

Film Notes

By Emma Joy & Tessa Williams

Small Things Like These

2024 | 96m | 12A | English

Director: Tim Mielants

Starring: Cillian Murphy, Emily Watson, Michelle Fairley

Plus **Irpinia** | Jameisha Prescod | English | 8m

Small Things Like These is based on Claire Keegan's 2020 novel and was adapted for the screen by Enda Walsh. It focuses on the protagonist, Bill Furlong, played by Cillian Murphy. Set in 1985, Bill is a coal merchant in a small Irish town who often makes deliveries to the local convent, in which he slowly encounters something increasingly disturbing. This truly captivating drama is based on Ireland's notorious Magdalene Laundries; the church's homes for unwed mothers who were made to work, and had their babies taken away and sold to foster parents, without their permission.

It's interesting to make a film about a time in which there was so much female suffering led by a male protagonist. The topic is portrayed perfectly, due to Murphy's subdued and shocked response as he's led further and further into witnessing more atrocities from the outside. Held back by his own life responsibilities and a tendency for his fellow neighbours to ignore what is happening, and indeed which he is constantly urged to ignore himself. Indeed, however, these atrocities are not blatant, and the film quietly shows this.

The film is directed by Tim Mielants, and produced by Ben Affleck and Matt Damon's production company *Artists Equity*, alongside Cillian Murphy, Alan Moloney, Drew Vinton, and Catherine Magee. This star-studded team came together through a series of interactions; with Murphy and Mielants meeting on *Peaky Blinders*, and Murphy and Damon on *Oppenheimer*. With chemistry already present between them, they just needed inspiration.

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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?

- Small Things Like These was the opening film at the 74th Berlin International Film Festival, the first time an Irish film has been.
- While Murphy was discussing working with Peaky Blinders director Tim Mielants, Murphy's wife suggested that the novel "Small Things Like These" be made into a film. He didn't expect it but called the agency and was told it was possible. Murphy loved the novel by Claire Keegan.
- Small Things Like These is the shortest book to have been longlisted for the Booker prize in its entire history.

Continue Your Journey...

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Philomena (2013)

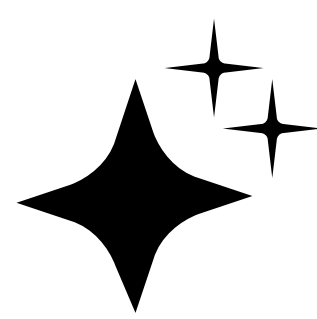
BBC journalist Martin Sixsmith reaches out to Philomena Lee to help her in her mission to find her son who was given up for adoption when she was a teenager



The Magdalene Sisters (2002)

After feeling that they've had enough, three young Irish women in the Magdalene Sisters Asylum plan to escape. The only problem they have is Sister Bridget, the lady who runs the wing.

SCAN ME



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