

The Crow's Egg

Cert PG India 2014 91 mins

Crew

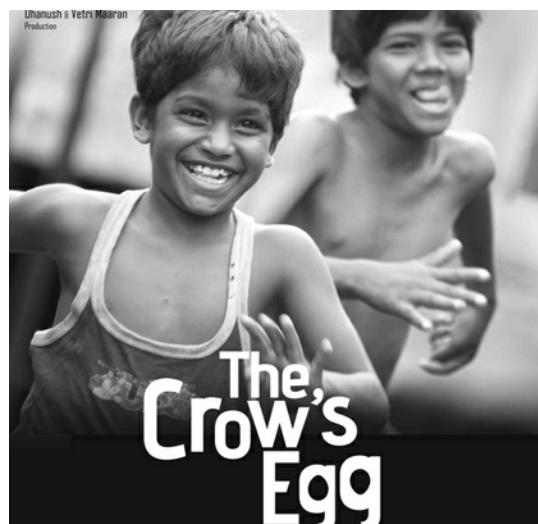
Director/	M. Manikandan
Cinematography/ Screenplay	
Film Editing	Kishore Te
Original music	G. V. Prakash Kumar

Cast

V Ramesh	Chinna Kaaka Muttai (younger crow's egg)
J Vignesh	Periya Kaaka Muttai (older crow's egg)
Iyashwarya Rajesh	their mother
Ramesh Thilak	Naina
Babu Antony	Pizza Shop Owner
TSilambarasan	(as himself)

Synopsis

Chennai, India, the present. Two mischievous and resourceful young brothers live in a slum with their mother and grandmother, but despite their poverty they find joy in each other and their family and friends. When their mother gets a television the boys see an advertisement for pizza for the first time, and coincidentally a pizza shop opens nearby. They are determined to taste this magical food - and so begins a great adventure, with triumphs and setbacks, as the industrious pair try to raise the cash to fund their dream.



Booking Information

Distributor: 20th Century Fox

DVD bookings: via **Filmbank**

0207 984 5957/8

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www.filmbank.co.uk

Available: tbc



Reviews

Deceptively simple, this charming film about dreams evolves in the most unexpected way, endearing us to its two young slum boy protagonists in the process. In his writing and directing debut, M. Manikandan, who also did the cinematography, has created a wonderful film that gets up a head of steam in the slums [and] artfully incorporates potent and topical themes of food globalization and the disparity between the rich and the poor. While it may not have the slick appeal of Danny Boyle's Oscar-winning *Slumdog Millionaire*, the film enjoys similar rewards.

..... Music is cleverly used as illustration to portray thoughts and ideas and just when we think the dream of pizza is floating away above the clouds, Manikandan lassoes the exposition and takes it in a different direction. The resolution is wonderful; the payoff complete.

Louise Keller, Urban Cinefile, November 2015

.....Manikandan leans a touch heavily on montages to smooth the film's passage, and throws in one heartstring-tugging contrivance as the boys approach their lowest ebb. Yet whenever he's left to roam this scrappy patch, he spots a good deal of interest: the unintended knock-on effects of gentrification, the centrality of food among those whose fate in life is to do the heavy lifting (the film provides a blue-collar bookend to 2013's crossover hit *The Lunchbox*) and, at the last, the many and varied ways social justice can now be engineered, even after all expectation and appetite for it has dwindled.

Wherever he places his camera, he registers people who really do seem to belong to this milieu: no slumming is tolerated, and young Ramesh and Vignesh in particular have a giggly, us-against-the-world bond you surely couldn't direct into them. (Their eyes visibly widen upon witnessing the discarded crust one contemporary has enshrined in Tupperware, as though it were a holy relic.) Sandwiched between starrier Hindi releases, it'd be a shame if *The Crow's Egg* slipped through the cracks: here's a film that doesn't merely observe India's economic divide from the outside, but inhabits it absolutely.

Mike McCahill, The Guardian, November 2015

FILM FACTS...

- ☆ The film premiered at the Toronto Film Festival 2014, and has been well received at festivals around the world.
- ☆ The scene where the boys are selling a dog was shot for real - the boys were told that the film was running out of money, and this is how they responded.
- ☆ The film's producer, Dhanush Vetrimaan (also actor, singer and Tamil celebrity) is now funding the boys' education.