoken Word</b>	Ron Padgett
<b>Director of</b>	Method Man
<b>Photography</b>	Frederick Elmes
<b>Editor</b>	Alfonso Gonçalves
<b>Music</b>	SQÜRL
<b>Sound Design</b>	Robert Hein
<b>Costume</b>	Catherine George
	<b>USA/Germany/France 2016</b>
	<b>107 mins</b>

#### Another View

Paterson teaches us that there is beauty to be found in all things. Poetry, meaning and further dimensions to even the most mundane trivialities of everyday existence. In Jim Jarmusch's latest, which takes place in contemporary New Jersey, Adam Driver plays a bus driver and amateur wordsmith named Paterson. Cyclical, overlapping layers, in narrative, naming and construction, make this week-in-the-life of a lumbering, ironically monosyllabic dreamer and his wonderfully wacky and supportive other half, Laura (played exquisitely by beautiful Iranian actress Golshifteh Farahani), a softly spoken, spellbinding and kooky triumph.

With Paterson, Jarmusch meditates on how true creativity may rise in the most unlikely of places (a laundrette, for one) and like its oddly stoical protagonist, the film says a lot with very little. It's a love letter to the luminaries issued from this nondescript blue-collar town who adorn a local bar's wall of fame – to which Paterson aspires, perhaps, as he stares pensively toward the bottom of his beer glass. Here we have a refreshingly harmless human drama where nothing too serious or menacing occurs - but for the mischievous machinations of the couple's wily, and truly tremendous, British bulldog, Marvin. In fact, little outside of day-to-day routine happens at all but in going about their Monday to Friday as normal, this couple provide a profound look at what makes ordinary, and not so ordinary folks, tick.

All of life can be found - and importantly overheard - on public transport and as Paterson drives his daily route he eavesdrops on two men boasting of affections from women they are too chicken to talk to, young pals recalling the fateful life of Hurricane Carter, university age hipsters name-dropping whichever political activist was en vogue that week. There's an ease and naturalism to the writing which is a delight to ingest. Paterson, and indeed Jarmusch's script, takes inspiration from observation and lines of poetry appear scrawled across the screen in sync with his pen flowing over the page of his precious notebook. Whoever would have thought a love poem could come from a box of Ohio Blue Tip matches?

Paterson, eating his morning Cheerios, sees flaming expression in

their simplicity and a representation of his understated but all-encompassing love for Laura in the box's megaphone-shaped lettering. He'd like to shout it from the rooftops but this is the only way he can. The Great Falls of the Passaic River prove a popular lunch spot and his thoughts cascade as a stream of consciousness, admission or ever confessional which slowly builds his character. These secretive, internalised words are his only means of expression and initially there is something a little unnerving in Driver's languid movement and uncomfortable social interactions but rarely has there been such expression in purposeful vacancy.

It's a tremendous turn; almost an example in anti-acting. We follow the same footsteps to and from the depot each day, but in discovering new sections of the town, in a refraction and reflection of light in shop windows and in Laura's recollections of far-flung, often mythical dreams each morning as they wake, Paterson reaches much further than its insular bare bones would have you believe. Keep an eye out for the recurring motif of twins: perfectly matched identical beings who rhyme visually in contrast to Paterson's sprawling, free-formed stanzas. Why does Laura barely leave the house and why is she so obsessed with monochrome decoration we may ask? It really doesn't matter. That's what she's happy with. Life isn't black and white. There's something very reassuring in the fact that for the most part it's grey.

**Matthew Anderson CineVue**

#### **Our next film -Friday September 22nd, 7.15pm Toni Erdmann (Germany 2016. Cert 15)**

Critically acclaimed, winner of multiple awards and judged the best film of 2016 by Sight & Sound, Toni Erdmann is that rare thing - a genuinely original, funny German comedy.

Though perhaps comedy gives the wrong impression; satire might be more appropriate. Director Maren Ade has taken aim at a number of topical issues - the state of Europe, class, ruthless capitalism and the position of women in the business world - and delivered a film that exposes the flaws in them all and the damage that they cause. Above all, it's a film about a father-daughter relationship that's on the verge of disintegrating and poses the question - what's more important, material success or the people in our lives?

Toni Erdmann has been described as "outlandish", an "intensely angry political statement", a "tragicomedy", a "very human delight". Take your pick: it's certain to provoke reaction.

**NB: this film starts at 7.15. Please make sure you arrive in good time for the earlier start**