



CHESTER FILM SOCIETY PRESENTS:

MY AFTERNOONS WITH MARGUERITTE

2010 France 82 mins

Director: Jean Becker

Starring: Gerard Depardieu, Gisele Casadesus

Preceded by a short.

Heart-warming French drama with a superb script and a terrific central performance from Gerard Depardieu.

What's it all about?

Directed by Jean Becker, My Afternoons With Margueritte is based on a novel by Marie-Sabine Roger and stars Gerard Depardieu as Germain Chazes, an uneducated, middle-aged handyman who still lives next door to his mean spirited mother (Claire Maurier) and divides his time between his much younger bus driver girlfriend Annette (Sophie Guillemin) and hanging out in the local cafe owned by his friend Francine (Maurane). When he meets 95-year-old former scholar Margueritte (Gisele Casadesus) on a park bench, the pair bond over their mutual love of pigeons and soon become friends.

During their regular meetings on the same bench, Margueritte reads to Germain and he gradually discovers a love of literature, despite the fact that he can barely read. At the same time, their friendship begins to have a positive effect on Germain's relationships with his friends, his girlfriend and his mother.

The Good

Depardieu is terrific as Germain, delivering a likeable, warm-hearted performance that feels effortlessly naturalistic and believable. Casadesus is equally good as Margueritte and their relationship is genuinely touching; there's also strong support

from Guillemin (who does a good job of selling Annette's attraction to the much older Germain) and a fiery turn from Anne Le Guernec as Germain's mother in the heartbreaking flashback sequences.

The script is extremely good, holding your attention throughout despite the relative lack of plot, and it manages to perfectly convey the transformative qualities of both friendship and art (or at least literature). There's also a lot of humour in the film, even if some of it is at Germain's expense (there's a good joke about Guy de Maupassant that translates surprisingly well).

The Great

Becker's direction is excellent and he orchestrates several memorable scenes, most notably a shocking scene involving a pitchfork that's all the more jarring because it stands in sharp contrast to the peaceful, slow moving nature of the rest of the film. He also handles the emotional scenes well and if you're not wiping something from your eye by the time the climax rolls around then frankly, you're dead inside.

Worth seeing?

Impressively directed and superbly written, My Afternoons With Margueritte is an enjoyable, emotionally engaging French drama with a terrific central performance from Gerard Depardieu. Highly recommended.

Matthew Turner View London.



PLEASE RATE TONIGHT'S FILM USING THE SCALE BELOW. DETACH AND HAND IN AS YOU LEAVE. PLEASE LEAVE ANY COMMENTS ABOUT THIS FILM ON THE REVERSE OF THIS FORM. MANY THANKS.

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TERRIBLE FANTASTIC