

EIFF – A Wedding (Noces)

(2016) 98 mins ***



Zahira (Lina El Arabi) is 18 and pregnant. Her boyfriend is Pakistani and Muslim and should be suitable but ultimately he doesn't want to know and, eventually, she has the pregnancy terminated supported by her big brother Amir (Sebastien Houbani) and her parents. However they quickly decide to force her to settle down by arranging a traditional marriage for her, allowing her to choose between three Pakistani men who are family acquaintances. After vacillating and changing her mind several times, she chooses the one who can speak some French and they are married online. Her sister then confides that Zahira is going to be taken to Pakistan to consummate the marriage and she runs away to stay with best friend Aurore, finding another boyfriend to console herself with.

Stephan Streker who wrote and directed the film, based on true events, skilfully leads us through the conflicting wishes of a beautiful, young Belgian girl wanting to have a free life to fulfil her ambitions and a traditional Pakistani family who face ostracisation if their daughter withdraws from her arranged marriage with its dowry and cultural significance.

The family members truly love one another but ultimately they are torn apart in the inevitable, explosive, tragic ending by prejudice, tradition and fear.

This is former journalist Streker's third feature film.



See it:

Wednesday 28th June 1810 Cineworld

Sunday 2nd July 2030 Filmhouse 2

