



Chiasso, Cinema EXCELSIOR

18.15

Friday, 23rd November 2018**THE BIG SICK****2017**

120 minutes

Directed by **Michael Showalter**Starring: **Kumail Nanjiani, Zoe Kazan, Holly Hunter**

Kumail is a comedian in Chicago trying to get his big break performing stand-up as well as a self-produced one-man show about his Pakistani background. His Muslim immigrant parents frequently set him up with young Pakistani women, expecting that he will follow their example of an arranged marriage; he is uninterested but tolerates the introductions. He also lets them believe he still shares their religious faith, though he has become agnostic.

One night, after a show, Kumail approaches Emily, a white woman in the audience and their one-night stand develops into an on-going relationship. Kumail does not tell his family about Emily, and his relationship with Emily is strained as he holds back, fearful of losing his family, who disowned one of his cousins after he married a white woman. Emily finds pictures of the women Kumail's parents have set him up with; they argue and she asks whether he sees a long-term future with her, given his family's expectations. When he says he doesn't know, Emily ends their relationship.

Kumail learns weeks later that Emily has been taken to the hospital after having fainted. A doctor tells him that Emily has a serious lung infection and must be immediately placed in an induced coma with tracheal intubation. He signs the permission form and calls her parents, Beth and Terry. Aware of their daughter's messy breakup with Kumail, they tell him he is not needed, but Kumail stays and the three become closer as they deal with Emily's illness.

Surgery is ineffective and the infection spreads to Emily's kidneys. Emily wakes from her coma. Still pained from their breakup, Emily tells Kumail to leave.

Meanwhile, Kumail's parents visit his apartment, angry that he is not taking their marriage suggestions seriously. Kumail tells them that he does not want an arranged marriage and no longer practices Islam, and reveals his relationship with Emily. His parents disown him. So Kumail decides to move to New York City with two comedian friends. As Kumail prepares to depart for New York, his parents visit. His father tells him they are still angry, but gives him a dish of his favourite food and ask him to stay in touch.

Critics' comments:

Judd Apatow has tackled love and race in the US and made a delicate and funny classic. (*The Times*)

Love means having to say you're sorry — early and often. That's one of the truisms in "The Big Sick," a joyous, generous-hearted romantic comedy that, even as it veers into difficult terrain, insists that we just need to keep on laughing. (*The New York Times*)

This date movie, produced by Judd Apatow and based on the real lives of writers Kumail Nanjiani and Emily V Gordon, is charmingly free of irony and cynicism. (*The Guardian*)