

Limbo

Marketing Pack for venues, part of BFI FAN's support for new releases

"Limbo is about refugees and asylum seekers in Britain, and it's a bracingly internationalist and non-parochial piece of work: film-making with a bold view on the world but also as gentle and intimate as a much-loved sitcom... This is superlative film-making from Sharrock."

The Guardian



Specification details:

Dir: Ben Sharrock | Cert 12A | 104 mins | UK | 2020

Distributor: [MUBI](#)

Available: 30 July 2021 (UK theatrical release)

Booking contact: Natalie Ralph <nralph@mubi.com>

Audio Descriptive versions of the film are available to book. Also versions of the film will be captioned.

Synopsis:

50 word version



Ben Sharrock's critically adored *Limbo* is a wry, funny and poignant cross-cultural satire that subtly sews together the hardship and hope of the refugee experience. Set on a fictional remote Scottish island, it follows a group of new arrivals as they await the results of their asylum claims.

Short version

Ben Sharrock's critically adored *Limbo* is a wry, funny and poignant cross-cultural satire that subtly sews together the hardship and hope of the refugee experience. Set on a fictional remote Scottish island, it follows a group of new arrivals as they await the results of their asylum claims. Among them is Omar (Amir El-Masry), a young Syrian musician struggling with the guilt, regret and grief that comes with leaving his former life behind. This deadpan comedy-drama from a bold new voice in British cinema shines a light on the hearts and lives of those at the centre of a crisis that is mostly only experienced through the headlines.

Long version

Ben Sharrock's critically adored deadpan comedy-drama *Limbo* is a wry, funny and poignant cross-cultural satire that subtly sews together the hardship and hope of the refugee experience, shining a light on the hearts and lives of those at the centre of a crisis that is mostly only experienced through the headlines.

Set on a fictional remote Scottish island, *Limbo* tells the story of a group of new arrivals awaiting the results of their asylum claims. It centers on Omar (played by rising star Amir El-Masry), a young Syrian musician who, thousands of miles from home, finds himself trapped by guilt, regret and the grief that he carries for the loss of his former identity. Separated from his family and burdened by a plaster cast on his arm, Omar wanders the epic landscapes searching for answers to a complex past and daunting future.

But while he is stuck there, he isn't alone. In between brief long-distance conversations with his parents and passing interactions with oddball locals, Omar and his new flatmates attend outrageously misjudged 'cultural awareness' classes, binge *Friends* boxsets, and debate attending the local open mic night, all the while waiting for the delivery of letters that will ultimately determine their future.

ALSO AVAILABLE: A pre-recorded 30 min Q&A with director Ben Sharrock (fully subtitled): please email Stefana Dragan for more info:

sdragan@mubi.com



ALSO AVAILABLE: To celebrate the release of *Limbo* by MUBI on 30 July, BFI FAN have teamed up with ArtReach to offer you the opportunity to add a short film to your screening.

Journeys into Film is a fresh and thoughtful selection of short films from five contemporary filmmakers that offer both artistic intrigue and an injection of the reality of displacement and seeking refuge. Through bold, experimental, and intimate approaches, these films articulate the voices of their makers' lived experiences and will resonate with audiences across the country.

The films include, *The Little Whale on the Beach* by Parang Khezri, *My Name is Anik* by Bircan Birol, *Ambience* by Wisam Al-Jafari, *Birds or Borders* by Parham Ghalamder and *This is Not a Poem* by Eric Ngalle Chrles and Greg Lewis. [You can read more about each film here.](#)

Each film can be provided individually for a small fee of £20 +VAT. The full programme can also be booked for £100+VAT and would work best as a stand alone screening.

Please enquire with Dan Williamson dan@artreach.biz for more details and to get preview access to the films.

[Find out more](#)

Assets

Official Website: <https://mubi.com/limbo>

Distributor Twitter handle: <https://twitter.com/mubiuk>

Official hashtag: #Limbo

Official Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/mubiuk/>

Official UK poster: [Download here](#)

Stills: [Download here](#)

Q&A tour assets: [Download here](#)

BFI FAN programme notes written by Dan Williamson, Journeys Festival: [Download here](#)

BIFA Social Media assets and copy: [Download here](#)

Trailer YouTube version: <https://youtu.be/-pdLSXjEAoc>

- [Download trailer](#)
- [Download clips](#)

Cut down trailers: [Download here](#)

Official Clip #1: https://youtu.be/BUoQewq_WsM

Official Clip #2: <https://youtu.be/NND5lqvmKg>

Audience surveys

For feedback on the New Release title and your event, please direct your audience members to www.newreleasesurvey.co.uk to fill out our BFI FAN Audience Survey.

