



The White Crow – Review

The White Crow is a **watchable**, serviceable movie telling the story of ballet legend Rudolf Nureyev and his sensational escape to the west in the early 60s at the age of 23, while on his first European tour. Dance is represented as a transcendental experience of success, of leaving behind the past and reinventing the future. Like Billy Elliot's defection from his working-class childhood, Nureyev's flight involves crises of **loyalty** with family and community. These

struggles are, however, a little enigmatic and opaque with Rudolf, as portrayed by the Ukrainian ballet star and first-time actor Oleg Ivenko. Ralph Fiennes directs and gives a performance of spaniel-eyed sadness as Nureyev's dance teacher and mentor Alexander Pushkin, with whose wife Xenia (Chulpan Khamatova), Nureyev is to have a sentimental education.



David Hare adapts Julie Kavanagh's **biography** of Nureyev, skilfully sketching in his past life via flashbacks of childhood and early manhood as a tempestuous young student in Leningrad. The present-tense action takes place in Paris, as Nureyev and the west thrill each other to the bone. Nureyev finds a well-connected Parisian ally in Clara Saint (Adèle Exarchopoulos), whom the film promotes almost to quasi-girlfriend status, while representing Nureyev's gay identity pretty obliquely compared with his straight experiences with Xenia. Finally at the **airport**, Nureyev realises it's now or never. He has to defect.



What should be a nail-biting climax is a bit subdued due to Ivenko's intelligent but at times passionless performance. Casting a seasoned actor would have meant a long-shot body double for dance scenes, and there's an argument for keeping dance scenes out of it entirely. As it stands, Ivenko – though perfectly **plausible** – is often playing opposite Sergei Polunin as Nureyev's Kirov colleague Yuri Soloviev; though arguably no better at acting than Ivenko, Polunin – a

real-life dancer – radiates far more Nureyevian **charisma** and sexy **arrogance**.

Hare cleverly suggests Nureyev's mixture of courage, hauteur, emotional damage and cool self-appraisal; the Soviet authorities cannot **threaten** him through his family because he long ago left them behind. An **athletic**, confident, undemanding film.

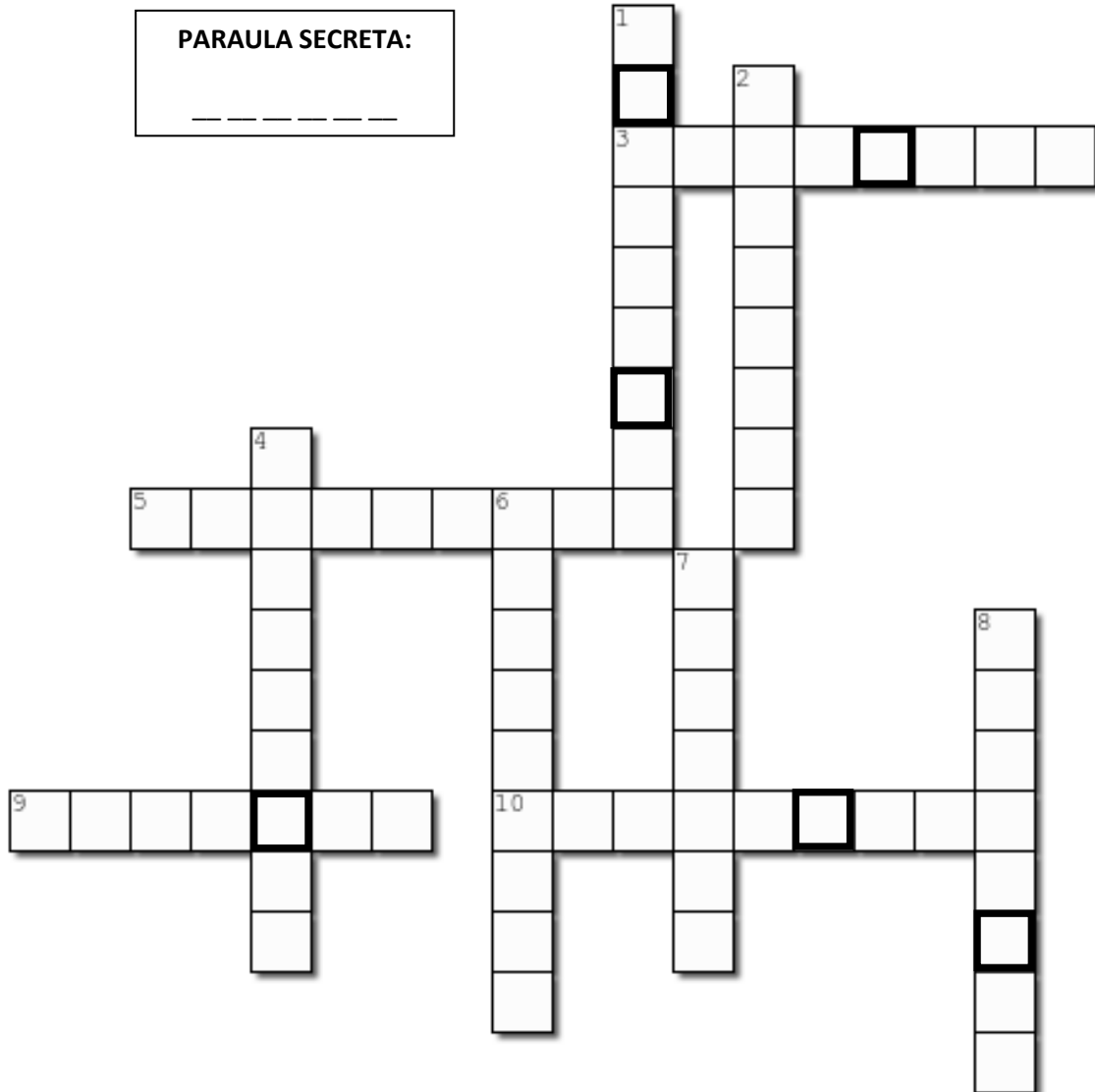


The White Crow – Crossword

GUANYA 2 ENTRADES GRATUÏTES AMB EL CINEMA ESBARJO I CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL

- 1) Completa els mots encreuats amb el vocabulari de la crítica.
- 2) Reuneix les lletres de les caselles en negreta i forma la paraula secreta.
- 3) Sigues el 1er en publicar la paraula al Facebook de Cambridge School www.facebook.com/CambridgeSchoolPage i guanyaràs 2 entrades per a una pel·lícula en VO al **Cinema Esbarjo de Cardedeu** (a recollir al mateix cinema).

PARAULA SECRETA:



ACROSS

3. physically strong, active or good at sports
5. enjoyable and interesting to watch
9. support that you always to give someone because of feelings, duty or love
10. behaviour that shows you think you are more important or better than others

DOWN

1. likely to be true, honest and sincere
2. a strong personal quality that makes other people like you or be attracted to you
4. an attempt to do something that takes a lot of effort over a period of time
6. a book that someone writes about someone else's life
7. a place where planes arrive and leave
8. telling someone you might or will cause them harm, especially if they don't do something



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