



Poetry (Shi)

Spring
Season
2012

Release: 2010

Cert (UK): 12A

Runtime: 139 minutes

Director: Lee Chang-Dong

Cast: Jeong-hie Yun, David Lee, Yoon Jeong-hee

'A remarkable Korean meditation on the nature of life, death and memories' – Peter Bradshaw, Guardian

Mija's life has been fairly mundane for many years; she works as a nurse looking after a man who has had a stroke, whilst her home life is spent bringing up her teenage grandson; his mother has gone off to the big city (Busan) and left him. The Poetry has gone out of Mija's life.



To add to her problems, she starts to forget words and is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Something in this news inspires her to join a community education class to learn

poetry; she wants to write one poem before she loses the facility of speech all together. As anyone who has attempted to write poetry knows, it doesn't just write itself and Mija starts to wander the countryside looking for inspiration.

This might have made a rich enough plot for many movies, but director Lee Chang-Dong adds yet another disaster in her blameless life, when the body of a teenage girl turns up in the river. Mija's response to her illness and this tragedy force her to discover a deeper consciousness and, with it, the poetry in her life...

The film has won awards around the world, including 'Best Screenplay' and a nomination for the 'Palme d'Or' at Cannes.

Jeong-hie Yun came back out of retirement to take the part of Mija and, from all critical accounts, manages to a marvellous performance here, being the 'good' female in a sea of 'bad' male characters who treat her like a buffoon.

It is the fifth film from the director, Lee Chang-Dong, all of which have had good reviews, but the first one that has found its way on to our programme.