Responses can be shared with venues upon request.

- [Easy Read feedback survey](#)
- **[Download a MP4 slide here to put on your screens before the film to encourage audiences to fill out the survey.](#)**
- **[Download the QR code here](#)**

Simple and easy wins for exhibitors

- Facebook and Instagram ads: this is an easy and effective way at reaching target audiences. FAN support can pay for the ad and we can also talk you through campaign set-up to maximise results.

We expect *Limbo* to appeal to:

- Independent film lovers
- People interested in social issues
- People interested in British cinema
- People interested in the refugee crisis
- Fans of quirky comedies

Young Audiences

In collaboration with distributors, the FAN Young Consultants (a group of 10 under 30 year olds working in film exhibition) select new release titles that they would like to highlight as particularly engaging for their peers and young people aged 16-30 (or segments therein). Working with the FAN Young Audiences lead Moira McVean, the group creates [light-touch marketing packs](#) with digital assets, eventising and social media marketing ideas aimed specifically at supporting exhibitors attracting younger audiences to their venues.

The group recommends *Limbo* for 20+ year olds and had this to say about it:

Caroline Wilson- I really liked *Limbo* - it showed the refugee story and uncertainty in a humorous way and was concise in its storytelling. I would recommend it. Great performances and direction. Would really like to see this film reach a wide audience.

Thea Berry - I loved this. So funny and moving - a brilliant example of how comedy is used for pathos. Really beautifully shot and framed. Wonderful performances - one of the best British new releases I've seen in a while.

Caitlin Lydon- I thought this film was excellent - very moving and funny in a sometimes painfully deadpan way, and also so beautifully shot. It is the sort of film you continue to think about long after you've stopped watching, I'd hope it gets a wide release.

James Calver- I'd echo what everyone else is saying. It's one of the best and most fun British films I've seen for a few years, and I've been recommending it to my friends since watching it. I'd love it if it got a wide release. It didn't feel too long or too short, and the performances were great. Can't really go wrong.

The group all agreed that after watching *Limbo* they were keen to read around the themes of the film and to find out more about the processes of making the film. Share and highlight this kind of information via your social channels and be sure to share the great programme notes available within this pack!

Limbo: campaign and marketing ideas

The focus of BFI FAN's support for new releases is developing diverse audiences:

- **Price:** If you have a young person/student ticket offer, why not promote it alongside *Limbo*
- **Experience:** Research into audiences highlights how important the whole experience is. Think about promoting guest speakers or post-film discussions along with your screenings.
- **Interaction / social media:** Focus on the fact that it is a film all about family separation and the refugee experience something that might resonate strongly with audiences.

Promote your screenings

Find out how to tell new audiences about your events and make them unforgettable with our simple guides:

- **A Simple Guide To: DIGITAL MARKETING:** Marketing your events online can be as simple or as complex as you want it to be. To get you started, here are some easy steps to promote your event online.
- **A Simple Guide To: AUGMENTING FILM SCREENINGS:** Putting on a film screening doesn't have to be about just showing a film. Venues can make their events stand out and attract new audiences by augmenting their screenings with something extra.

If running social media advertising, consider using the following key words/phrases to attract diverse audiences that might be interested in the film:

- British cinema
- Comedies
- Refugees
- Award winners
- Social issues
- Syrian culture/Syrian conflict
- Immigration

Event Ideas

- Special screenings of local refugee groups/migrant communities
- Guest speakers from refugee groups like [Choose Love](#), [Refugee Council](#), [Refugee Action](#), [Migrant Help](#), [Scottish Refugee Council](#) and [Welsh Refugee Council](#).
- Celebration of rural towns and villages
- Celebration of Syrian culture

Planning your event

There is a regional marketing freelancer in each Film Hub region working on grassroots outreach, press and marketing, alongside a small budget for activity. They will also be working with students (both foreign and home) and language schools. Get in touch on fannewreleases@watershed.co.uk to be linked in to the campaign in your area - we can help with event ideas, finding speakers and other grassroots marketing.

- [Email template for schools/university/youth networks](#)
- [Email template for event screenings](#)
- [Email template for contacting venues](#)

Press

Get in touch with local press for any special events with the below press release template alongside stills from the film.

