



February 2021

The Bin

William L. Blizek
University of Nebraska at Omaha, wblizek@unomaha.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/jrf>

Recommended Citation

Blizek, William L. (2021) "The Bin," *Journal of Religion & Film*: Vol. 25 : Iss. 1 , Article 31.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/jrf/vol25/iss1/31>

This Slamdance Film Festival Review is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Religion & Film by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.

The Bin

Abstract

This is a review of the short film, *The Bin* (2021), directed by Jocelyn Tamayao.

Keywords

Deaf, Cochlear implants

Creative Commons License



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

Author Notes

William Blizek is the Founding Editor of the Journal of Religion and Film, and is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He is also the editor of the *Continuum Companion to Religion and Film* (2009).



**The Bin (2021), dir. Jocelyn Tamayao
From the Unstoppable program**

The plot of this film is simple. A father wants his deaf son (Mico) to learn to speak. For years he teaches his son to speak. As the son grows older, however, he learns Filipino Sign Language and he identifies with his sign language self. The father then learns of cochlear implants and wants his son to get the implants. The son rejects this idea as well. All of this generates conflict between father and son and ends with an estrangement.

One day the father encounters a father and his daughter in a café. The daughter is communicating using sign language. The father tells them that he wants his son to get cochlear implants, but the daughter berates him for disrespecting the wishes of his son. She tells the father that he is being selfish. Eventually, the father stops pushing his son to have the implants. The father learns FSL, as does the mother. Mico is now able to both express himself through sign language and be a welcome part of his family. A happy ending.

But this film goes well beyond the simple plot. Is the father really selfish? Does the father simply want his son to be like himself? A fundamental feature of most parents is that they will do

anything to help their children be happy. This is a strong feeling for parents, and it is not selfish. The problem is that the parent sees only one way for the child to be happy, and so imposes his own view of happiness on the child. It is very difficult to see or understand that there are other ways for children to be happy. The parent identifies with his or her own world view. This is a common conflict between parents and children. The film helps us to understand this conflict.

Looking at the big picture, however, this film is about the other. The conflicts between me and the other are often the result of one of us having a different view or understanding of what makes life valuable—a different world view. I think of someone else as lazy or irresponsible, for example, because they do not want to live the life I live. They do not buy into the world view with which I identify. We must learn, then, to respect the differences between us and care for the person who is not like us, whose vision of a good life is not limited by the parameters of my own vision. This applies to so many situations in our lives. It permeates our interactions with others. This is a film that speaks to love and respect not only between parent and child, or between those who have disabilities and those that do not. It is a film that speaks to our very humanity.

The writer and director of the film, Jocelyn Tamayao, is herself deaf. This film is part of the Unstoppable program of Slamdance 2021, which features directors with disabilities.