

Rose of Nevada [15]

2025 Country 114 mins

UK released **24 April 2026**

Director **Mark Jenkin**

Screenplay **Mark Jenkin**

Cinematography **Mark Jenkin**

Music **Mark Jenkin**

Cast **George MacKay** (Nick); **Callum Turner** (Liam);

Rosalind Eleazar (Tina); **Francis Magee**

(Murgey/Denver); **Mary Woodvine**; **Edward Rowe**

Rose of Nevada explodes with signs, in which everything – every shot, sound, cut – signifies like crazy. Nothing is arbitrary: there are no gratuitous atmospherics, no casual incident.

In his 2019 breakthrough feature *Bait* and its follow-up *Enys Men* (2022), there was a jazzy improvisational feel to the editing rhythms, but here the staccato style puts remarkable emphasis on individual shots, weighting them with an extra ballast of meaning, manifest or potential. *Rose of Nevada* is a mystery narrative that expects us to do a great deal of interpretative work, but in which individual elements might be read either as metaphor, or more straightforwardly as navigational clues to guide us through the narrative's troubled waters.

Once again set in Jenkin's native Cornwall, this is a timeslip story of two men – Nick (George MacKay) and Liam (Callum Turner) - who join the crew of a fishing vessel that has mysteriously come back to shore after a long absence at sea. When they return from their first voyage, the men realise that they have slipped back three decades to 1993, when the local fishing community was thriving – as opposed to the present, when the village post office has become a food bank, and an old woman's dementia seems to embody all the trauma of calamitous times. This is a tale of the fantastic, but rooted in the bleak political realities of 2020s Britain.

The signifiers come in strings threaded throughout, some literally in the form of messages: a fond note to Nick from his wife and daughter; the Rose's nameplate, kicked into the sea only to magically reappear; the warning

message Nick finds carved in his cabin... There is the gash in the roof over his kitchen, which comes to embody a rip in the fabric of time. Then there are the nautical mechanisms – winches, ropes, chains, suggesting the inexorable machinery of time itself (echoing in the clanking, mechanical sounds that are a leitmotif of Jenkin’s score).

As you’d expect from Jenkin, shooting again on 16mm — with occasional visible sprocket holes and searing blasts of overexposure – Rose of Nevada is at once visually harsh and remarkably beautiful in its attention to detail and texture. Rust, mould, crumbling plaster all evoke a world defined by decay, running out of energy and of luck. The water imagery, from rain on slate to the ferocious storm braved by the Rose’s crew – which functions narratively like a spaceship’s entry into a black hole — evokes a world in which porousness is the law. All things leak into all others, meanings and time zones included. The film is richly cast, with MacKay’s taut facial geometry marking the anxiety and the terrible shifts of realisation that Nick experiences. Jenkin regulars Edward Rowe and Mary Woodvine (also story collaborator) are among those playing the same characters at different ages. And Francis Magee has a riotous old time as the mystery skipper who may be called Murgey or Denver (his real name “lost in the wind, sir!”), a mocking Flying Dutchman figure forever dispensing gnomish sea lore and salty wisdom – his catchphrase “Home to Mother!” forever upping the oedipal stakes another notch.

Jonathan Romney, *Sight and Sound*, 30 September 2025 (abridged)

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