KINONIK

TICKETS

SMOKE (1995)

DIRECTED BY WAYNE WANG

WEDNESDAY November 25th 7PM

SATURDAY November 28th 2pm / 7pm

16mm • 1 hr 52 min



Some years the table gets smaller. Fares are the steepest in a decade, jet fuel is priced like a war, and for the first time in four years fewer of us are expected to travel for Thanksgiving. Plenty will spend Wednesday night in town, by choice or by arithmetic, looking for safe harbor and the warmth of a room full of friends.

Smoke is that room. It moves at the speed of a cigar: a Brooklyn summer, a fan turning over the counter, the same handful of regulars wandering in for a tin of something and staying for a palaver. Harvey Keitel runs the shop as Auggie, a man who has quietly decided to love everyone a little and tell no one. No one here is a hero, exactly, but no one is a villain either. Everyone is lying about something small, or big, and in unlikely ways the lies keep turning into kindnesses before anyone can stop them.

Asked by the New York Times to write a Christmas story, Paul Auster dreamed it up after opening a tin of little cigars and thinking about the man who sold them to him. Wang read it on Christmas morning and asked his wife who this Auster guy was and if he might turn it into a movie. It's a story about stealing and giving, and by the end you won't be able to say which was which.

Wang breaks the film into chapters named for its people, each of whom is quietly nursing the wound of a loss: a wife, a father, a daughter, an arm. They patch it the clumsy way, with a bad joke, a borrowed name, money nobody should be carrying, a free lunch. Nobody announces that these strangers have become a family; you notice it on your own, the way you notice the regulars at a bar have started saving each other a stool.

A Christmas story the night before Thanksgiving is early, we know; but somehow it seemed like the right way to say how much we appreciate the incredible support you've shown us all year. If you loved Wim Wender's Perfect Days, this is a picture for you.

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