

Chicken Run

UK, USA | 2000 | 84m | U

Directors: Nick Park, Peter Lord

Starring: Mel Gibson, Julia Sawalha, Phil Daniels,
Miranda Richardson

Animated in the iconic Aardman stop-motion style, this adventure-comedy was the first feature-length film from Aardman Animation, the Bristol-based studio behind for the *Wallace and Gromit* films, as well as *Flushed Away* (2006). Not only is it local to the festival, but *Chicken Run* also features the voices of numerous British talents, including Julia Sawalha (*Absolutely Fabulous*), Timothy Spall (*Quadrophenia*), and Imelda Staunton (*Harry Potter*, *The Crown*). Alongside Aardman, the film was also co-produced by Pathé (*Slumdog Millionaire*) in partnership with DreamWorks Animation (*Shrek*, *How To Train Your Dragon*). The film released to both critical acclaim and commercial success alike, exceeding a gross of \$220 million, making it the all-time highest-grossing stop-motion film and DreamWorks Animation's biggest success at the time.

A family film, *Chicken Run* has an appeal on many levels. The main cast of characters are interestingly complex and through their natural interaction, endear themselves to the audience in ways that fully allow the emotional beats and perilous moments to land. As expected of an Aardman picture, the film certainly nails the comedic side of the story too, thanks especially to the dialogue, which is loaded with cleverly paired British slang and puns.

Homage is paid throughout the picture to numerous prison escapist films, in terms of both the plot, and the referential use of genre conventions, adding a deeper level of enjoyment for those familiar with the wider genre. According to Park, the film actually originated as a parody of the 60s war epic *The Great Escape*, focusing on a group of anthropomorphic chickens, rather than prisoners of war, as they attempt to escape from the pie-making farmer with the help of Rocky Rhodes (Mel Gibson), an American rooster.

Twenty-three years later, Netflix is set to release a sequel, *Chicken Run: Dawn of the Nugget* later this year, following its world premiere at the 67th BFI Festival in October, making this FilmBath screening the ideal time to catch *Chicken Run* on the big screen

‘It is not only an amazing technical accomplishment, it's also the wittiest and best-voiced animated movie to come along in years,’ *New York Post*.



Excellent

Fair

Poor

What did you think of the film? Please mark or tear the number.

Please add any further comments here

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Did You Know?

- Mel Gibson didn't record any dialogue in the same studio as any of the other principal cast members – he wasn't even in the same country! All of his lines were read in a recording studio in America.
- Following the film's success, there was a major push for the film to be nominated for Best Picture at the Academy Awards. Though this campaign failed, the film's popularity with Academy members led to the creation of the Best Animated Feature category, first presented at the 2002 Academy Awards.

Tell Us What You Think!

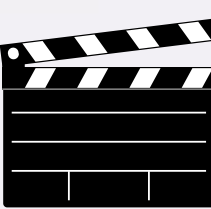


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