



The Kid with a Bike

(Belgium, France, Italy, 2011)

Directors: Jean-Pierre Dardenne & Luc Dardenne

Written by Jean-Pierre Dardenne & Luc Dardenne

Cinematography: Alain Marcoen

Running time: 87 Minutes

www.chelmsford-filmclub.co.uk

Cast: Cyril – Thomas Doret; Samantha – Cécile de France; Guy Catoul – Jérémie Renier; bookseller – Fabrizio Rongione; Wes – Egon Di Mateo; bistro owner – Olivier Gourmet

Belgium's Dardenne brothers make movies that remind you the most compelling stories are unfolding right outside your window, rather than in outer space, the distant past or wherever cinema usually takes us. But rather than diminishing the medium, they elevate it, as in *The Kid with a Bike*, another arthouse-bound neorealist snapshot that subtly echoes virtual soul brother Vittorio de Sica's "Shoeshine" and "Bicycle Thieves."

From a review by Peter Debruge, *Variety*, May 14, 2011

Winner of the Grand Jury Prize at Cannes 2011, *The Kid with a Bike* is another empathetic film by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne, the brothers from Belgium who have strong sympathy for alienated children and young people, and who avoid melodrama and sensation in telling their stories so movingly. The film is only 87 minutes long, lean and efficient, intent on Cyril. It doesn't "explain" him, because he is all there to be seen: his need, his abandonment, his reckless determination, his unprotected youth. Young Thomas Doret fills the role with natural sincerity and focus, and not a second that seems contrived.

From a review by Roger Ebert, rogerebert.com, March 21, 2012

This is a heartfelt, boldly direct film composed in the social-realist key signature of C major, revisiting the film-makers' classic themes of parenthood, trust and love. It gets a lot of storytelling accomplished in its brief running time, although the directors gloss over the realities of criminal assault. Despite some plot eccentricities, this is an affecting, artless film that wins over its audience with simplicity and force. Like the Dardennes' 1999 film *Rosetta*, it is about the desperation and vulnerability that results in being ceaselessly and restlessly on the move: Cyril is forever running, either running away from his tormentors or running towards someone or something he believes will provide hope. The film is unafraid of emotion, unafraid of plunging into basic human ideas: the need for trust, and the search for love.

From a review by Peter Bradshaw, *The Guardian*, 22 March, 2012

The realistic movies of the Belgian brothers Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne have been winning prizes for 15 years now, including two Palmes d'Or at Cannes. They've established their own particular geographical area (largely working-class small towns in post-industrial, French-speaking Belgium) in which they explore a familiar series of themes and situations that inevitably arise from this milieu – broken families, alcoholism, unemployment, conflict with and exploitation of immigrants. Their elliptical, carefully observed films dig deeper and find new things to say each time they put their hands to the plough, and *The Kid with a Bike* sees them in good form, if somewhat short of their very best.

From a review by Philip French, *The Observer*, 25 March, 2012

Also from from Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne:

The Promise (1996)

Rosetta (1999)

The Son (2002)

The Child (2005)

The Silence of Lorna (2008)

Next Chelmsford Film Club screening: *Troll Hunter*, Thursday 1 November.

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