[Generic press template for local press and listings](#)

AWARDS:

[\(see all\)](#)

- BAFTA Awards 2021 | Nominee: Outstanding British Film
- BAFTA Awards 2021 | Nominee: Outstanding Debut by a British Writer

- British Independent Film Awards 2020 | Winner: Breakthrough Producer
- British Independent Film Awards 2020 | Nominee: Best Actor
- British Independent Film Awards 2020 | Nominee: Best Cinematography
- British Independent Film Awards 2020 | Nominee: Best Casting
- British Independent Film Awards 2021 | Nominee: Best Actor
- British Independent Film Awards 2021 | Winner: Breakthrough Producer
- British Independent Film Awards 2021 | Nominee: Best Casting
- British Independent Film Awards 2021 | Nominee: Best Cinematography

Key Press Quotes

[\(see all\)](#)

“The film is also a treat for the eyes, shifting between the dehumanising hostel where the men have been housed and the seemingly endless purgatorial bleakness of the island itself. The result is one of the best films ever made about the refugee experience.” - Radio Times

“Guided by El-Masry’s tender, understated performance and a tone that hovers between playful and sincere, “Limbo” manages to turn its downbeat scenario into a sweet and touching rumination on the quest to belong in an empty world.” - IndieWire

“Sharrock’s deadpan direction and his use of composition and lighting playfully filches from some of the greats such as Jacques Tati and, more recently, Aki Kaurismäki, but his shots are executed with a precision which suggests this is no mere homage.” - Little White Lies

“It’s a credit to Sharrock that “Limbo” can hold this multiplicity, flexing to accommodate tonal changes in much the same way cinematographer Nick Cooke’s aspect ratio shifts to embrace the astounding scenery. There are shots and simple moments here that will break and remake you. Sublime.” - Time Out

“A thoughtful, gentle-natured sophomore film, which dramatizes the refugees’ plight through deadpan comedy rather than issue-movie hand-wringing... [and whose] tonal inconsistencies are balanced out by the weight and grace of El-Masry’s performance, flickering with mirth and rage behind tired eyes, and the steady, deliberate composure of Sharrock’s filmmaking.” - Variety

“Limbo” is an appealing little gem overall, with a feel-good message about the kindness of strangers that is glib and simplistic but hard to resist. Rising British-Egyptian screen talent El-Masry gives a soulful, quietly hypnotic performance as Omar while Bhai exudes effortless comic energy as Farhad, his deadpan face a masterclass in mirthful minimalism, Buster Keaton with a hint of Borat.” - The Hollywood Reporter

“Despite an elegant deadpan style established from the outset, Sharrock soon gets you to invest in the characters and care deeply about what happens to them. “Limbo” is about refugees and asylum seekers in Britain, and it’s a bracingly internationalist and non-parochial piece of work: film-making with a bold view on the world but also as gentle and intimate as a much-loved sitcom... This is superlative film-making from Sharrock.” - The Guardian

Articles of Interest

- [The Wrap: How Ben Sharrock’s Study Abroad in Syria Inspired Refugee Film ‘Limbo’](#)
- [EW: Limbo director Ben Sharrock wants to tell a different kind of refugee story with his new film](#)
- [NPR: Ben Sharrock And Amir El-Masry Bring A Refugee Story To Life In ‘Limbo’](#)
- [The Scotsman: Limbo: Writer-director Ben Sharrock on his acclaimed refugee drama-comedy shot entirely on location in the Outer Hebrides](#)
- [The Slant: Interview: Ben Sharrock on Challenging Labels with Refugee Dramedy Limbo](#)
- [The Skinny: Ben Sharrock on moving refugee comedy Limbo](#)
- [The Time: Limbo Is a Wry and Tender Comedy About Refugees Searching for the Meaning of ‘Home’](#)



Sample social media posts

Twitter/Instagram:

“Sublime... will break and remake you.” - @TimeOut

Watch @BASharrock’s BAFTA-nominated @LimboFilm from @MUBIUK in cinemas from 30 July.

[VENUE]

[DATE]

[LINK]

“Witty, poignant, marvellously composed” - @Guardian

Watch @BASharrock’s BAFTA-nominated @LimboFilm from @MUBIUK in cinemas from 30 July.

[VENUE]

[DATE]

[LINK]

Facebook:

“Sublime... will break and remake you.” - Time Out

Watch Ben Sharrock’s BAFTA-nominated Limbo from MUBI UK in cinemas from 30 July.

[VENUE]

[DATE]

[LINK]