

Driving Mum

Iceland (2022) 112 minutes

Director: Hilmar Oddsson

Cast: Þröstur Leó Gunnarsson, Kristbjörg Kjeld, Hera Hilmar, Tómas Lemarquis.



Screening 17 September 2025 at Swindon Arts Centre

Synopsis

Jón (Þröstur Leó Gunnarsson) and his mother (Kristbjörg Kjeld) live in a isolated house where they make their living by knitting sweaters. After her sudden death, and per her instructions, Jón, accompanied by Bresnef the dog, takes her heavily made-up (by him) corpse, sat in the rear of the car, to bury her at Eyrarbakki the distant village from which she came. Rather than follow his mother's commands directly – for which the corpse berates him - Jón goes in search of his lost love. This is a road movie with a difference.

Reviews



This film hits just about every sweet spot possible: it is Icelandic and shot on black and white stock; it is a quirky road movie set in an unlikely place (Iceland); and it has a cute dog and features characters who knit. What is not love? (This) Icelandic film.... celebrates the breathtaking emptiness of the landscape. She may be dead but that doesn't stop her from criticising Jón's life choices like the time he fell in love with a girl named Bergdis (Hera Hilmar). As the journey progresses, he imagines he sees Bergdis in every passing woman with long hair, and slowly he begins to thaw out and open up to the strangers he meets.

Leslie Felperin, The Guardian

The horizons of Iceland's isolated Westfjords, shot in airy widescreen and crisp black and white, seem boundless. Not that you would know it from the life of Jón. Dour and middle-aged, he lives with his elderly, hectoring mother and a dog called Bresnef, days away from the nearest neighbours. But when his mother dies, Jón must fulfil her last wish and drive her corpse across the country. Away from the prison of his home, he starts to question his life. And Mama has plenty to say on the matter (death hasn't made her any less argumentative). This droll road movie uses the wild landscape to powerful effect, and features the best Icelandic canine acting since *Godland*.

Wendy Ide, The Observer

Film Facts

- o Film of the Year 2024 Edda Awards (Icelandic Film and Television Academy)
- o Grand Prix Prize 2022, Tallin Black Night Film Festival
- o Industry Select title, 2022 Toronto International Film Festival

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