

Moonlight – Review

Moonlight is about a young African American man and his coming of age, presented as three **stages** in his life, like the panels of a **trptych**. The film has power and generosity and is the kind that leaves you feeling somehow mentally **smarter** and physically lighter.

Love, sex, **survival**, mothers and father figures are its themes, the last one **foregrounded** by the **poignant** absence of the fathers themselves. The protagonist comes to be named Black: macho, gym-built, with **gold** teeth; a man of few words. He got out of **jail** to start a new life far from his Miami home town, ending up in Atlanta, and **dealing** on street corners. But Black has a secret: something he keeps **hidden** from other people, and maybe even himself. He is gay. How did he get here?



Moonlight is moving and mysterious: a dance to the music of time, in its way. But it also shows that the three stages can be considered in **parallel**, as well as in **sequence**.

Moonlight is a film about **masculinity**, the **wounds** and crises of which are the same for all sexualities, but conditioned by the background weather of **race** and class.



What makes *Moonlight* distinctive is its **offbeat** quality and ability always to **wrong-foot** the viewer. The film, shot in the same parts of Florida where the director and writer grew up, feels like an **inside** story. We know that Jenkins comes from the world he is dramatising. It's refreshing, too, that he doesn't resort to **clichés** and that he tries so hard to give us a sense of the **inner** lives of the characters.