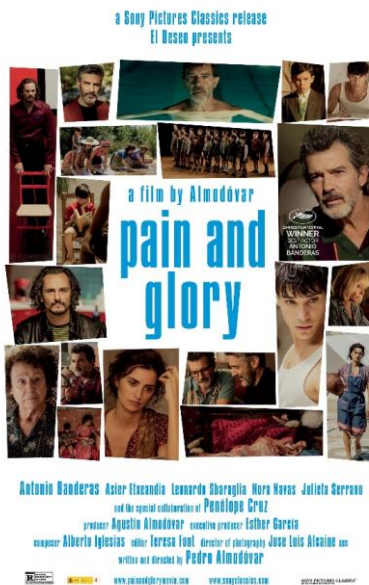


Neutral Bay Probus

Movie Enjoyment Group

You are cordially invited to our next meeting to see “Pain and Glory” (113 mins)

Directed by: Pedro Almodóvar **Cast :** Antonio Banderas, Asier Etxeandia, Leonardo Sbaraglia



There’s a tender, heartbreaking scene in Pedro Almodovar’s excellent “Pain and Glory,” in which one character asks another if the pain he caused him derailed his art. The other, a famous director who knows a thing or two about physical and emotional pain, scoffs at the idea. After all, art is one of the few professions not derailed by pain. Some of the best artists have worked their pain into their craft in ways that other jobs simply don’t allow. Pain doesn’t derail an artist’s career; it shapes it. And Almodovar’s film captures the way life is reflected in art in ways that only a master filmmaker could possibly even attempt. It’s a deeply personal and very moving film, anchored by the best work of Antonio Banderas’ career.

When “Pain and Glory” opens with a narrative in which a famous director reunites with an actor whom he made a star decades earlier, the meta-aspect of watching Banderas play a version of Almodovar himself is clearly intentional. Is Alberto Crespo (Asier Etxeandia) intended as a stand-in for Banderas or someone else from Almodovar’s past or a purely fictional creation? It’s likely a mix of people Almodovar worked with over the years with whom he lost touch, either intentionally or otherwise. For Mallo and Crespo, there’s bad blood. Mallo didn’t like Crespo’s work in their breakthrough film, accusing it of being too influenced by the actor’s heroin use. Years later, they reunite for a Q&A and Mallo, in a great deal of pain because of chronic health problems, decides to try chasing the dragon himself, quickly becoming addicted to heroin. It’s a story of someone reaching into the past, pulling out something formative, and then using it to reshape and inform the present—like how great artists often do.

One of the reasons for that is how much trust Almodovar places in Banderas, and how much that trust is reciprocated. Banderas never once feels like he’s doing an Almodovar impression, and yet their friendship clearly influenced the performance in ways that other actors couldn’t have possibly understood. Perhaps the best praise that I can pay both gentlemen is that, while the actor and director clearly shaped the character, Banderas and Almodovar both fall away and we become invested in the story of Salvador Mallo. He’s not just a stand-in as he could have been in a lesser film—a symbol for the aging auteur. He’s a fully-realized, emotional, complex character in his own right. Brian Tallerico [rogerebert.com] [David Stratton.s recommendation ****1/2](#)

WHEN: Monday 25 November 2019

TIME: 10:20am for a 10:30am start
(you will need to buy your own ticket)

WHERE: Cremorne Orpheum Cinema 380 Military Rd Cremorne
<http://www.orpheum.com.au/session-times>

Afterwards: Discussion over lunch/coffee at a nearby café
Please contact David before or after the film

Wives, Partners, Welcome

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