Berlinale FILM CAPSULE: Ana, mon amour (Netzer, 2017): Romania

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

CÄ?lin Peter Netzer returns to the Berlinale Competition, having captured the Golden Bear in 2013 with his low budget, digitally shot, *Mutter & Sohn*, a mother-son relationship piece. Netzerâ??s entry this year, another relationship piece, is *Ana, mon amour,* starring Diana Cavallioti, as Ana, and Mircea Postelnicu as Toma. *Ana, mon amour* is a story of two young people who meet at the university and begin a co-committed love affair full of hopes and dreams. Each feels mutually supported.

Opening in tight framing, Netzer introduces us to Ana and Toma discussing Friedrich Nietzsche and Adolph Hitler. Panic ensues for Ana. Toma caresses her belly and the two become intimate partners. Director of Photography Andrei ButicÄ? delivers highly crafted frames representing the closeness and intimacy Ana and Toma share.

As the relationship evolves the episodes continue until medication is used and then reconsidered with psychoanalytic therapy. Along the way we meet both sets of parents and discover root causes for the affective emotionality Ana and Toma exhibit and experience.

Netzer shows Anaâ??s struggles and Tomaâ??s attempts to cope with exquisite, tender and emotive close ups. In, addition Netzer incorporates the use of extended narrative flashbacks as Toma is participating in on-going, regular psychoanalytic therapy sessions.

In addition, Netzer addresses racial and social bias in Romanian society. Each visits the otherâ??s parents home. Taking a cue from Milos Formanâ??s *The Loves of a Blonde* (1965) Netzer gives an up-close and introspective view exploring in seemingly real-time these racial and social biases. Afterwards, the two begin to isolate themselves from their families and friends. Moving into more graphic detail, Netzer effectively shows Ana unravelling and Tomaâ??s increasing frustration at his own inability to stabilize her.

Eventually, Toma succumbs to the stress from Anaâ??s anxiety and walks away from his career becoming a stay-at-home husband/father as the two have chosen to embark on parenthood. Ana has now become the sole breadwinner. Unsure of herself at first, Ana begins therapy with a competent

psychologist finding an inner strength from the insights and support she garners from her sessions. Toma feels left out and the relationship comes to a head.

In *Ana, non amour*, Netzer delves into some rather deep and heady territory including dream interpretation as it relates to psychoanalysis. The filmâ??s narrative is strongly driven by Andrei ButicÄ? (Director of Photography) camera work and dynamic editing from Dana Bunescu (Editor) in revealing the multi-faceted aspects and multi-faceted complexities of relationship in a most intimate space. Bunescu would go on to win the Silver Bear for Outstanding Artistic Contribution in the categories camera, editing, music score, costume or set design. That being said, the actors more than hold their own.

But above all, In *Ana, non amour*, Netzer delivers a profound dramatic presentation on mental illness, how itâ??s overcome and the toll it takes on an adult, romantic relationship. Netzer delves into some rather deep and heady territory including dream interpretation as it relates to psychoanalysis revealing the complex psychological affects due to repression related to Romanian societal taboos.

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Date Created
February 18, 2017
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