



See You at Jackson's Cinema House!

MAEBASHI CITY COORDINATOR FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (CIR)
JACKSON BANNISTER'S ACTIVITY REPORT

JULY 2026



DECEMBER'S MOVIE

The Life of Chuck

2024 USA 

Jackson Bannister



I work as a Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) in Maebashi City, Gunma Prefecture, engaging in activities to deepen mutual cultural understanding between Japanese and non-Japanese residents.

Films are another family

～Discover new cinema in Maebashi—connecting films, people, and the community.～



In order to foster bonds within the local community through film, we decided to open Maebashi Cinema House.

Although small, our theater shares a wide variety of films from the heart of Maebashi. Our program spans a wide range of genres, including high-quality independent and mini-theater films that rarely receive screenings, hit titles that have completed their runs at multiplex cinemas, family-friendly films that parents and children can enjoy together, and classic masterpieces from the past. Through this selection, we hope audiences will discover new films.

This is the kind of "Cinema House" we aspire to build.

MISSION

3F, Maebashi Plaza Genki 21 Annex, 1-16 Chiyoda-machi 5-chome, Maebashi City

The Life of Chuck

Everyone carries a
universe within them.

For this issue, I had the chance to see *The Life of Chuck*, which is currently playing at Maebashi Cinema House!

Directed by Mike Flanagan and based on Stephen King's novella of the same name, *The Life of Chuck* is a 2024 drama with touches of fantasy that quietly reflects on mortality, memory, and what it means to live. Though the film deals with death, it is ultimately a celebration of life, suggesting that every seemingly ordinary person contains an entire universe of experiences.

The story unfolds in reverse chronological order across three acts, gradually revealing the life of its titular protagonist, Charles Krantz (Chuck), played by Tom Hiddleston. At first glance, Chuck appears to be the definition of an everyman: an unremarkable accountant living a quiet, ordinary life. Yet as the narrative moves further into his past, it becomes clear that *The Life of Chuck* is not simply about one man's life. Rather, it asks us to recognize the immeasurable value found in every human life, no matter how ordinary it may seem.

The film's central idea is encapsulated by Walt Whitman's famous line from *Song of Myself*: "I am large, I contain multitudes." Throughout our lives, every person we meet, every place we visit, every piece of music we hear, and every joy or hardship we experience becomes part of who we are. Each of us carries an entire world within ourselves. By telling Chuck's story in reverse,

the film gradually uncovers those "multitudes," inviting us to appreciate the richness of his inner world before guiding us back to where it all began.

On the technical side, Flanagan's background in horror is immediately apparent. Best known for works such as *Ouija: Origin of Evil* and *The Haunting of Hill House*, he brings his signature restraint to the film's opening act. Through understated camerawork, unsettling sound design, and an ever-present sense of unease, the first chapter feels almost like an entirely different film from what follows.

That bold shift in tone makes perfect sense given the film's Stephen King origins. Yet the creeping dread isn't there simply to unsettle the audience. Instead, it underscores just how fragile a person's world can be, making the quiet moments that define Chuck's life feel all the more poignant and irreplaceable.

The film truly comes into its own in its second and third acts. As more of Chuck's life is gradually revealed, the story quietly reshapes the way we understand everything that came before.

Rather than dwelling on plot twists or grand revelations, *The Life of Chuck* invites us to reflect on the weight of a single life and the quiet significance of the unique world each person carries within them.

The screenplay remains compelling throughout. Its philosophical dialogue never becomes overly self-indulgent, instead naturally converging on the film's central idea that even the most ordinary life possesses immeasurable depth and complexity. At times, the script feels almost literary rather than cinematic, recalling the intellectually engaging dialogue of writers like Aaron Sorkin or Andy Weir. That is by no means a criticism of Flanagan.

If anything, it demonstrates the remarkable range of a filmmaker best known for horror, showcasing his talents as both writer and director.

Overall, *The Life of Chuck* was a wonderful surprise. Despite featuring an outstanding cast, including Tom Hiddleston, Chiwetel Ejiofor, and Mark Hamill, it somehow escaped my attention until now. The film effortlessly shifts between mystery, melancholy, humor, fantasy, and heartfelt drama without ever feeling tonally inconsistent. Every genre it embraces ultimately serves the same central idea: that each of us carries countless experiences, memories, and relationships that shape who we are. *The Life of Chuck* is a moving reminder that behind every seemingly ordinary person lies a world unlike any other, one that deserves to be seen, cherished, and remembered.

MAEBASHI CINEMA HOUSE
OPENING AND CLOSING TIMES CHANGE
DEPENDING ON MOVIE SCREENING TIMES

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