

EIFF 2011 Review: On The Shore

By [Heather C Thomson](#)

❌ Obsession, longing and needing in a subtle South of France setting should provide *On the Shore* with a strong basis for a satisfying film, and yet it fails to deliver on the key point – why should an audience care?

When washed up French detective Michel Matarasso (Daniel Duval) finds the body of a beautiful yet troubled woman, Suandra Bardini (Chaira Caselli), he descends into a spiral of obsession that brings personal happiness, but at a terrible cost to those around him.

The film shows the wanderings of a middle-aged man plagued with insomnia and tormented by the suspicion that he is wasting his life. While Duval gives a tremendous performance as a man on the abyss, unable to truly connect with those around him the big, unanswered, question is “Why?”

Despite his steady job, a decent apartment and a woman who loves him, his life consists of rolling around the less picturesque areas of Nice, making only superficial connections with those he meets.

The film never really addresses the origins of Matarasso’s discontentment and this makes it difficult for the audience to sympathise with the main character as he increasingly wreaks havoc on the lives he touches with his selfish actions.

Although it is a well made film that avoids the ‘cop on the edge’ clichés, the sex scenes between the gaunt Duvall as the policeman and Chiara Caselli as Sandra are just a little long and voyeuristic.

On the Shore (Beau Rivage); French dialogue with English subtitles; 90min

Filmhouse, Edinburgh – Fri 17 June at 21.55 and Sun 19 June at 19.00