

IF ONLY I COULD HIBERNATE

Mongolia (2024) 96 minutes

Director: Zoljargal Purevdash

Cast: Battsooj Uurtsaikh (Ulzii)
Nominjiguur Tsend (Tungaa)
Tuguldur Batsaikhan (Erkheme)



Screening 22nd October 2025 at Swindon Arts Centre

Synopsis

Ulzii is a teenager living with his family on the outskirts of Ulaanbaatar in Mongolia. His father is dead and his mother resorts to drinking alcohol instead of finding a job, meaning that there is often not enough coal to heat the home in the cold of winter. Ulzii feels responsible for his three younger siblings and needs money.

Reviews



True to its neo-realist foundations, *If Only I Could Hibernate* is a tough, unrelenting watch, with a harshness that is reflective of the freezing temperatures Ulaanbaatar residents live in. Despite the obvious poverty, however, there are moments of real levity; director Zoljargal Purevdash conjures up just as many emotions from shared family laughs as she does from hard-hitting drama, without ever fumbling the contrast between the two tones. This small and intimate Mongolian gem sparkles with the vivacity and authenticity of life that is so very important to films such as this.

William Stottor, Filmhounds

It's not the first time that Purevdash has let her audience inhale the hardship and the pollution of the yurt district, where she currently lives. Her two short films *Stairs* (2020), about a disabled person in Ulaanbaatar, and *Yellow Bus* (2022), which recounts the situation of a woman who immigrated to the city looking for a job, take a close approach to the Mongolian urban reality. "That is why I usually make films that could become a voice of the Yurt district people. I want my films to be a bridge to bring love, understanding, and peace that could lead to real solutions", she said.

The Independent, Michele Crestani

Film Facts

- The film was the first Mongolian film to play in the *Official Selection of the Cannes Film Festival*, where it competed in the *Un Certain Regard* section at the 2023 edition.
- It was selected as the Mongolian entry for the *Best International Feature Film* at the 97th Academy Awards.

swindonfilm.org.uk